

The Weekly Press

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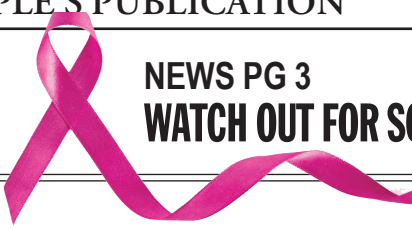
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21-27, 2021

A PEOPLE'S PUBLICATION

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BATON ROUGE PREPARING FOR 19TH ANNUAL GALA ON THE BLUFF

NEWS PG 3
WATCH OUT FOR SCAMS DURING BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH



Mediation program launched to help Hurricane Ida victims

The program is available for policyholders looking to dispute claims of up to \$50,000

The Louisiana Insurance Commissioner announced a Hurricane Ida mediation program Tuesday.



Insurance Commissioner Jim Donelon

Insurance Commissioner Jim Donelon said Louisiana policyholders that are at odds with their insurers over Hurricane Ida damage claims may now be able to resolve their disputes through a mediation program created by the Louisiana Department of Insurance.

The program is available to all authorized property and casualty insurers and surplus lines insurers and their insureds to facilitate disputes for personal lines residential insurance claims of up to \$50,000, according to Donelon.

"I'm confident this new mediation program will be helpful in solving claim disputes between insurers and policyholders and getting people what they need to put their homes and lives back in order," said Commissioner Jim Donelon.

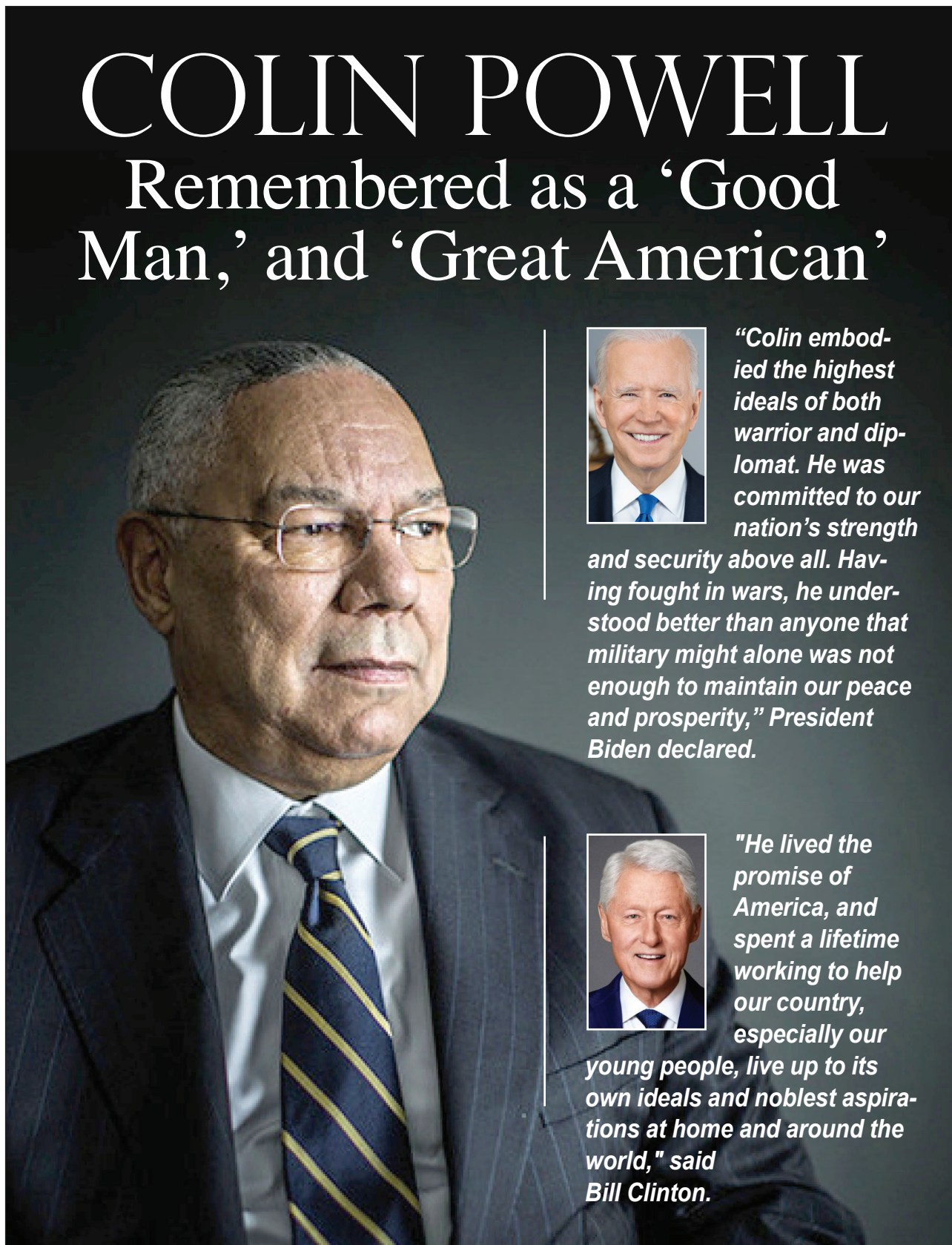
The Hurricane Ida Mediation Program begins this week and is open to all authorized property and casualty insurers and surplus lines insurers to facilitate disputes for personal lines residential insurance claims of up to \$50,000.

Participation in the Hurricane Ida program is voluntary for insurers and policyholders. The two mediation providers have agreed to provide the service for a flat fee of \$600.

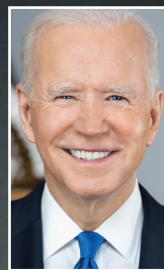
Details of the program are available in Bulletin 2021-08.

The program is expected to run through June 30, 2022.

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COLIN POWELL Remembered as a 'Good Man,' and 'Great American'



"Colin embodied the highest ideals of both warrior and diplomat. He was committed to our nation's strength and security above all. Having fought in wars, he understood better than anyone that military might alone was not enough to maintain our peace and prosperity," President Biden declared.



"He lived the promise of America, and spent a lifetime working to help our country, especially our young people, live up to its own ideals and noblest aspirations at home and around the world," said Bill Clinton.

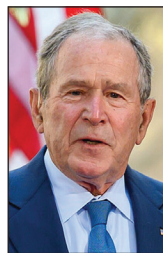
The four-star general served under three Republican presidents and was the youngest and first Black chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

First Black Secretary of State, Dies of Covid-19 at 84

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent

Colin Powell has died from complications from Covid-19, his family members have confirmed.

"Laura and I are deeply saddened by the death of Colin Powell," said George W. Bush. "He was a great public servant, starting with his time as a soldier during Vietnam."



"General Powell was an exemplary soldier and an exemplary patriot," said Barack Obama. "He was at the center of some of the most consequential events of our lifetimes."



The first Black US secretary of state was 84.

"General Colin L. Powell, former U.S. Secretary of State and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, passed away this morning due to complications from Covid 19," the former General's

family wrote on Facebook.

"We have lost a remarkable and loving husband, father, grandfather and a great American," the family wrote.

They reported that Powell had been fully vaccinated.

Powell became the first

Black national security adviser during the end of Ronald Reagan's presidency.

He also counted as the youngest and first African American chairman of the Joint Chiefs

See POWELL, on page 3

Statement by Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome

BATON ROUGE, La. — Today we have lost a trailblazer and icon. Colin Powell was a four-star general who served as the first African-American Chairman of the Joints Chief of Staff, Secretary of State and National Security Advisor.



Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome

General Powell was a man of integrity. His leadership transcended political parties. He advocated for civility in American politics. He developed initiatives to uplift and educate our youth—the next generation of leaders. He was a great American and will be missed. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family.

Ardoin announces rescheduled Voting System Commission date

BATON ROUGE, La. — Secretary of State Kyle Ardoin announced the rescheduled first meeting of the Voting System Commission will occur at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, November 17. The meeting will take place at the State Capitol in Baton Rouge.



Secretary of State Kyle Ardoin

"After being delayed by Hurricane Ida, I'm pleased that we are beginning this important work with a diverse group of dedicated citizens from around the state," Ardoin said. "I look forward to hearing from experts and members of the public on how to best advance Louisiana's voting system."

The November 17 meeting is open to the public and will be held in the John Hainkel Senate Committee Room.

OTHER STORIES ONLINE



READ OUR DIGITAL INTERACTIVE EDITION ONLINE @ BRWEEKLYPRESS.COM

More than 20 people safely escape after plane crashes outside Houston

WALLER COUNTY, Texas -- An emergency response got underway mid-morning Tuesday in the wake of a plane crash just outside of Houston.

Texas Department of Public Safety confirmed the incident in a field at the Houston Executive Airport, near Brookshire, Texas.

According to Waller County Sheriff Troy Guidry, 21 people, which included 18 passengers and three crew members, were on board and all made it out safe. Two people were sent to the hospital.

The youngest person on

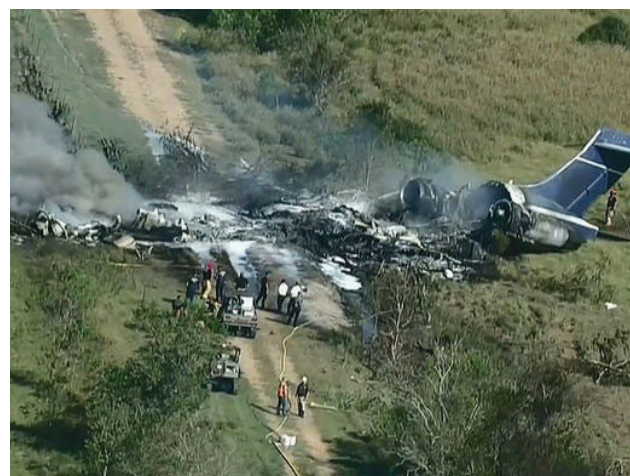
board is a 10-year-old, officials said. Fortunately, no one was killed, Guidry added.

Photos obtained by ABC13 show black smoke coming from a field around the scene of the crash.

From above the scene, SkyEye captured firefighters attempting to douse flames of the wreckage, with the aircraft's tail intact.

Since the incident, FAA identified the aircraft as a McDonnell Douglas MD-87, adding that the plane rolled through a fence and caught

See CRASH, on page 2



The airports executive director said the plane's departure appeared normal and that it should've been up in the air, but he still doesn't know what went wrong.

Donald Trump proves there's no bottom again

Roughly 24 hours after the death of Colin Powell, Donald Trump proved, again, that he is utterly incapable of empathy, grace or even common decency.

"Wonderful to see Colin Powell, who made big mistakes on Iraq and famously, so-called weapons of mass destruction, be treated in death so beautifully by the Fake News Media," Trump said in a statement released Tuesday morning. "Hope that happens to me someday. He was a classic



Donald Trump

See BOTTOM, on page 2

WEATHER

MON. 10/25
Thunderstorm
High 85°

TUE. 10/26
Partly Cloudy
High 86°

WED. 10/27
Thunderstorm
High 83°

THUR. 10/28
AM Thunderstorm-
High 78°

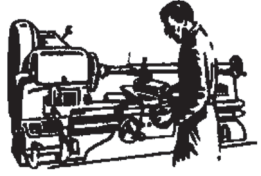
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LOCAL & STATE

READER INFORMATION



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 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

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NNPA Meets with President's Advisor



Cedric Richmond was recently appointed senior advisor to President-Elect Joe Biden.

By Lisa Fitch
 Our Weekly News

President Joe Biden's Senior Advisor, Cedric Richmond, who serves as the director of the White House Office of Public Engagement, attended a live streamed briefing for the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) on Wednesday to address a number of issues of concern in the Black community.

"It's been a long fight," Richmond said of the struggle for racial equality. "We're not where we want to be, but we are making progress."

The director noted that he was in the capitol on January 6 and understands how close the country came to experiencing a coup in this country. He noted that the President is vocally advocating, and his administration is pushing the restoration of voting rights. An act to address the issue is now sitting in the Senate.

"We understand the impor-

ance of voting," Richmond said, explaining that the first order of business is to craft an act which all 50 Democrats can agree on. With 50 votes the Vice President would be the tie breaker. "There are some challenges there."

Richmond explained that the administration is fighting on this issue using a three-pronged approach - in the justice department, filing suits in the courts; pushing the act in the halls of congress; and organizing and educating voters on the street corners.

The advisor said that voter suppression happens in several ways - creating barriers to voting like requiring identifications and also persuading people that voting doesn't matter. Voters become discouraged

"The best and most immediate thing we can do is restore the voting rights act," he said.

Richmond also addressed the administration's promise to increase education funding -

from pre-kindergarten to HBCUs - noting that the country's public schools have turned into a system of haves and have nots.

"This is something that flies under the radar far too often," he said. "We want to make sure three- and four-year olds go to school for free. . . It's Time to invest in our children and put our money where our mouth is."

Richmond also addressed the issues of home ownership, generational wealth and the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, which, among other things, directs the Department of Justice (DOJ) to create uniform accreditation standards for law enforcement agencies and requires law enforcement officers to complete training on racial profiling, implicit bias, and the duty to intervene when another officer uses excessive force.

The House passed the measure in May, but it sits in the Senate now, where it still needs votes.

"That process went on and on," Richmond said. "Senate Republicans wouldn't even go as far as President (Donald) Trump's executive order. They were backtracking."

"Where congress won't act, we will," he said, noting that the DOJ has banned choke holds. "We will do as much as we possibly can according to the constitution. The one thing this president is not afraid of doing is action with executive orders"

Richmond said the administration is not letting congress off the hook and will continue to push for legislation equity.

"We are intentional about investing in the African-American community," he concluded. "Making sure African-Americans get to chart their own future."

BOTTOM from page 1

RINO, if even that, always being the first to attack other Republicans. He made plenty of mistakes, but anyway, may he rest in peace!"

"But anyway, may he rest in peace!" Yes, Trump really said that.

The gulf between Trump's statement and that of other former presidents on Powell's passing is simply massive.



Morris Day

BR preparing for 19th Annual Gala On The Bluff

Morris Day and The Time this year Headlined performer

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

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

PROGRAM from page 1

Either the insurer or the policyholder can make a written request for mediation, and the other party is free to accept or reject the invitation. If someone declines and later changes their mind, they are still eligible to participate in the program. Once a mediator is assigned to a case, they will promptly ask the parties to provide all relevant documentation and explain why they have been unable to resolve their differences.

The mediator will then have 30 days to set the date for mediation. All mediations will take place in either the Baton Rouge or New Orleans metropolitan area at locations provided by Mediation & Arbitration Professional Systems (MAPS) in Metairie or Perry Dampf Dispute Solutions in Baton Rouge.

The policyholder may have an attorney or other representative participate in the mediation as long

as they give those names to the mediator in advance. Both insurers and policyholders are free to bring adjusters, appraisers, contractors or other knowledgeable individuals to the mediation.

Mediations will last up to 90 minutes. That period does not include mediator preparation time. If the parties come to resolution, they must sign an agreement that specifies which portions of the claim have been resolved and the dollar amount of their settlement. The insurer then has 10 days to pay the policyholder.

Policyholders should come to the mediation with a complete list of damages. If new damage is found or repair costs are higher than anticipated, the terms of the mediated settlement will govern whether the policyholder can reopen the claim.

If the parties reach partial agreement, they can continue to use the mediator's services beyond the 90 minutes but will be responsible for the cost.

CRASH from page 1

fire in a field while attempting to depart the executive airport just after 10 a.m. CT.

"During the departure, it looked like a normal departure. Like I said, once it got behind the hangers I could not tell my-

self what was going on with the aircraft," said the airport's executive director Andrew Perry. "It should have been up in the air. I knew something was wrong and then a couple of seconds later, we saw the fireball and went rushing to the scene."

The federal agency also confirmed that all passengers



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Hurricane Ida's damage forces Louisiana voting site changes

BATON ROUGE, La. — Hurricane Ida's destruction across southeastern Louisiana will force thousands of voters to cast their ballots at different polling locations for next month's election, with some voting sites relegated to large tents because few area buildings were free of damage.

Secretary of State Kyle Ardoin said Tuesday that elections officials are working to notify people about the dozens of voting location changes through mail, advertising and signs. The Nov. 13 election already was pushed back several weeks because of the storm.

Nine parishes have disrupted polling locations because of Ida, which roared ashore Aug. 29 as a Category 4 storm.

In portions of hard-hit Lafourche and Terrebonne parishes, some voters will cast ballots in large tents that will be ventilated by fans and have security workers on site. In St. John the Baptist Parish, 27 of 28 voting sites will be relocated, with several consolidated into a local gym, because of the widespread destruction to parish buildings and schools that are normally used.

Other parishes with some voting site changes include Assumption, Jefferson, Orleans, St. Charles, St. Helena and Plaquemines.

People trying to determine where to vote can check the secretary of state's website at geauxvote.com, log into the state's GeauxVote mobile app or call 1-800-883-2805.

The only statewide issues on the fall ballot are four constitutional amendments, including a proposal to overhaul Louisiana's income tax structure. Some parishes will see special elections to fill vacant legislative seats and other local races. New Orleans has a full slate of municipal elections, including the mayor's race. Early voting begins Oct. 30.

To tell people about the voting site changes, elections officials are mailing information to people's homes, placing signs in high-traffic areas, running radio and digital ads, passing out flyers at local churches and hanging up posters in prominent parish locations.

People displaced by Ida who won't be in their home parish for the election also can seek to vote absentee by mail.

Research shows close to 75% of schools in Baton Rouge are in 'Fair' or 'Poor' shape



According to research done by the East Baton Rouge School System, dozens of schools in Baton Rouge that your children go to, are not in good shape.

BATON ROUGE, La. - Dozens of schools in Baton Rouge that your children go to, are not in good shape.

That's according to research done by the East Baton Rouge Parish School System, as they work to create a 'Facilities Master Plan.' It's hard to compare the new, to the really old.

"The reality is, you know, over time, you have to put maintenance in," said Dr. Sito Narcisse, EBR Schools Superintendent.

But some schools in Baton Rouge may need a lot more than an oil change per se.

"And a master plan of a school district, is where you talk about where you need to put buildings, consolidate, modernize and expand," said Dr. Narcisse.

The EBR School System did research on how the facilities in the district are faring:

- 20 Active Schools in the district were classified as 'GOOD.'
- 36 Active Schools were classified as 'FAIR.'
- 16 Active Schools were classified as 'POOR.'

"I mean, look at here, we're at Liberty High School and the environment here feels very college campus. And so trying to make sure that no matter where you are, whether it's at an elementary or one of our high schools. What are the ways that we can create environments to feel connected, not feel good about going to school.

And facilities have a lot to do with that," said Dr. Narcisse.

The 36 schools in 'FAIR' condition, may have a few years left. "Right now, based on the tax plan, there are schools in the next 10 years that should be modernized, fixed, or new buildings. And so, we just have to go through the tax plan," said Dr. Narcisse.

A series of public meetings like this one will let parents weigh in on what should be done next.

But some people just want the easy stuff taken care of first.

"I've been here for 45 years, and this is the most frustrating it's been," said Rusty Price, Athletics Director at Broadmoor High.

Broadmoor High's Football stadium has been without power since Hurricane Ida.

And with no lights, they haven't been able to play a home game all season...

"And next week is our homecoming week. And I just think it's not fair to the kids, it's not fair for the students, to wait this long just to get a wire connected," said Price.

Coach Price says the school needs major upgrades too. But right now, his focus is just giving these students a few home football games.

"It's for the kids. It ain't for me. I'm going to go to the game at Woodlawn, I'm going to go to the game wherever it is. But it's not fair for the students, who go to this

school," said Price.

There are other town halls scheduled in the future:

- Northeast High School cafeteria, Oct. 19
- Belaire High School theater, Oct. 27
- Scotlandville Magnet High School library, Nov. 3
- Tara High School library, Nov. 10
- Woodlawn High School library, Nov. 16

The school system is hopeful to finish up this master plan, when it comes to facilities, by next Summer.



BBB Warns: Watch out for scams during Breast Cancer Awareness Month

BATON ROUGE, La. - October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and all month long, especially October 20, you're going to see a lot of pink in the Capital Region.

There are many ways to contribute to breast cancer research. But as you do that, the Better Business Bureau is warning you to use caution when purchasing "pink ribbon" items.

Be cautious by shopping smart and checking the charity you are donating to. Some companies donate a portion of the sale of specific items, designated with pink ribbons or packaging. When shopping for "pink ribbon" items, see if the promotion is transparent about which charity it will benefit and how much of the purchase will be donated. Watch out for vague claims of proceeds benefiting unspecified charities.

Check the charity. Charities accredited with BBB Wise Giving Alliance meet the 20 BBB Charity Standards. If you are considering a donation to a charity that is

not familiar to you, go to Give.org to view its charity report or find trustworthy organizations to donate to.

When researching a charity, pay close attention to its name, as some questionable charities may use names similar to those of established organizations.

Participate carefully. Some charities host fundraising events in addition to marketing promotions. If this interests you, gather all the important information before signing up. Is there a participation fee or are you required to sign up a minimum number of sponsors? Always research the charity or group organizing the event before you register.

Take action. If your preferred charity is not holding any events or promotions during Breast Cancer Awareness Month, contact them directly to see how you can volunteer or donate on your own time.

To view charity reports and find more wise giving tips, visit Give.org.

POWELL from page 1

of Staff under President George H.W. Bush.

Powell was thrust into the global spotlight after leading the United States to victory during the Gulf War, with many even considering him as a presidential candidate.

"Laura and I are deeply saddened by the death of Colin Powell. He was a great public servant, starting with his time as a soldier during Vietnam. Many Presidents relied on General Powell's counsel and experience," former President George W. Bush stated.

"He was National Security Adviser under President Reagan, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under my father and President Clinton, and Secretary of State during my Administration."

Bush continued:

"He was such a favorite of Presidents that he earned the Presidential Medal of Freedom — twice. He was highly respected at home and abroad.

"And most important, Colin was a family man and a friend. Laura and I send Alma and their children our sincere condolences as they remember the life of a great man."

National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., said the Black Press of America will fondly remember General Powell's contributions.

"We pause to express our profound condolences to the family of The Honorable Colin Powell," Dr. Chavis remarked. "Secretary Powell was America's military general and, at the same time, the nation's conscience as U.S. Secretary of State."

He continued:

"We in the African American community mourn his passing and rededicate ourselves to ensure that the legacy of Colin Powell will live on."

General Powell had a reputation for generating bipartisan support, being a trusted military adviser, and putting country over party, added Spencer Overton, the president of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

"General Powell was a true leader and a man of many firsts —

the first Black U.S. Secretary of State and the youngest officer appointed chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff," Overton reflected.

"We will remember General Powell's commitment to public service and Black communities. General Powell was a friend of the Joint Center and participated in various events.

"He always remembered where he came from and tried to ensure that opportunities would remain open to others — as evidenced by his support of affirmative action and other programs designed to facilitate economic mobility and the full participation of Americans from all backgrounds.

President Joe Biden remembered Powell as the son of immigrants, born in New York City, raised in Harlem and the South Bronx, and as a graduate of the City College of New York.

Powell believed in the promise of America because he lived it, Presi-

dent Biden asserted, noting that the general devoted much of his life to making that promise a reality for so many others.

"Colin embodied the highest ideals of both warrior and diplomat. He was committed to our nation's strength and security above all. Having fought in wars, he understood better than anyone that military might alone was not enough to maintain our peace and prosperity," President Biden declared.

Above all, President Biden said General Powell was a friend.

"I am forever grateful for his support of my candidacy for president and for our shared battle for the soul of the nation. I will miss being able to call on his wisdom in the future," the President continued.

"Colin Powell was a good man. He will be remembered as one of our great Americans."

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RELIGION

Get Out of God's Way

We live in a world that encourages us to depend on our five senses to process what's going on around us. The prevailing mindset is that whatever we can't see, hear, taste, touch, or smell isn't real. This is the natural realm that requires no faith whatsoever; however, God operates in the supernatural realm, which is just as real as the natural. If we are to experience what He wants to accomplish in our lives, we must stop depending on our carnal senses and trust Him to do what seems impossible.

Relying on our physical senses can hinder our belief in God's ability and get in the way of seeing His work firsthand. During Jesus' earthly ministry the disciples had the same problem. On one occasion, when they couldn't cast a demon out from a boy, Jesus got the job done and later explained to them what went wrong. "And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder

place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Matthew 17:20). Seeing the physical manifestations of the demon in the boy kept the disciples from fully believing in their authority over the unclean spirit; Jesus didn't have that problem because He looked beyond physical appearances and relied on His faith.

We've become accustomed to having faith only in what we see others say or do. Worldly philosophy encourages us to place our trust in what it calls wisdom, but worldly wisdom comes from imperfect people who can let us down. Jesus has no flaws or imperfections; therefore we're wise not to trust in anyone else but Him. "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (1 Corinthians 2:5).

Our overdependence on what we can see gets in God's way when He's trying to manifest what we've been praying for. We tend to struggle with something we can't comprehend intellectually. The solution for this is to step aside and



Creffo Dollar

get out of God's way. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). Faith goes against the grain of everything we've been taught about intellectual reasoning, but it's the key to unlocking the supernatural.

In the natural realm, 20/20 vision is a good thing. In the spiritual realm, it might hold us back. One

of the biggest obstacles a believer has to overcome is the temptation to live by what they see instead of what they believe. The Bible says that we are to walk by faith, not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7).

Every day we see people struggling unsuccessfully with issues that dominate them. As Christians, we've been set apart from this fruitless struggle; we're the ones who draw attention to ourselves because we have victory over things that defeat others. It all comes down to trusting God in every situation, no matter how bad it looks. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4).

God gave us physical senses to enhance our enjoyment of life, but we need to know when to use them and when not to. Exercising our authority over them opens us up to the eternal things of heaven. Using godly wisdom in this area allows Him to do mighty things on our behalf.

New Flavor Entertainment & Tyscot Records Partner To Release "You're Coming Out" By Melissa Bethea

If the voice of Melissa Bethea sounds familiar, maybe you've heard it on JJ Hairston & Youthful Praise tracks such as "No Holding Back" or the Top 30 hit, "You Are Worthy." Now, fans can hear her on her own, as the New Flavor Entertainment production duo of Clarence Singleton and Eric Davis, and Tyscot Records have partnered to release the Newark, Jersey native's poignant new track, "You're Coming Out" (New Flavor Entertainment/Tyscot). It was written by Singleton, a seasoned songwriter and producer (Byron Cage, Marvin Sapp, Hezekiah Walker), and Davis, a producer who's co-written a dozen of J.J. Hairston & Youthful Praise's big radio hits such as "After This", "Lord of All", and "Resting on His Promise."

"This song is my personal testimony about overcoming infertility," Bethea says of the power ballad. "Five years into our marriage, my husband, Joseph, and I tried to have a baby. The first trimester there was no heartbeat. Then, it happened again, and I had a miscarriage. I said to myself, 'Lord,

why can't I carry a child?' Then, God told me that He'd give me a miracle in six months. Nothing happened for six months. At the end of that six months, I finally got pregnant and eventually had my daughter, Jade, who will be three years old in November. She's, my miracle."

Bethea feels the song will resonate with others going through hard times. "There's so much going on right now with COVID-19," she says. "People need to feel encouraged about coming out on the other side of this pandemic. Those who made it through and those who are still here, you are definitely coming out strong." Meanwhile, the talented trio is hard at work on Bethea's first full-length album. "I believe the album will be used to encourage, uplift, and inspire," she says. "So many people need hope because they've lost so much with this pandemic. This is going to refresh, revive, renew, and point people to Jesus." Listening Link: <https://smarturl.it/zkagbh>

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BUSINESS

New York directs two cryptocurrency lending platforms to cease activity

Two cryptocurrency lending platforms were asked to cease activities in New York by the state's attorney general on Monday and three other platforms were directed to provide information about their business.

The move comes weeks after New York Attorney General Letitia James won a court order forcing the closure of cryptocurrency exchange Coinseed.

In a redacted version of a letter dated Monday, James said the Office of the Attorney General "was in possession of evidence of unlawfully selling or offering for sale securities and/or commodities".

Regulators in the U.S. have been ratcheting up scrutiny of a world that has so far existed in a regulatory gray area, against the



Attorney General Letitia James

backdrop of rising tension between the crypto industry and regulators worldwide.

James filed a lawsuit in February to shut down Coinseed for allegedly defrauding thousands of investors, including by charging hidden trading fees and selling "worthless" digital tokens.

The state's attorney general warned investors about "extreme risk" when investing in cryptocurrency and issued warnings to those facilitating in the trading of virtual currencies.

"Cryptocurrency platforms must follow the law, just like everyone else, which is why we are now directing two crypto companies to shut down and forcing three more to answer questions immediately," James said on Monday.

Walmart unveils Black Friday 2021 plans with three sales

The world's largest retailer is spreading out its Black Friday deals for the second year in a row.

Walmart announced Monday that it is bringing back its month-long "Black Friday Deals for Days" in November.

Instead of one sale that has traditionally started on Thanksgiving, there will be three different events online and in stores like last year. Walmart stores also will be closed this Thanksgiving for the second time since the late 1980s because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The three November sales will all start online first and continue in stores. The first sale starts online at 7 p.m. ET Nov. 3 and then in stores at 5 a.m. local time Nov. 5.

■ Target's new Apple

stores: Target to open more 'mini Apple shops' in time for holiday shopping. Will your store get an upgrade?

■ Best Buy Black Friday 2021: Holiday shoppers, mark your calendars: Best Buy Black Friday deals start to drop next week

But Walmart is offering paying members of its Walmart+ membership program early access this year. Members can start shopping four hours ahead of the scheduled online start times.

The program costs \$98 a year or \$12.95 a month and includes free delivery and shipping with no order minimum.

Janey Whiteside, chief customer officer for Walmart U.S., calls Walmart+ "the ultimate life hack for our customers" and said in a state-

ment that the company is "excited for our Walmart+ members to be first in line for the hottest Black Friday deals out there."

Those on free trials of the membership program do not get early access, Walmart confirmed.

■ Find Walmart deals now: Walmart Black Friday deals now, including discounts on Keurig and the Ninja air fryer

■ Will this move save Christmas?: Biden administration looks to fix supply shortages with Walmart, UPS and FedEx by Christmas

The second starts online Nov. 10 at 7 p.m. ET and then at 5 a.m. local time Nov. 12 in stores. Walmart didn't provide dates for

the third sale but said it "will wrap up a month of savings with a third event that will bring its biggest, best savings of the season for the most exciting shopping day of the year."

Walmart says the "events are designed for a safe, enjoyable experience" and that all of the deals are online and "to help ensure safe shopping in stores, Walmart follows CDC guidance and local mandates."

Experts recommend that consumers start shopping for holiday gifts now ahead of Thanksgiving and Black Friday, which is often seen as the official kickoff to the holiday shopping season.

Best Buy is kicking off its Black Friday sale Oct. 19 and Target has started a new holiday

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The Weekly Press

Booster shot of Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine recommended by FDA pane

FDA advisory panel vote came a day after the same group of independent vaccine experts recommended a third dose of Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine for older and higher-risk adults, as well as certain workers.

WASHINGTON — A federal vaccine advisory panel on Friday endorsed a second dose of Johnson & Johnson's one-shot COVID-19 vaccine, meaning millions more Americans are expected to soon join the line for booster shots.

Anyone who received a J&J shot at least two months ago will be eligible for an additional dose, under the committee's recommendation.

The Food and Drug Administration is expected to follow the advice of its advisory panel. Formal guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also is required, and expected to occur

as soon as next week.

Authorization of the second dose will essentially turn the one-dose J&J vaccine into a two-shot regime like those from Pfizer and Moderna, which use a different type of technology to spur the immune system to create antibodies.

That FDA advisory panel vote came a day after the same group of independent vaccine experts recommended a third dose of Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine for older and higher-risk adults, as well as certain workers.

That same population also has been recommended to receive a third dose of the Pfizer shot to

ensure better protection against infection.

The one-dose shot from J&J's vaccine division, Janssen Pharmaceuticals, initially was approved in February. Since then, more than 15 million Americans have received it.

By relying on one dose instead of two, the J&J shot was heralded as logistically helpful in vaccinating harder-to-reach populations, such as those who may not be able to easily return for a second jab.

Early in the shot's deployment, its use was briefly paused as federal regulators reviewed data on a rare but serious blood-clotting condition identified in some

women. It was allowed to be used again 11 days later, with providers directed to inform patients about the warning about the rare blood clots.

Regulators on Friday found no evidence of serious safety concerns, though they did express frustration about receiving little time to independently review some of the company's data.

But there was unanimous agreement that there was enough data to show that the benefits of a second dose of the J&J shot outweighed the risks.

One factor in that discussion was the effectiveness of Johnson &

Johnson's vaccine, which has been lower than that of the two-dose vaccines from Moderna and Pfizer.

A lingering issue that the panel did not resolve is whether those who received the J&J vaccine should be able to get a follow-up dose of either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, given the differences in the efficacy rates in those shots.

The FDA panel did hear a presentation from a scientist who helped lead a study on mixing doses from different drug manufacturers. But it did not vote on whether to recommend mixed doses, or set a timeline for doing so.

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