

# The Weekly Press

SERVING BAKER, CENTRAL, AND ZACHARY

THURSDAY, JUNE 11-17, 2020

A PEOPLE'S PUBLICATION

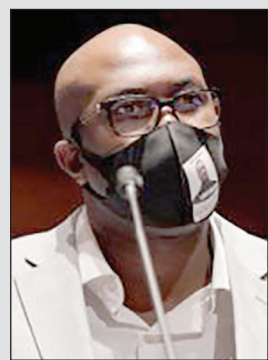
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WEAR YOUR ARMOR

## George Floyd's Brother Pleads With Congress: 'Make It Stop'



Philonise Floyd

WASHINGTON — Philonise Floyd, whose brother's death in police custody has inspired two weeks of sprawling protests across the country, made an impassioned plea to Congress on Wednesday to enact sweeping changes to law enforcement in America to address police brutality and systemic racism.

In wrenching testimony on Capitol Hill, Mr. Floyd described to the House Judiciary Committee the agony he felt as he watched the video of George Floyd, his older brother, dying

See **STOP**, on page 5

## HUD Sends \$1.65 Million to Assist Homeless in Baton Rouge



BATON ROUGE, La. - The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced \$20.9 million will be allocated to help fight homelessness in Louisiana. Of that money, \$1.65 million will go to Baton Rouge.

See **HUD**, on page 3

### WEATHER

3 day Forecast BR Area



MON. 94°  
Sunny,  
High 94F.



TUE. 94°  
Sunny,  
High 94F.



WED 91°  
Sunny,  
High 91F.

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# GEORGE FLOYD

## Laid to Rest, His Legacy Reverberates Across the Globe



A horse-drawn carriage carries George Floyd's casket to Houston Memorial Gardens in Pearland, Texas, on June 9.

*Barely known outside his own circle, Floyd suddenly became the most famous man in the world, shouldering the pain of the racially oppressed everywhere with his dying words, "I can't breathe."*

"He's going to change the world."

The poignant eulogy to George Floyd delivered by his brother Rodney on Tuesday is already at least partially true, although how deep and enduring that change is will be decided by future struggles.

In a span of mere days,

the death of a black man with a white policeman's knee on his neck became a parable in America's aching racial story and a rallying point for action that resonated far beyond Minnesota, where he died, and disrupted politics, business, culture and sports. Floyd's impact has spanned continents -- sparking debate and reflections

across the Atlantic in Europe.

Barely known outside his own circle, Floyd suddenly became the most famous man in the world, shouldering the pain of the racially oppressed everywhere with his dying words, "I can't breathe." Yet he will never know of his fame nor perceive

See **FLOYD**, on page 2

## Baton Rouge City Leaders Discuss Police Reform

BATON ROUGE, La. — Officials with the Baton Rouge Police Department held a press conference Tuesday, June 9 to discuss ongoing reforms in the department.



Police Chief Murphy Paul

Chief Murphy Paul and several other top officials with the law enforcement agency talked about what it will take to build trust and legitimacy in the community.

Paul said he shares the nation's outrage over the death of George Floyd. He condemned the actions of the Minnesota police officers involved in Floyd's death.

He credited Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome for implementing reforms within BRPD when she took

See **REFORM**, on page 7

## Critics Decry Trump Election Rally in City of Tulsa Race Massacre on Juneteenth

Donald Trump is facing a growing outcry for choosing to hold his first election rally during the coronavirus pandemic in Tulsa, Oklahoma — the scene of one of the worst race massacres in US history in 1921.

The rally will also be held on 19 June — known as "Juneteenth" — the anniversary of the day in 1865 when a general read out Abraham Lincoln's



President Donald Trump

to hold the rally in Tulsa in

emancipation proclamation in Texas, freeing slaves in the last un-emancipated state.

The decision

in the midst of nationwide protests over racist violence and discrimination, triggered by the police killing of George Floyd, has been criticized as all the more incendiary for the widely understood historic symbolism of the Tulsa race massacre in which up to 300 black Americans were killed by white mobs.

Critics accused the president of "racially motivated

trolling" and timing akin to "blasphemy".

In the New York Times, the columnist Michelle Goldberg decried the move under the headline: "A racist president trolls his enemies with a rally on Juneteenth" while in the Washington Post CeLillianne Green, described the move as "almost blasphemous

See **TRUMP**, on page 2

## Finalists Named for Superintendent of Baton Rouge Schools



Dr. Leslie Brown



Nakia Towns

BATON ROUGE, La. - The East Baton Rouge Parish School Board on Thursday, May 21, selected Leslie Brown and Nakia Towns as the finalists who will compete to become superintendent of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS).

View recordings of their first-round

See **FINALISTS**, on page 3

READ OUR DIGITAL INTERACTIVE EDITION ONLINE @ [BRWEEKLYPRESS.COM](http://BRWEEKLYPRESS.COM)

## EARLY VOTING EDITION

June 20th - July 4th, 2020

- Candidate Endorsements
- Candidate Information
- Polling time and places
- What to expect at the polls because of the COVID-19 Pandemic

## EARLY VOTING EDITION

TAKE THE BRWEEKLY PRESS TO THE POLLS

July 11th, 2020

- Endorsements and Recommendations
- Sample Ballots (Print & Digital)

**You Decide**  
★ 2020  
EARLY VOTING | VOTER'S GUIDE  
6/20-7/4/20 | 7/11/2020



# STATE & LOCAL

**TRUMP** from page 1

to the people of Tulsa and insulting to the notion of freedom for our people, which is what Juneteenth symbolises.”

Those planning to attend the rally will be required to indemnify the Trump campaign and others involved in the event so they will not be able to sue if they contract coronavirus.

The former Democratic presidential candidate and senator Kamala Harris, of California, tweeted of Trump's rally: "This isn't just a wink to white supremacists - he's throwing them a welcome home party."

Sherry Gamble Smith, the president of Tulsa's Black Wall Street Chamber of Commerce, an organisation named after the prosperous black community that white Oklahomans burned down in the 1921 attack, said: "To choose the date, to come to Tulsa, is totally disrespectful and a slap in the face to even happen."

If the rally went ahead, Gamble Smith said, the least the campaign could do is change the date to 20 June.

The massacre took place over two days from 31 May to 1 June in the highly segregated city, with mobs attacking the Greenwood neighbourhood of the city, known as Black Wall Street for its prosperity.

Following a familiar pattern to the racist lynchings of the era, the attacks started with accusations that a 19-year-old black man, Dick Rowland, had assaulted Sarah Page, a 17-year-old white girl.

As he was arrested, rumours spread that the accused man was about to be lynched leading to confrontations outside the courtroom in which shots were fired, and leading to exchanges that killed a dozen people. That in turn triggered white mobs to attack black businesses, homes and individuals.

Over two days of violence, according to a later Red Cross estimate, 1,256 houses were burned, and two newspaper offices, a school, a library, a hospital, churches, hotels, stores and black-owned businesses were among the buildings destroyed or damaged by fire.

Although the official tally at the time claimed just 36 people had been killed, historians believe the number to be considerably higher. In 2001, the report of the Race Riot Commission suggested there were between 100 and 300 deaths.

The US journalist Dan Rather said on Twitter: "So. Let's set the stage... President Trump has chosen as the venue for his first rally in months, Tulsa, Oklahoma, site of a horrific massacre of African Americans. And he has set the date for June 19th, Juneteenth, a celebration of the end of slavery in the United States."

The LA Times tweeted on its official account: "The Trump rally will occur on Juneteenth Day, when many Americans commemorate the end of slavery, in a city that was home to an infamous 1921 massacre of Black people, one of the worst racial atrocities in the nation's

See **TRUMP**, on page 3



Gov. John Bel Edwards signed the late Rep. Reggie Bagala's bill, HB 765, into law.

## Gov. Edwards Signs Late Rep. Reggie Bagala's LSU License Plate Bill

BATON ROUGE — In a private bill signing ceremony, Gov. John Bel Edwards signed the late Rep. Reggie Bagala's bill, HB 765, into law. The ceremony was attended by Rep. Bagala's wife and son, LSU Head Football Coach Ed Orgeron and Athletic Director Scott Woodward.

Rep. Bagala succumbed to complications from

COVID-19 on April 9, 2020.

HB 765 was filed by Rep. Bagala, R-Cut Off, to authorize a license plate in honor of LSU's historic 2019 football national championship. With Gov. Edwards' signature, HB 765 became Act 54 of 2020, in recognition of House District 54, which Rep. Bagala represented.

**FLOYD** from page 1

the change he has wrought.

Across the US, policing guidelines are being torn up and task forces are forming to address reform. The NFL admitted it had been wrong to not listen to its players about racism. In Britain, there are demands for statues honoring the authors of colonialism to be torn down. European sports stars are tak-

ing a knee to honor Floyd. The opinion editor of The New York Times, meanwhile, is out of a job after publishing an editorial that called for troops to deal with protests around the country.

The wave of protests spurred by Floyd's death and the societal turmoil it triggered will almost certainly ebb in the days after his body was carried to his grave on

a horse-drawn carriage, almost with the trappings of a state funeral for a national hero.

It will be days, weeks or months before the lasting, catalytic impact of his passing can be properly assessed. But already, reforming the police to eradicate racism in the ranks after a non-ending list of deaths of African American men in custody is now a political default in Washington, as CNN's Abby Phillip pointed out.

Senate Republicans, already greeting November's elections with trepidation and watching as their President flung racial rhetoric while diverse crowds marched, hurriedly prepared their own police reform draft bill after Democrats acted first.

The move reflected fast-shifting social currents after an extraordinary period when a nationwide and ultimately peaceful uprising drove a once-in-a-century pandemic into the background.

The thronged streets of US cities in support of the Black Lives Matter movement were a reminder that change really comes in America only on the back of a roused and insistent populace.

At another time, things might have been different. But in a season of sickness and fear, the power of grass roots sentiment stressed the power of humanity to write its own fate, and may have actually gathered intensity as an outlet after weeks of coronavirus shutdowns.

**READER INFORMATION**

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**Correction Policy**

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

**The Weekly Press**

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 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
 Closed Saturday, Sunday

**Summer CAMP EXPERIENCE**

**VIRTUAL + IN-PERSON EXPERIENCES**

Summer is back and BREC has fun in the works! As our community faces new challenges, BREC is adapting to offer recreational options this summer to keep children engaged in a safe and fun way.

Registration for June camps opened May 26. As public health officials release additional information, BREC will announce registration and details for July camps in late June.



**MORE INFO + TO REGISTER:** [BREC.ORG/SUMMERCAMP](http://BREC.ORG/SUMMERCAMP) (225) 272-9200

**Dr. Alice Sanders**  
 Baker City Council  
 District 5

**ELECT #240**

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 TOGETHER WE CAN

**#218**

**TIFFANY FOXWORTH**  
 for JUDGE

**ATTORNEY • REGISTERED NURSE • ARMY VETERAN**

**EARLY VOTING: 6/20 - 7/4/2020**  
**ELECTION DATE: 7/11/2020**

## Ochsner Baton Rouge Offers Free COVID-19 Antibody Test to Blood, Platelet Donors

Special incentive encourages donation during critical shortage



BATON ROUGE – On Thursday, June 18, the Ochsner Bloodmobile will park and accept donations at Ochsner Medical Center – Baton Rouge (17000 Medical Center Drive, off I-12, exit 7, O’Neal Lane). All successful blood and platelet donors will receive a free COVID-19 antibody test.

This special incentive is available at participating Ochsner Blood Bank sites around Greater New Orleans, Northshore, Baton Rouge and Bayou regions through July 5. Ochsner blood banks, like blood banks across the nation, are currently experiencing a critical blood shortage. All blood types are needed, especially platelets and Type O red cells.

Antibody Testing and How it Works

A COVID-19 antibody test can determine if a person’s immune system has created antibodies in response to COVID-19. Presence of the antibody indicates the individual has been infected with COVID-19 in the past but is not guaranteed immunity or protection from future infection.

Because this virus is new and there are still many unknowns, there is not enough information at this time to determine what defines COVID-19 immunity and how long immunity may last.

During your blood donation, a small amount of the

blood collected will be separately tested for COVID-19 antibodies. All participating donors will be notified via mail of the results. Note: To be eligible for the free COVID-19 antibody test, it must be a successful blood or platelet donation.

While the antibody testing is a step in the right direction, people should continue to follow CDC guidelines, including social distancing, wearing a mask in public and good hand hygiene practices. Individuals with a negative antibody test should be aware that they have not been infected by the virus or developed antibodies to COVID-19. If an individual were to test positive for antibodies, the same social practices should remain in place prior to testing as we continue to learn more about this virus.

Before You Donate:

- We encourage you to eat a healthy meal and drink water prior to donating.
- Individuals taking medication for high blood pressure or cholesterol CAN donate! All blood types are needed.
- Picture ID required.

Ochsner blood banks and blood drives participating in the antibody testing incentive can be found at [www.ochsner.org/bloodbank](http://www.ochsner.org/bloodbank). For more information or to make an appointment, call 504-842-3375.

## HUD from page 1

The money is part of an Emergency Solution Grant that will help make more emergency shelters available for homeless individuals and families, operate those shelters, provide hotel/motel vouchers to help get people off the streets, and provide services to people who are suffering from homelessness.

One of the shelters likely to benefit from such funding is St. Vincent de Paul. While the shelter has not experienced an increase in numbers due to coronavirus related shutdowns, it has seen its costs go up as it must provide personal protective equipment and other protective measures to all guests,

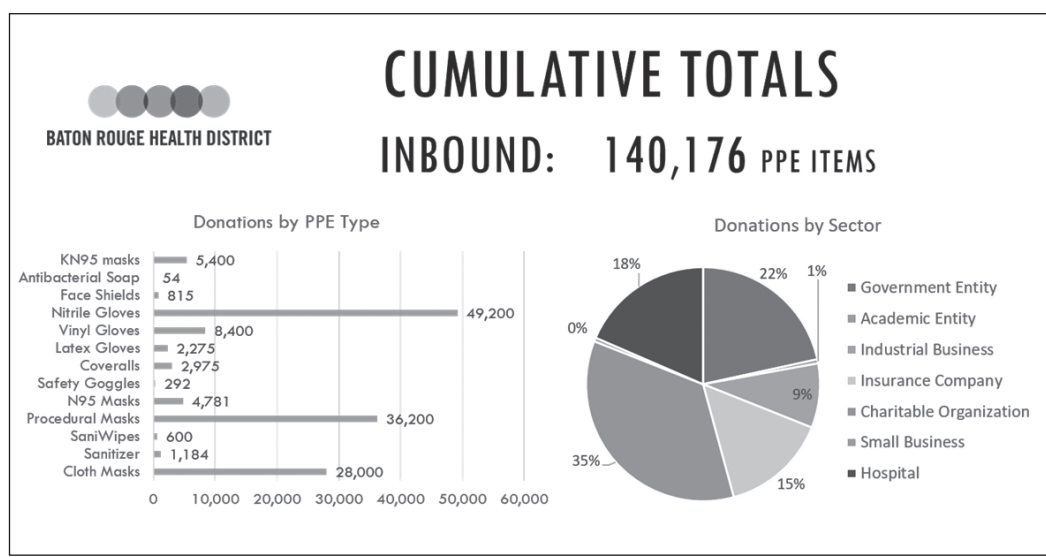
staff members, and volunteers. “Those are costs that we didn’t have last year at this time,” said Michael Acaldo, president and CEO of St. Vincent de Paul. “Those are challenges we didn’t have last year at this time, and so that all goes together, so today, it costs a lot more to run a shelter than it did just four months ago.”

Shelters must apply for the grant money before they receive it.

Acald says the money should be coming in at a time when numbers are likely to increase as restrictions on evictions start to lift.

See HUD, on page 7

## PPE Donation Initiative Reaches Milestone



BATON ROUGE, La. – Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome and the Baton Rouge Health District announced a major milestone in its PPE Donation Initiative. With a recent generous PPE donation by Guardians of the Angeles Foundation (GoA) and SLT Technologies, the PPE initiative has well exceeded 100,000 boxes of donated PPE items received for area healthcare workers. A summary of received donations below, amounting to several metric tons of donated PPE supplies collected at the Plank Road warehouse and forwarded to our local hospitals and clinics.

“Providing our healthcare workers with the needed PPE has been a challenge for most communities throughout the country. Here in Baton Rouge we met the challenge through partnerships like this with private companies,” said Mayor Broome. “Public-private partnerships continue to play a key role in our response to the coronavirus pandemic.”

“These are unprecedented times that call for unprecedented community support. We are glad to play a part in reducing the impacts of this outbreak by supporting those guarding our community. We are stronger together,” said Junzi Tan, Executive Director of GoA Foundation. “When our city is in need, I’m happy to step up and do whatever is necessary for us to move forward. Being able to partner which great or-

ganization like GOA to make this happen is extremely important in this fight!” added Calvin Mills Jr., President and CEO of SLT Technologies. GoA was founded in early 2020 amid the global outbreak of COVID-19, with a mission to support the most vulnerable - healthcare professionals, first responders, and essential workers - all those safeguarding our community in combating the pandemic. SLT Technologies is a major full-service IT consulting firm located in Baton Rouge.

Mayor Broome and the Baton Rouge Health District first announced the initiative in March. The Plank Road donation site serves as a business-to-business interchange to intake, organize and distribute much-needed PPE to our area hospitals and clinics. The location is not a donation site for the general public.

To date, the initiative has supported healthcare workers caring for COVID-19 patients at over 20 regional hospitals, long-term acute care facilities, nursing homes, rehab facilities, home health agencies, and testing sites. “Our entire community is thankful for this incredible effort to secure the necessary PPE for our healthcare heroes,” said K. Scott Wester, President & CEO of Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center and Baton Rouge Health District Board Member. “These important resources are keeping our frontline teams safe

as they continue to battle COVID-19 every day. We are thankful for everyone who donated and played a part.”

Building on its success, the PPE initiative is expanding and inviting all interested medical providers and practices across the Baton Rouge region that may be in need of protective equipment to sign up and receive donated PPE supplies. Register by emailing the name and description of the medical practice, point of contact name, address, phone number and email address where you can be reached to [PPEDonations@brhealthdistrict.com](mailto:PPEDonations@brhealthdistrict.com). More information is available on the PPE Donation website at [brhealthdistrict.com](http://brhealthdistrict.com).

To support its forthcoming expansion, the Baton Rouge PPE initiative is partnering with MedSupplyDrive, a national PPE movement aimed at mobilizing supplies and getting them to hospitals in need. MedSupplyDrive will provide volunteers to support distribution center efforts to reach the entire Baton Rouge medical community. “Partnering with Baton Rouge Health District is a great way for our two organizations to work together in serving the common goal of getting PPE to the medical providers of our community,” said Elise Hernandez, Regional Coordinator for the Baton Rouge Area with MedSupplyDrive. More information at [medsupplydrive.org](http://medsupplydrive.org).

## Councilwoman Tara Wicker Run for EBR Mayor-President

BATON ROUGE, La. - Metro Councilwoman Tara Wicker has announced she will be running for mayor-president of East Baton Rouge Parish.

Wicker, who represents District 10, will formally kick off her campaign at the Cortana Mall Friday, June 12.

She will be running against current Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome and District 11 Councilman Matt Watson.

## FINALISTS from page 1

interviews and more on their backgrounds by clicking the link here.

Baton Rouge Area Chamber (BRAC) Senior Vice President for Economic Competitiveness Liz Smith issued the following statement:

“We’re enthusiastic about the two finalists chosen by the EBR School Board to interview for the role of our community’s next Superintendent. Ms. Leslie Brown and Dr. Nakia Towns are incredibly strong candidates, with extensive experience leading dramatic improvement in students’ academic achievement. The two candidates’ first round interviews revealed in both a drive for equitably serving students and families across East Baton Rouge, an innovative mindset, and a belief in Baton Rouge’s education potential. Both leaders also participated in a national program called Chiefs for Change, which has helped identify and develop the skills of education’s rising stars on a national level. In this unprecedented time, in which our community and its children are experiencing extreme

See FINALISTS, on page 7

## TRUMP from page 2

history.” Katrina Pierson, a senior adviser to the Trump campaign, said that as the party of Lincoln, Republicans were proud of the history of Juneteenth.

The campaign was aware that the date for the president’s return to rallies was Juneteenth, according to two campaign officials, who were not authorized to speak publicly about internal discussions and spoke on condition of anonymity.

They said that when the date was discussed, it was noted that Biden had held a fundraiser a year ago on Juneteenth. Although choosing 19 June was not meant to be incendiary, some blowback was expected, the officials said. But the campaign was caught off guard by the intensity, particularly when some linked the selection to the 1921 massacre.

SEE FULL STORIES ONLINE @ BRWEEKLYPRESS.COM



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# OPINION

## The Weekly Press

A PEOPLE'S PUBLICATION

Dedicated to Informing, Educating and Empowering Our Communities and State

Ivory D. Payne, CEO / Publisher

Ivory J. Payne, Publisher Emeritus

## This is What We Need from Our Next City, State Leadership

The City of Baton Rouge is at a crossroads. The upcoming 2020 elections provide an excellent opportunity for Baton Rouge and surrounding Louisiana cities to turn the corner with bold and innovative leadership.

The Baton Rouge Weekly Press does not endorse or financially support candidates for public office.

However, strongly believe that there are certain qualities that the next leadership in our cities must possess to effectively lead our parish and state in the midst of these uncertain times and unprecedented challenges.

The next elected leaders must be:

- Strong, transformational leaders who exerts the consistent, steady direction needed to create a culture of competence, efficiency and transparency within city government.
- People of indisputable integrity with the resolve to hold all elected and appointed officials to the highest ethical standards.
- Collaborative leaders who forge strong working relationships with the City Council and other elected leaders at the local, state and national levels.
- True public servants who are committed to improving the quality of life of all city residents — regardless of race, neighborhoods or zip codes.
- Forward-thinking leaders who will advance an inclusive and diverse economic growth strategy to reverse the effects of racial inequity that has left



I. D. Payne

many residents and neighborhoods behind.

- Visionaries who can set clearly communicated goals for the city and implement the policies and programs necessary to achieve those goals.
- Customer service-minded leaders who appreciate the important roles that the private sector has on the city's economic growth and

prosperity and creates a culture within city government that is supportive of businesses' needs for a sense of urgency, transparency and integrity.

- Trusted communicators who will be fully transparent and will seek guidance from residents, communities, and businesses about their needs and priorities.

By electing a candidate with these characteristics, Baton Rouge, Baker, Central and Zachary will benefit from leadership that will not merely lead our cities, but drastically transform our state for the betterment of current residents and the generations that follow.

The Baton Rouge Weekly Press encourages all city residents and businesses to spend time getting to know the candidates and their platforms farther, to prioritize these essential leadership qualities while casting your vote on Election Day.

Ivory D. Payne  
CEO / Publisher  
The Baton Rouge Weekly Press  
225/775/2002

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## Please Don't Turn Our Community Into a Community Center

The Buffwood community donated property in our subdivision that included a pool and a clubhouse to the city of Baker during the Harold Rideau administration.

As one of the oldest subdivisions in the city and home to a sizable population of retired people and citizens who have for decades enjoyed the peace and solitude of our quiet subdivision, it is distressing to learn that Mayor Darnel Waites is planning to turn this property into a community center without considering how it will affect the people who live here and donated the property.

By using public money, the mayor is creating a location for anybody to use the property at any time and practice for any purpose. There are more than a few residents here who are concerned by the inevitable increase in traffic, loud noise, possible alcohol and drug use and other activities that are not in character with the lives of many of the elderly residents here. It is highly possible, if not probable, that this decision will expose us to unplanned dangers and compromise our personal safety.



Doris T. Alexander

I humbly submit that to subject our quiet neighborhood to such a radical change in atmosphere, purpose and character is not just a bad idea; it is foolish, disrespectful, and dangerous. Perhaps as an outsider who recently moved into the community, Mayor Waites does not understand how this is received in Buffwood. I would hope it is a lack of understanding and not simply a callous disregard for the community's feelings, wishes and safety.

To move ahead with these kinds of plans with absolutely no public comment or opportunity for the people who live in Buffwood and who made the donation to express themselves and their opposition, and fail to offer us, at minimum, the courtesy of having our voices heard demonstrates, in my opinion, an arrogant lack of respect by a public servant. Buffwood, and Baker, deserve more from those it elects to make decisions affecting our lives

Doris T. Alexander  
225 778-0141/225-326-9706  
Councilwoman District 4

### OTHER COMMENTARY ONLINE

- 8 Minutes 46 Seconds — By Mydra L. Kelly
- THE CHURCH LADY: We gotta have Love...
- The Stuff of Dreams — MLK Goes Right on Marching By Ray Curry, Secretary-Treasurer, UAW
- SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING: Wear Your Armor — By James Washington Jr.



## When the Protesting Ends — Do You Just Go Home?

By ROGER CALDWELL,  
NNPA Newswire Contributor

There is a ground swell in America, and for 13 days there has been multiracial protests and demonstrations based on the killing of George Floyd by four Minnesota police. There have been many different videos of the killing, with Mr. Floyd handcuffed and policeman Derek Chauvin holding his knee on his neck until he died. It lasted for 8 minutes and 46 seconds while the crowd and Mr. Floyd begged for his life.

It is obvious that the police operated and acted with impunity, and somewhere they forget their job was to protect and serve. Not only did they not remember the oath they took, but they thought they were above the law. Instead of being driven by law and justice, they disrespected their shield and the job.

Two of the policemen had only been on the job for 4 days, and the head trainer was teaching everything that is wrong with the system, and the image of policing as compliant with violence. The root problem of policing is brutality, force, and violence, and when a Black man is killed with 20 to 40 rounds of bullets, the person is not considered human.

For the last 400 years in America, Black people have been considered second-class citizens because of the color of our skin. Many White Americans will forget about slavery, lynching, Jim Crow laws, Civil Rights, KKK, Massacring Black Towns, and separate but unequal. Too many White Americans think racism does not exist. They are tired of Black

people using the race card, and why can't we just get along?

A physical, spiritual and metaphysical transformation took place on May 25, 2020, in the murder of George Floyd, which changed America and the world forever. This murder illuminated and crystallized a need for action based on brutality and violence of the military/police state. The power of White privilege, and White Superiority was exposed, and enough is enough.

Over the most recent 35 years, more than 300,000 Black men and women have been assaulted, brutalized, and violently killed by the police. There has been a lot of talking, but have the fundamentals really changed?

Many believe that something is different this time, with the backdrop of COVID-19, and Black Lives Matter. Millions of people from around the world are protesting and demonstrating for human rights for Black people. The tragedy of George Floyd's death is changing America — and the world.

For the last 400 years, White privilege and White Superiority have looted, assaulted, brutalized, and committed genocide against the Black community. It is now time to talk about our human and constitutional rights as Americans, and why the contract we made with the country came back with insufficient funds. Because of the color of our skin, and the mistreatment of the Black community, it is time for "Reparations" to Black people in America.

BET founder Bob Johnson has unveiled a \$14.7 trillion reparations payment

plan, which he calls an investment for 200 plus years of slavery, segregation, Jim Crowism, and denial of opportunity rights. "The leaders and taxpayers should pay for two reasons: one as an atonement for America's sins, and two the payment would bring African Americans equal to White Americans in terms of opportunity, wealth, and income. Instead of looking at it as a payment, look at it as an investment in 40 million African Americans who deserve equal treatment and equal opportunity," says Billionaire Bob Johnson.

The protest can no longer just be a demonstration, but it must be a movement that demands fundamental change on every level in the society starting with justice, education, housing, economics, and healthcare. Dismantling a racist and corrupt law enforcement system across the nation will be difficult, but it must take place from the top to the bottom.

The day of reckoning is upon America, and justice is calling out its name in all races, ages, genders, color of one's skin, and all human beings. The police must be able to right the wrongs and build trust in all communities. America will continue to be two separate and unequal societies without reparations, equal protection, and opportunity under the law.

It is time to reform America from the top to the bottom and build trauma and peace circles to facilitate sustainable change. The work is just beginning, when the protest ends.

## Old, Sick and Incarcerated

By JULIANNE MALVEAUX,  
NNPA Newswire Contributor

There were 4623 incarcerated people over 65 in federal prisons during the first week of May. Until May 12, Paul Manafort, Mr. Trump's one-time campaign manager, was one of them. The 71-year-old petitioned the court for release to home confinement because of his age, heart condition, and "fear of coronavirus." Yet the federal correctional institution that housed Manafort had no coronavirus cases, and Manafort had served fewer than two years of his more than seven-year sentence. Recently developed federal guidelines suggest at-home confinement for those at risk who have served more than half of their sentence or have less than eighteen months of jail time left to serve. Manafort meets none of these criteria, but he apparently had enough high-priced lawyers to push his case aggressively.

I'm not as outraged at Manafort's early release as I am disturbed about the other 4622 elderly inmates, most who lack the resources and access that Manafort had. Nearly forty percent of those incarcerated in federal prisons are African American, many serving very long sentences for drug-related crimes. Many have some of the same underlying medical conditions



Julianne Malveaux

and "fear of coronavirus" that Manafort had. How many of them will get an early release and the relative luxury of home confinement? The treatment of a wealthy, older white man and a poor, older Black man is vastly different.

Prisons are a breeding ground for the coronavirus. Prisons are overcrowded with social distancing an impossibility since an average cell, about five feet by five, does not allow six feet of distancing. Recent studies show that the COVID-19 germs from a loud conversation or a cough linger for minutes, sufficient time to infect another person. The notorious Riker's Island prison has eight times the COVID-19 infection rate of the New York City rate. Infection is not a possibility, but a near-certainty. Prison infections are so widespread that some activists describe them as "death camps."

Older people don't commit violent crimes (although they commit financial crimes and perjury). Releasing those over 65 who were convicted of drug crimes and other nonviolent crimes saves money and has little social cost. But incarceration is an economic driver for some communities. Federal prisons employ tens of thousands of people. In some isolated communities, these prisons are a significant source of employment. Releasing prisoners early may cause layoffs. Is this why we insist on keeping so many people locked up for such long periods?

Parole was eliminated in federal prison in the mid-1980s, allowing "good behavior" only after 85 percent of a sentence has been served. But Manafort, citing "fear of coronavirus," ended up serving less than a

quarter of his sentence. Can an old Black man get the Manafort treatment and serve the rest of his sentence in a cushy condo in Northern Virginia? Manafort had a lot less to fear, at his minimum-security prison, than a Black inmate might.

Other countries have reacted to coronavirus crowding by releasing inmates in the tens of thousands. According to David Anderson of the International Legal Foundation, Iran released more than half of its prisoners — 100,000 of 189,000. Palestine is holding emergency court sessions to allow inmates to petition for release. Other countries seem to understand that COVID-19 and crowding don't work and are releasing prisoners.


Meanwhile, our country, in Anderson's words, is "addicted to punishment." In keeping nonviolent inmates incarcerated, we are "prioritizing punishment over public health." The inmates aren't the only ones at risk. Correctional officers, lawyers, and visiting family members are also vulnerable. We are so committed to getting a "pound of flesh" from those incarcerated that we refuse to consider the high costs of incarceration.

Consider the case of former Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick. Convicted of perjury, obstruction of justice, and other crimes, Kilpatrick was sentenced to 28 years for his crimes. He is not scheduled to be released until 2037! While Kilpatrick certainly deserved to be convicted, a 28-year sentence is excessive. Recently an inmate at his Oakdale, Louisiana prison died from the coronavirus.

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# BUSINESS

## Baton Rouge General Reopens Mid-City Emergency Room

BATON ROUGE, La. - Residents in Mid City, downtown and Baton Rouge North will have an emergency room once again, officials announced Thursday.

Baton Rouge General (BRG) will re-open its Mid City Emergency Room starting Monday, June 15. This is largely due to the hospital restaffing and equipping the facility for treating COVID-19 patients.

"While the last few months have been challenging for everyone, they have brought us an opportunity to help our community heal and recover," said Edgardo Tenreiro, BRG's President and CEO. "We will continue to offer acute care and keep the ER open as long as we have the support of the State."

Although the surge of COVID-19 patients dropping, the need for an emergency room in the area has not decreased.

"Currently, patients at BRG Mid City are admitted to the hospital only by being transferred from other facilities -- for example, a skilled nursing inpatient may have been transferred from a nursing home, or a behavioral health inpatient from a local ER. The ER will allow patients to get care at Mid City without going through another facility first," states a press release.

The emergency room closed five years ago. Since then, the hos-



Baton Rouge General: We have some exciting news to share today – the Baton Rouge General Mid City Emergency Room will re-open its doors on June 15! Visit <http://brgeneral.org/MidCityER> to learn more. #BRGProud (Twitter Photo)

pital transformed into a hub for post-acute services. The facility employed more than 900 people working in cancer care, rehabilitation, behavioral health, outpatient surgery, family medicine and more.

"We worked hard to keep

healthcare services in Mid City, exploring many different partnerships, tenants and models of care," said Tenreiro. "But emergency care is part of our mission and is a service we are happy to be able to offer again."

Baton Rouge General offers emergency care at its Bluebonnet campus and will be opening another emergency room at its Ascension Neighborhood Hospital this fall.

For more information, visit [brgeneral.org/midcityer](http://brgeneral.org/midcityer).



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STOP from page 1

while pinned under the knee of a white police officer for nearly nine minutes, gasping that he could not breathe. The elder Mr. Floyd was arrested over a complaint that he had bought cigarettes with a counterfeit \$20 bill.

"I am asking you, is that what a black man's life is worth? Twenty dollars?" Mr. Floyd asked. "This is 2020. Enough is enough. The people marching in the streets are telling you enough is enough."

Mr. Floyd was the first witness and marquee voice among more than a half-dozen civil rights experts and activists at a hearing called to consider the most expansive federal intervention into law enforcement that lawmakers have proposed in recent memory, which was put forth by Democrats this week. His remarks came a day after his brother was laid to rest in Houston, amid a groundswell of public support for the Black Lives Matter movement, widespread protests that have convulsed big cities and small towns alike, and a rapidly unfolding national conversation on race in the United States.

"Sitting here, coming to try to tell you all about how I want justice for my brother, I just think about that video over and over again," Mr. Floyd said in tears.

What happened to his brother, he said, was "a modern-day lynching in broad daylight."

His testimony added to the mounting sense of urgency on Capitol Hill to overhaul law enforcement practices and address systemic racism in policing. House Democrats have indicated that they intend to act quickly, with a vote on their legislation planned by the end of the month. Congressional Republicans, faced with a rapid shift in public opinion, are scrambling to coalesce around a legislative response.



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The Capital Area Transit System (CATS), a political subdivision of the State of Louisiana, operating the public transit system in EBR Parish is accepting Offers for **Microtransit**. Sealed offers are due to CATS Procurement Department by **March 11, 2020 at 10:00 AM (local time)** at 350 N. Donmor, Baton Rouge, LA 70806. A copy of this RFP can be found on CATS website at: <https://www.brcats.com/page/procurement>. Written questions will be accepted through February 19, 2020 via email at: [catsprocurement@brcats.com](mailto:catsprocurement@brcats.com). Offerors are reminded to check CATS website often for addenda and other important dates in reference to this RFP. CATS is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

# RELIGION

## THE CHURCH LADY: We Gotta Have Love...

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For a moment there, I thought that Miss Rona had got me. My head was hurting, and my back was hurting and I couldn't breathe. Then I realized that most of that was just old age and arthritis, hee hee, and the other was CNN syndrome from watching the murder of George Floyd over and over again. Why babies it's just enough to take an ole soul out. It's too much I tell you, too much! Shucks, I can't breathe. All this doggone hatred and violence in the world. Help us, Jesus. This is not the way! Why doesn't Cocacola start a new campaign and give everybody in the world a coke again, and let's all learn how to love each other. It's love that is gonna conquer all this hate people. Nothing but love, and not your little bit of love or mine, but only the love of Jesus! I'm telling y'all we've gotta stop this. We can take no more.

The babies out in there in the street protesting smack dab in the middle of the pandemic, and where are you grown folks at? Where the preachers at? All



THE CHURCH LADY

you people who are supposed to be important and got so much power. Get yo tired selves up and do something! Somebody better call Diana Ross and tell her to fix her wig because America needs her. What the world needs now is love sweet love. It's the only thing that there's just too little of. We got to love each other's babies. Red, yellow, black white; everybody. Then pray, pray, pray, and pray some more. Ask the Lord to heal our land. Please y'all. We can do this, but we got to do it together. Listen to me now babies. I love ya, and y'all pray for me too cause my heart hurts. I love y'all, keep praying and I'll talk to you soon.

## Spiritually Speaking: Wear Your Armor

By JAMES WASHINGTON JR.,  
Co-Publisher,  
Dallas Weekly News

With everything going on in our world today, my question to you is how does one put on the full armor of God in the midst of pandemic, the continuation of overt racism, state sanctioned discrimination and even murder? The bible says, "Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes." Ephesians 6:11. This passage may not tell you how to put on the armor, but it certainly lets you know why you need it. That's kind of why I pose the question.

I wish I could say most of this is original but it's not. I'm paraphrasing most of it, but I think it's important to understand when people talk about warfare, Satan's power in the physical world or, just plain battling against sin, this is what they're talking about.

Spiritual warfare, as my bible says (for believers), is fought in the mind, in the emotions and in the will.

It is in these areas that we do battle and most times we think we're struggling with ourselves, our own weaknesses of flesh and blood, and discipline and integrity, pride and envy. When in actuality, we're really struggling against "the devil's schemes." Let's not overlook or be complacent about where a lot of this is coming from.

At these rather intense times, we sometimes lose sight of the



fact that Satan and his forces have already been defeated and to a large extent disarmed. We give him power when we forget this simple little fact. Our emotions take over and, in a state of complete exasperation, judgement gets clouded and actions happen in the spur of a moment.

I've said on many occasions that the fight is fixed in our favor but we do have to go through the mental reality of this in order maintain control and think ourselves into the solutions we so desperately need to navigate what some believers term a temporary existence called 'life.'

Here is something that sums it up pretty well straight out of my bible: How do we put on spiritual armor?

We do so by daily absorbing scripture as truth, living in obedience to God, sharing the gospel and trusting Christ. That's how to put armor on, study the Word, live according to biblical principles and believe that we live in a place infused with Jesus' protection. That knowledge will protect us as we come under spiritual attack. But it does it makes us less

See ARMOR, on page 7

## Streaming LIVE Churches



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■ **Living Faith Christian Ctr.**  
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## Mayor-President Broome Signs Executive Order to Establish Mayor's Commission on Racial Equity, Inclusion

BATON ROUGE, La. – Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome signed an Executive Order Friday to establish the Mayor's Commission on Racial Equity and Inclusion (COREI). The commission will work to instill the practice of racial equity and inclusion throughout the city-parish government and Baton Rouge community.



Mayor Sharon Weston Broome

"The only way for us to move forward as a community of peace, prosperity, and progress is to ground ourselves in racial equity, social justice, and social cohesion within the infrastructure of our government systems and our society," said Mayor Broome.

The COREI agenda serves as a roadmap for the private and public sectors to create opportunities for increased community engagement, apply training, framing, and other tools to continually improve outcomes related to race. The four major focus areas include:

- Community and Economic Development
- Education, Health and Human Services
- Arts, Culture & Community Based Nonprofits
- Government Entities

The Executive Order will be effective on June 12, 2020, and will be in effect for 1 year. The commission will meet within 14 days of the issuance of the order and will meet bi-monthly. The commission will provide a report to the Mayor-President's Office and Metropolitan Council within 90 days after its first meeting.

Residents interested in participating in the Mayor's Commission on Racial Equity and Inclusion should apply at [brla.gov/equitycommission](http://brla.gov/equitycommission)

## HUD from page 3

"We're anticipating a big surge is coming in August, September, October, November, and December," he said. "That is when the surge is going to hit."

While the money will help, Acaldo says the budget will only get tighter, especially if homelessness spikes in Baton Rouge. He says his shelter will still need to rely on donations from the public.

Visit <https://svdpbr.org/donate> to donate.

## ARMOR from page 6

vulnerable, less susceptible to the 'devil's schemes' i.e. better able to handle what comes at us.

You see, in this world Satan is free to tempt, deceive and entice, but he has no authority over you. My bible says when we overcome temptation in the spiritual sense; we play out the victory in the physical world.

We win emotionally. We win physically. Pure and simple we win. The point here is you've got to recognize that a lot of what you're going through is the direct result of coming under attack and not because of some great flaw within you. Success or better yet victory, necessitates controlling the mind game.

When you put on the armor of which I speak you know this. It's like knowing that it's going to rain and taking an umbrella. But you have to pay attention to the signs of bad weather in order to be prepared. You can't be prepared for the devil properly unless you know Jesus Christ personally. He is your and my umbrella so to speak. And please don't take my word for it. Just read the bible. The streets are dangerous. Please be safe and aware of who you are and who's coming at you. Protect yourself.

May God bless and keep you always.

## Grammy Award-Winning Artist T-Pain Releases New Song "Get Up" in Support of Movement for Justice

Grammy Award-winning artist T-Pain released a new song and video on Friday aimed at inspiring his worldwide fanbase to take a stand and make a difference. Titled "Get Up," proceeds from the song's revenue will be donated to Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice, the 42,000-member national network of crime survivors that advocates for real public safety reforms and deeper investment in treatment and rehabilitation.

"This song was actually meant to come out at the end of March, but I decided to switch it out last minute," said T-Pain. "We had all of the artwork and marketing assets created months ago. It's very ironic because it all has so much more meaning to it now with everything going on in the world. I thought it was silly to hold this song. I want people to be motivated, inspired, and to continue to Get Up and push forward."

The new song also inspired T-Pain to create merchandise to coincide with the music's message and become another avenue of support in the fight for equality – he will donate proceeds of the merchandise to Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice as well.

"T-Pain has shown up time and again for crime survivors, and we are so grateful for the additional support he is providing through this inspiring new song, video and merchandise," said Robert Rooks, Co-Founder of Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice and CEO of Alliance for Safety and Justice. "Elevating the voices of crime survivors from communities most harmed – disproportionately Black communities and others who have been marginalized – is key to advancing the change and justice so desperately needed. Survivors know best that we can achieve shared safety by ending the wasteful spending on

the criminal justice system that fails us all, and instead investing in what communities need. On behalf of our 42,000 Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice, we thank T-Pain for being part of and supporting our family of survivors."

T-Pain first joined Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice months ago at their #Survivors-Speak Florida advocacy event at the state capitol in his hometown of Tallahassee. He gave an address of encouragement to a group of over 400 survivors from across the state ahead of their visit to advocate for new safety policies at the capitol. He also met privately with some Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice members, listened to their stories, and shared his own. T-Pain's has a personal connection to the organization because of his own experience as a survivor, including his niece being killed in Tallahassee a few years ago.

## FINALISTS from page 3

uncertainty, choosing a bold and capable leader is absolutely paramount. The school board and this community should take pride in the remarkable talent that has been attracted to the Superintendent's position.

The two finalists are impressive women, and we look forward to learning more details about their COVID response and education transformation plans in the coming weeks."

Candidates were required

to receive five votes from school board members to move on to the final round.

Each board member could submit a vote for up to three candidates.

The semi-finalists included Leslie Brown, Adam Smith, Quentina Timoll, Nakia Towns, and Marshall Tuck.

## REFORM from page 1

office in 2017.

BRPD officials say citizens can now file complaints online by clicking here and they have changed their internal affairs division to be more proactive instead of reactive.

The internal affairs division now starts to investigate the questionable conduct of officers before a formal complaint is filed, officials say.

Investigators with the internal affairs division also review six months of past body cam footage when they launch an investigation into a complaint against an officer.

BRPD implemented the following changes in use of force policies in February of 2017:

- Officers are required to give a verbal warning, before using deadly force, except where there are exigent circumstances
- Officers are required to de-escalate situations, when possible, before using force. Deescalation strategies include disengagement, area containment, waiting out a

subject, summoning reinforcements, calling in specialized units or employing other strategies.

- Officers will not employ choke holds or strangleholds, except in emergency circumstances where it is immediately necessary to use deadly force and the authorized weapons are inoperable, inaccessible, or otherwise not available

- Officers are prohibited from discharging a firearm at a moving vehicle unless the vehicle or the persons within the vehicle pose an immediate deadly threat to others

- Officers will be required to intervene to prevent another officer from using excessive force and to immediately report when they observe the use of excessive force by another officer

Two other law enforcement agencies, the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office and Louisiana State Police, also issued statements about their policing policies Tuesday, June 9.



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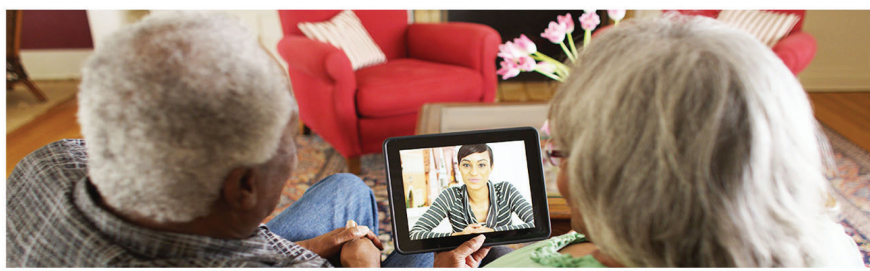


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**THE STATE IS OPENING BACK UP,  
BUT DON'T YOU FORGET COVID-19 IS STILL HERE.**



**PROTECT AND DEFEND YOUR  
FAMILY, ESPECIALLY THE  
ELDERLY MEMBERS.**

**CONTINUE TO WEAR YOUR MASK  
IN PUBLIC. THEY PROTECT YOU AND  
THEY PROTECT OTHERS.**



**CONTINUE TO PRACTICE SOCIAL  
DISTANCING IN GROCERY STORES,  
IN RESTAURANTS, AND AT CHURCH.**

**LET'S CONTINUE TO USE OUR HEADS TO HELP STOP THE SPREAD.**

**TEXT "LACOVID" TO 27683 FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION  
VISIT CORONAVIRUS.LA.GOV ALSO FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**Get Serious**  
**LOUISIANA**  
USE YOUR HEAD... STOP THE SPREAD!  
**STOP COVID-19**