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New Orleans

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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

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Black and Gold...

The Soul of the City



Cam Jordan (94) is leading the Saints defense in shutting down opponents in 2020.



Future Hall of Fame Quarterback Drew Brees (L) is leading the team in what may be his final season. This year because of an injury back-up QB and Swiss Army Knife Taysom Hill(R) got the job done leading the Saints until Brees returned.

Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief

New Orleans A City of Traditions

New Orleans is a City that is filled with rituals, some taking on a sacred quality. Like red beans

and rice on Mon. Super Sunday, where the colorful plumes of the Mardi Gras Indians are on full display, the Brass Band Tradition where the marriage of horns and percussions marry is the heartbeat of our walk through life in the most international and mystical City in the United States

It is this gumbo of life that is the flavor of how life

is lived in New Orleans. This spirit is not lost when one thinks of the City's football franchise the New Orleans Saints. In its over 50 years of existence; this year for the Black and Gold and the Who Dat Nation it's been one that's been affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic. And while the stands are not filled with fans, the spirit of the Black and Gold and life in New

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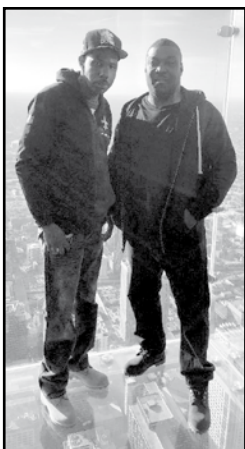
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Craig Jones is a New Orleans native and diehard Saints fan who owns Mardi Gras Tyme, a catering and spice company, based in the Washington D.C. area.



For Charlie Tenner Jr. (far right) the Saints games are more than just about football, but a family affair where he and loved ones gather spending time together to cheer on the Black and Gold.



This season is one that have many fans not being able to connect. Fans like Timothy Ambrose, have found ways to stay connect to others in "The Who Dat Nation" using social media.



Saints running back Alvin Kamara is having an incredible year. In a division clinching game against the Minnesota Vikings, he tied a league record by scoring six rushing touchdowns.

Orleans continues to live on.

This season the Superdome is not filled to capacity with fans, or the smell of food grilling along Poydras Avenue during tailgating events and the camaraderie of the fans supporting the Saints. But this hasn't stopped them from supporting the Black and Gold in their journey hopefully towards Tampa for this year's Superbowl.

Forever Fleur De Lis

This year the Saints are having a great season and on the way to another playoff berth.

"I am satisfied because our program is as solid as Ms. Benson continues the Legacy of Tom Benson and that's what it is all about. Taking what you have and grow upon it. We have Drew Brees as our anchor and we have Alvin Kamara and most importantly our defense have showed up and showed out every game for the most part this season," says Craig Jones, a New Orleans native and diehard Saints fan who owns Mardi Gras Tyme, a catering and spice company, based in the Washington D.C. area.

In 2020 the season there have not been fans in the stands, but this did not stop the Saints faithful from supporting the Black and Gold.

"On Poydras around the Superdome you cannot smell the cooking on the grill or the sounds of people celebrating and supporting the Saints in unusually eerie, but after the Saints win you get the same feel whether it is 3000 people or 50,000 people you get that same feel if they win it is a win for everybody," says Charlie Tenner Jr. who works in law enforcement and is a culture bearer who is a Mardi Gras Indian.

With him this is a family affair as

they have traveled as far as London to support the Saints, this year was no different as they went to Chicago for a game.

"We traveled to Chicago in October to the game and it was totally different, we didn't realize that the city was shutting down due to the Pandemic. It was not too much we could do in the city, but we were there to support the Saints. We couldn't get in the game, so we found a nice sports bar and made the best of it."

Staying Connected in Black and Gold

Many are finding new ways and innovative ways to stay connected as Saints fans explains Timothy Ambrose, a graduate of Xavier University and presently is a Fellowship recipient at Loyola University Institute of Politics. In addition to working in the area of Juvenile Justice. He's been compared to a Barack Obama as a leader among his generation.

"We as young fans are using other means to stay connected as Saints fans. There are just so many ways from social media to conventional media to keep up with the Saints. I can say it is a bit disappointing not being able to attend games, but many of us who are fans of the Saints that I know we all stay connected using social media to show our support for the Saints and more broadly our connection as people who love the City of New Orleans."

The Fleur De Lis is Not Only Symbolizes A Football Team but A Way of Life

The Saints are more than a football team but have come to become part and parcel of a way of

life in the Crescent City.

"On a scale of 1-10 it is an 11, the Saints are important to New Orleans and to Louisiana. The Saints have been a pillar of who we are that's akin to going to church, to Super Sunday, or any of our other traditions and things that define us. Watching the Saints, it is a very ritualistic day for us in New Orleans on Sunday. You think about Sunday going to church and coming home and watching the New Orleans Saints game that's our Sunday in New Orleans," says Craig Jones.

While the Who Dat Nation is always rooting for the Saints, the games serve a dual purpose even during the Pandemic according to Charlie Tenner, Jr., "We use watch-

ing the game as family time. We might boil crawfish, pull the grill out we still celebrate and watch the game like we are in the dome it is family time for us."

The Saints have a way of bringing people together in a way spanning the spectrum of race, class, and zip code in the City. Where the everyday divide that exist somehow disappear in matters of the Black and Gold and the Fleur De Lis symbolizes more than a football team, but a local identity.

"The Saints are like the Soul of the City. It gave people from all over something to believe in. After the Super Bowl whether you were from West End, Kenner, Downtown in Tremé or from the Magnolia in Uptown we were all one as Who Dats. It's like we are all on the same team. In New Orleans we have been a

gumbo pot, and this is an extension of that as it relates to our identity," says Timothy Ambrose.

Those thoughts are also echoed by Tenner, "When the Saints play it is everybody from different backgrounds coming together as one, that is what I like about the football season here in New Orleans. You don't get the negativity."

In 2021, it will be challenging times for our City, nation, and world.

For New Orleans, the Saints are a symbol of more than just what goes on the field. The Fleur De Lis has come to symbolize unity, hope and faith for a better future for those who identify and call New Orleans home whether they are here in the physical form or in spirit. Cheering on the City and its rich traditions and way of life.

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Celebrating the Life and Legacy of Wilbert “Mr. Chill” Wilson

Continuing the Spirit of Giving and Serving Others

Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief

It has been one year since the untimely death of a beloved member of the community, Wilbert “Mr. Chill” Wilson, who died in 2019 after battling Pancreatic Cancer.

Wilson was best known in the City as an entrepreneur and was celebrated following Hurricane Katrina for cutting the hair of National Guardsmen at the corner of Claiborne and Napoleon Avenues after his shop was destroyed in the storm. In addition he became a champion of many causes especially those involving young people and those in need.

Family, friends and supporters gathered and released balloons in his honor and spoke of how they are dedicated to continuing his legacy.

In the spirit of his life, one that was dedicated to giving back the group is raising funds in honor of Wilbert’s life to benefit local children who are in desperate need of financial assistance.

“Wilbert showed us all that anyone can serve to help others and that is what his life symbolized,” says his widow, Joyce Wilson.

For those interested in helping this worthy cause contact: Craig Stewart at 504-650-6832

Photos by Dwight Bell, Jr.



Joyce Wilson, the widow of Wilbert “Mr. Chill” Wilson is continuing the legacy of giving back and serving the community.



Family, friends and supporters came out to observe and celebrate the life of entrepreneur, philanthropist and humanitarian Wilbert “Mr. Chill” Wilson.



Toast The New Year in Style

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Tracee Dundas
Fashion Stylist

Like most things in 2020, New Year's Eve is looking a little different this year due to COVID-19.

Perhaps you won't be ringing in 2021 with 500 of your closest friends, but that doesn't mean you can't still dress for the occasion to see the New Year in with style and pizzazz!

Regardless if your New Year's Eve plans are to host a virtual soiree on zoom or facebook portal, serve a candlelight dinner for you and your significant other, attend an intimate "social-distant" gathering with your safe circle of friends, or curling up on the couch to watch the ball drop in your PJ's; that doesn't mean what you wear should be boring! You know what they say: "When you look your best, you feel your best." Throw on your glitzy outfit, get your hair and nails done and toast in the new year with the traditional glitz, glamour and style without missing a beat!

However you want to celebrate the start of 2021 there's a New Year's outfit for you.

Here are stylish options pulled from Pinterest ranging from sequins loungewear to sexy cocktail dresses to inspire your festive style and that help channel positive vibes going into 2021.

Fashion Stylist: Tracee Dundas
@fashionablyyoursnola

Photos Courtesy of Pinterest



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New Orleans' Big Freedia and PJ Morton Highlight Performances at 'Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve with Ryan Seacrest 2021'



Big Freedia



PJ Morton

Data News Staff Edited Report

NEW ORLEANS — “Queen of Bounce” Big Freedia and Grammy-Winning Artist PJ Morton will appear at the 5th Annual Central Time Zone Celebration from New Orleans on “Dick Clark’s New Year’s Rockin’ Eve with Ryan Seacrest 2021,” Dick Clark Productions and ABC announced today. Big Freedia will serve as the host of the New Orleans show while Morton will perform the classic “Auld Lang

Syne” as part of the lead-up to the countdown to the Fleur-De-Lis drop at midnight.

The most-watched New Year’s Eve Celebration nationwide, which features iconic performances of the year’s biggest songs, airs live on Thursday, Dec. 31, at 7 p.m. (CST).

Note: This is a broadcast event, closed to the public.

“We are beyond excited that Big Freedia and PJ Morton, two of New Orleans’ brightest musical lights, will be shining for our city and before the entire world as we ring

in the New Year. Even though we won’t be watching this performance in person, we will be watching from the safety of our homes as ‘Dick Clark’s New Year’s Rockin’ Eve with Ryan Seacrest 2021’ rings in the New Year with that special New Orleans flavor. We’re also excited that this event will employ nearly 70 local crew members, many of whom have been shut out of production jobs due to the Pandemic, and that the world will remember that New Orleans will be the safest place to visit and enjoy our music

and culture in 2021,” said Mayor LaToya Cantrell.

Big Freedia has spent much of her career as a respected artist in and advocate for New Orleans’ vibrant hip-hop scene while serving as an inspiration to others in the community. The rapper and cultural icon expanded her audience with her own reality show, “Big Freedia: Queen of Bounce”; her autobiography, “God Save the Queen Diva!”; several albums, most recently “Big Freedia’s Smokin’ Santa Christmas”; and notable collaborations

with Kesha, Lizzo, Beyonce, and Icona Pop, to name a few. More recently she has collaborated with the City on public service announcements to promote safe and healthy practices in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, appearing with Mayor Cantrell in one and with fellow New Orleans entertainers such as Kermit Ruffins and Bryan Batt in another.

Fellow New Orleans native PJ Morton is a Grammy Award-winning artist, songwriter, producer, and keyboardist as well as the Founder and CEO of Morton Records. He is the son of Bishop Paul S. Morton, Senior Pastor of Changing a Generation Full Gospel Baptist Church in Atlanta, and of Dr. Debra Brown Morton, Pastor of Greater St. Stephen Full Gospel Baptist Church in New Orleans. In December 2018, PJ Morton released a holiday album, “Christmas With PJ Morton,” and performed in Mayor Cantrell’s Cultural Concert Series through the Office of Cultural Economy.

This year marks the 49th Annual “Dick Clark’s New Year’s Rockin’ Eve,” America’s go-to New Year’s tradition which celebrates the year’s very best in music.

State & Local News

Ashe’ Cultural Arts Center *Pop Up For The Culture*

Elise Schenck Data News Weekly Contributor

During these uncertain times; the COVID-19 Pandemic continues to impact so many people in the City of New Orleans. This is affecting residents lives and livelihoods; most notably, for the culture bearers of the City these are tough times.

Ashe’ Cultural Arts Center recently produced “Pop Up For The Culture” to support local creatives. During these events, people came out in a socially distanced outdoor pop up market to support some of the City’s finest visual artists, jewelers, fashion designers, culinary artists and craft vendors.



Vendors sold their works during this incredible event to promote local creatives.



Frederick “Wood” Delahoussaye, Operations Manager/Youth Program Director at Ashe’ Cultural Arts Center.



UPTownArtwerx, owner and visual artist Charles “Charlie V” Vaughn and Southern Cypher poet/ writer alum G. Harden

Push is On to Increase African Americans' Confidence in COVID-19 Vaccine

Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

Former President Barack Obama has vowed to take the new COVID-19 vaccination on live television. Dr. Ebony Hilton, a physician in the Critical Care and Anesthesiology Department at the University of Virginia Health, is also publicly taking the vaccine and documenting how she's coping on YouTube.

On Day 1 of Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine, Queens, New York, critical care nurse Sandra Lindsay received the first dose of the two-shot vaccine at about 9:20 a.m. EST on Monday, December 14th.

What Obama, Dr. Hilton, and Lindsay all have in common is that they are African American.

Intentional or not, the rollout has featured prominent Black people.

The mistrust in medicine and science in the Black community remains palpable for lots of well-founded reasons.

"Truth and transparency are going to start with me," Dr. Hilton declared. "I want you to see me in real-time as I undergo this process, and as my body adapts as I have this medicine in my body."

Houston Astros Manager Dusty Baker, an African American, also urged Black people to get vaccinated.

Baker praised Meharry Medical College President Dr. James Hildreth, one of the world's lead-



African-Americans are less likely to take the COVID-19 vaccine according to some reports. Medical and political leaders are making efforts to promote the safety of vaccine to the African-American community.

ing immunologists and an African American who sat on the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's panel that approved the rollout of Pfizer's coronavirus vaccine.

"There was an African American doctor that was in charge of the vaccine," Baker said during a video call.

"I felt more comfortable that he and other African Americans were on the boards to come up with the vaccine. And he guaranteed that it wouldn't be another Tuskegee kind of experiment. And he urged Black Americans to use the vaccine."

Because of the Tuskegee experiment, the notorious 40-year study that began in 1932, where U.S. Public Health officials misled African Americans about their health

status.

The study's participants were infected with syphilis, and health officials withheld treatment like penicillin, leaving some to die.

"The Tuskegee Experiment ended ten years before I was born, and we still have heavy metal laced water in Flint, Michigan, we still have not fixed," Dr. Hilton offered.

However, she offered optimism about the new coronavirus vaccine.

"So, join me, and I'll be as open and honest as possible. We have one time to do this right, and I'm hoping it's this time."

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's foremost infectious disease physician, also championed the work of Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett, an African American scientist, whom Dr. Fauci

said was at the forefront of the development of the vaccine.

"So, the first thing you might want to say to my African American brothers and sisters is that the vaccine that you're going to be taking was developed by an African American woman. And that is just a fact," Dr. Fauci remarked.

More than 300,000 Americans have died, and nearly 17 million have contracted the coronavirus. Some reports indicate that as many as 25 percent of COVID-19 victims are African American.

However, that hasn't stopped the skepticism about the vaccine among many Black people.

"We saw early on that vaccine acceptance and willingness to enroll in vaccine clinical trials were going to be a major challenge," Dr. Reed Tuckson, a former public health commissioner in Washington, D.C., and the leader of the Black Coalition Against COVID-19, a D.C.-based effort to spread information about the virus and potential vaccines to Black Americans, told NBC News.

Over the past several months, the coalition has worked with several Washington community organizations, historically Black colleges and universities, and community leaders, to share information about Covid-19 prevention.

They also drafted a public "Love Letter to Black America" that calls for people to be open to vaccines when they are available.

"The African American community needs to understand that 2020 is not 1930 or 1940," Tuckson said. "There were no African American physicians or scientists or health policy leaders in the past. Today is a different situation."

Job Opportunity

Freelance Writers Wanted

Data News Weekly, "The People's Paper," is looking for freelance writers to join our team print and digital team. We want to hear from you if you are a working journalist, or an aspiring journalist who has 2 years or more of newspaper or PR writing experience. We need writers who can cover New Orleans news stories, ranging from local high school sports, community events, City Hall and entertainment. Experience in print is necessary, experience in digital and social media are encouraged.

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