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Big Chief Shaka Zulu Presents: Sew & Brew

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February 27 - March 5, 2021 55th Year Volume 44 www.ladatanews.com

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Re-Writing the History Part 4

Civil Rights Pioneer Leona Tate
Dedication to Education



Leona Tate, one of the New Orleans Three, desegregated the New Orleans Public schools in 1960. She is continuing her work fighting for racial equality through The Leona Tate Foundation.

Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief

The Great Divide: Education in New Orleans

Today education in New Orleans continues to be a topic that sparks controversy, as people are divided as to what is the solution to a system that seems to give a high-quality education to some; while others receive one that is sub-par by many measures.

As we look back as part of our series; “Re-Writing the History” we had the opportunity to speak with Leona Tate, who is one of the New Orleans 3. It was in 1960 that Tate along with Gail Etienne and Tessie Prevost integrated McDonogh 19 in the Lower 9th Ward of New Orleans.

They along with Ruby Bridges, who integrated William Frantz Elementary at the same time are etched in the History of a City that is still working towards educational equality for all its young people. It is a story that many are familiar with from photos, videos, and artwork, but the story of these courageous six-year-old girls helped change the racial landscape of the City.

A Group of Six-Year-Old Girls Making History

Recalling the first day of school and her time at McDonogh 19, Tate says, “I was never afraid. I remember trying to speak to a little White girl and she ignored me; by the end of the day, we were the only three students left in the building myself, Gail Etienne, and Tessie Prevost. All the Whites had pulled their children out and it was that way for a year and a half. All the teachers were there without students except for our teacher.”

During these times of White intolerance, Tate contin-

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DATA NEWS WEEKLY
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Dated material two weeks in advance. Not responsible for publishing or return of unsolicited manuscripts or photos.

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ues, speaking about what they endured as pioneers integrating the public schools in the City of New Orleans.

"Our second-grade year it started out the same way we couldn't eat from the school, we could not look out the windows because they were covered with paper and the water fountains were cut off. We never played in the yard. Our play area was under the stairwell outside our classroom, and I am sure that was for security reasons."

"Twenty-five students joined us, but only two of them were White, the NAACP wanted to keep us in a White school then they transferred us to T.J. Semmes. This time we did not have the U.S. Marshals like we did at McDonogh 19, where they would pick us up and drop us off. We did not have that protection at Semmes. We were afraid to go in the cafeteria because you wouldn't be able to eat your food because either someone would spit in it or would knock it out of your hand."

The Continued Battle Against Confederate Symbols and Segregation

Later Tate changed schools at the end of the year and joined fellow trailblazer Ruby Bridges at William Frantz Elementary, then attending Kohn Middle School, then she helped to integrate Francis T. Nicholls (Today it is called Frederick Douglass, that is part of the KIPP Charter Network).

It is interesting to note that today the nation is engulfed in conversations surrounding removing Confederate monuments and street names. During her time at Nicholls, this was an issue as she and other Blacks fought to change the school mascot.

"I went to F.T. Nicholls High School (A Confederate General and Governor of Louisiana) at the time the mascot was Rebels. In the 11th grade we asked for the mascot to be changed from Rebels and there were riots and fights, but eventually the mascot changed to Bobcats."

The times were changing, as schools became more integrated and the demands for equality from Blacks and their allies grew louder, White flight as the White population of the 9th Ward declined by 70 percent in the 1960's. As many the parents took their children out of integrated schools and sent them to schools in neighboring St. Bernard Parish, which was under the leadership of Democratic Party-Political Boss Leander Perez, who along with the White Citizens Council fought to preserve segregation.

This White flight caused a re-segregation of the schools in the City of New Orleans.



Gail Etienne, Tessie Prevost and Leona Tate, celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the desegregated the New Orleans Public Schools. Also in photo is A.P. Tureaud Jr., who is the son of famed Civil Rights attorney A.P. Tureaud. Tureaud Jr. (left) was the first Black undergraduate to attend LSU. Also in photo are the three federal marshals who accompanied the New Orleans Three to school during these times of social unrest.



Gail Etienne and granddaughter, Leona Tate, Tessie Prevost, Dorothy Prevost (Tessie's Mother), Tory Prevost (Tessie's Sister) on March 9, 2020 groundbreaking for the TEP Center (formerly McDonogh 19). Photo: Rhonda Joseph.

Today The Fight Is To Combat Re-Segregation And The Fight For A Quality Education For All

Since these times we have seen the re-segregation of the public schools in New Orleans; where there are few great schools, and even after Hurricane Katrina and the City's questionable decision to introduce charter schools, where the results have been mixed.

"In my view we have regressed a lot in respect to education in New Orleans, and that's what sparked me to do what I do today. I get invited to a lot of schools and it really is heart-breaking that kids in your town do not know about you, but out of town they do but that's because they are not being taught about Civil Rights in their curriculum."

Owning A Piece Of History And Telling The True Story Of A Movement

In the place where Tate, Prevost and Etienne made history as three little girls in 1960, is now being transformed to a place of hope as



In the place where Tate, Prevost and Etienne made history as three little girls in 1960, is now being transformed to a place of hope as Leona Tate, now owns the building that was McDonogh 19. She has plans to make it a place for racial reconciliation and understanding in New Orleans. To Volunteer or donate resources to this cause go to: Leonatatefoundation.org or tepcenter.org.

Leona Tate, now owns the building that was McDonogh 19. She has plans to make it a place for racial reconciliation and understanding in New Orleans.

It is called the (TEP) Tate-Etienne-Prevost Interpretive Center.

"I now own McDonogh 19 and I need to provide a space where

they can get that history. So, they need to see it and it was just sitting there and nothing was being done. It took us 10 years to get the building and we got the funding that we need not all of it but some of it. The bottom floor will be an exhibit space where we will show what happened during the Civil

Rights Movement in New Orleans and the top two floors will be affordable for the elderly 55 years or older."

Today Ms. Tate also heads a foundation called the Leona Tate Foundation. "The focus is about education, Civil Rights and human rights." Since launching her foundation they have held food pantry's, after school tutoring and undoing racism workshops. Their goal is to continue to raise money to move into the school to continue the great work her foundation is doing.

"The story telling our story inaccurately, we want it told the right way. Culture being lost came back to a culture shock, put it all in one place."

It Takes A Village

Since launching she is getting a lot of support in her effort to tell the "true" story of the Civil Rights Movement of New Orleans and to heal the divide that keeps the City of New Orleans from becoming a place where all can have a chance to prosper and thrive.

"The response is overwhelming, but I am surprised by people who don't know. But they can come in and take workshops because we are partnering with the People's Institute and they're going to be doing some of their undoing racism workshops."

"We have in some ways come a long way, but in many ways our community is broken, so we need to do something to fix it. We used to be a village and we need to begin to revisit this because too many of our children are falling through the cracks because they are not getting the proper education, nurturing and support to be successful."

TEP Center: A Place of Hope, Healing And Inspiration For The City of New Orleans

Today, many know the Lower 9th Ward as ground zero for Hurricane Katrina. But with the building of the TEP Center, it is now as it was in the 1960's a place of hope and can become an example of people coming together to rebuild and renew the spirit of the entire City of New Orleans.

"We have a lot of work to do especially in the Lower 9th Ward, but where we are, we have to work together. We have to be a community unified. There is a lot of stuff that is needed, and we can make it work and I hope this building can be an anchor for that and racial healing can be done to inspire this and future generations."

To Volunteer or donate resources to this cause go to: Leonatatefoundation.org or tepcenter.org

Big Chief Shaka Zulu Presents: Sew & Brew

None none

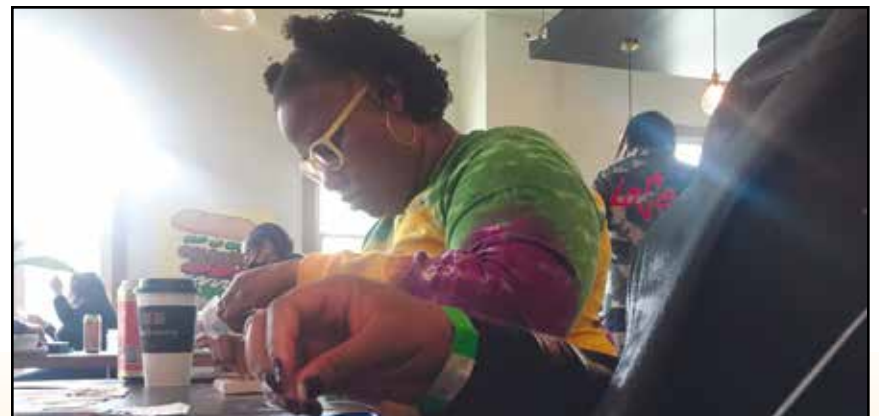
At Backatown A Coffee Parlour, a class full of people learned the basics of Mardi Gras beading by Big Chief Shaka Zulu. Recently, he held an event during Mardi Gras, showcasing this amazing aspect of the Black Masking Indian Tradition.



Big Chief Shaka Zulu held a class on Mardi Gras beading at Backatown A Coffee Parlour.



Teaching these classes and to watch people learn an important part of New Orleans brings me a lot of joy," says Big Chief Shaka Zulu.



It was a full class on this Mardi Gras Day event called Sew and Brew held by "culture keeper" Golden Feather Hunters Big Chief Shaka Zulu.

Visit www.ladatanews.com for more photos from these events

Women's History Month

Finding Your Special



Diva Dionne Character
Female Empowerment
Columnist

There is something special in all of us, more specifically in you!

As we celebrate Women's Month this March 2021 let us remember that we too are shin-

ing stars wearing beaded crowns traced in abundance and love from the universe that is willing to show us everything once we are clear minded enough to receive.

Let this month be a time of reflection as you tap into your inner boss realizing that you are capable of all things. You are powerful and you are amazing because God made you WOMAN!

Girl, it is time that you realize that you have the freedom and the empowerment to set your own intentions and goals.

You are a magnificent woman who can make anything happen with her beautiful mind. The moment you tap into your "special," things will begin to unfold.

It is time that you start manifesting and stop downplaying your skills as a woman who has been equipped for generations to win no matter how things may appear. You just need to believe!

"A real woman is not afraid of the dark. She always travels where the gravel has already eaten the back of her shoes." You just need to keep stepping aggressively because you are connected

to the beauty of the world.

Let's march together as strong Black women who can create as we evolve, realizing that we have the strength to move boulders with our creative minds. You are incredible! Take advantage of what God gave you and use it to win. There is no need to look elsewhere when you have all that you need within.

Realize that there is uniqueness in you. Find it and never let it go!

Dionne Character can be reached at characterinhollywood@gmail.com.

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COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Expanded in Louisiana, But Availability Remains Limited

Louisiana Department of Health

The Louisiana Department of Health is coordinating the COVID-19 Vaccine distribution effort in Louisiana. As more vaccines become available from the CDC, more individuals and groups will be offered a vaccination.

Limited amounts of COVID Vaccines are available at select locations only for:

- Persons 65 and older
- Dialysis providers and patients
- Ambulatory and outpatient providers and staff
- Behavioral health providers and staff
- Urgent care clinic providers and staff
- Community care providers and staff
- Dental providers and staff
- Non-emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) providers and staff
- Professional home care providers (including hospice workers) and home care recipients (including older and younger people with disabilities over the age of 16 who receive com-



munity or home-based care, as well as clients of home health agencies)

- American Sign Language (ASL) and Foreign Language Interpreters and Support Service Providers (SSPs) working in community and clinic-based settings, and clients who are both deaf and blind
- Health-related support personnel (lab staff, mortuary staff who have contact with corpses, pharmacy staff)

• Schools of allied health students, residents, and staff

- Law enforcement and other first responders
- Louisiana Unified Command Group
- State and local essential COVID emergency response personnel
- Some elections staff ahead of March and April elections
- Teachers and any other support staff working on site in K-12 or daycare
- All pregnant persons

• Individuals ages 55-64 with at least one of the conditions listed by the CDC as placing them at an "increased risk of severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19". Persons with the following qualifying underlying medical conditions are advised to complete the Louisiana COVID-19 Vaccine Attestation Form, before their appointment, to receive the vaccine:

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease

- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Down syndrome
- Heart conditions including but not limited to heart failure, coronary artery disease or cardiomyopathies
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
- Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30kg/m² or higher but less than 40kg/m²)
- Severe obesity (BMI greater than 40kg/m²)
- Sickle cell disease
- Smoking
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus

Patients must contact a participating location and make an appointment at the location. Do not arrive at a location without an appointment. LDH cannot make appointments for residents; only participating locations can. Appointments do not have to be made to receive the second dose of the vaccine. Second doses are given at the same location a person receives their first dose and the appointment for the second dose will be made during the appointment for the first dose.

State & Local News

Experts Encourage Better Health Options for Children During the Pandemic

Justice Page Data News Weekly Contributor

The COVID-19 Pandemic has affected overall health in many aspects. While the focus has been on adults, children are facing extreme physical challenges as well. Attending school virtually has limited social interaction and engagement, along with physical activity. Experts are concerned that less exercise and unhealthy food consumption is on the rise for children.

"At least 60-percent of youth and about 50-percent of adults consume one sugary beverage every day," said Dr. Jennifer Avegno, the Director of the New Orleans Health Department. Sugary beverages are one of the highest leading sources



From left to right, Dr. Tami Singleton, Stephenie Marshall, Dr. Alisha Reed and Dr. Vyoone Segue Lewis discuss steps to take to improve children's health during the pandemic on February 18th for the New Orleans Regional Black Chamber of Commerce Straight Talk Series. Photo: Justice Page

of added sugars into the nation's diet, Avegno explained. "That in some cases for kids, is 10-percent of

their caloric recommended intake," Avegno said.

Local physicians and health pro-

fessionals who spoke at the New Orleans Regional Black Chamber of Commerce (NORBCC) Straight Talk Series Webinar on Feb. 18th said the pandemic has worsened this impact on children's health.

"It is important for the future of our children to maintain a healthy lifestyle and that they start young" said LaVerne Toombs, the Executive Director of the Black Chamber.

American culture heavily markets unhealthy food choices to families. Individuals have developed chronic diseases, such as diabetes and obesity, which ultimately leads to early mortality. Children model the actions of the adults in their lives, said Dr. Tami Singleton, the Chief of Pediatric Hematology with LSU Health in New Orleans.

"We have an obesity crisis or epi-

demic in the United States," Singleton said. "We have a crisis in terms of our children having adult-like diseases, even when they are as young as 9 or 10 years old with diabetes."

For parents with young children, they may find it difficult changing their beverage preferences, said Dr. Alisha Reed, a Pharmacist, Wellness Advocate, and mother to a young son. Reed said it was also challenging at first providing drinks other than soda and juice to her son in order to get him out of the habit for solely asking for sugary drinks. She explained the importance of alternative options she provides for him.

"I purchase flavored waters. I give him a choice," Reed said. "He

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Continued on page 7.

Winter Storm Brings Statewide Blackout Across Texas

Madison Brydie
Data News Weekly
Contributor

Millions of residents across Texas lost power and water in a once in a generation winter storm that left at least 30 people dead. The state experienced record-breaking temperatures as low as 9 degrees Fahrenheit and with an average of 3 to 5 inches of snow.

For Alisa Levy, a 26-year-old student and a veteran, her power went out on Tuesday, Feb. 16, for 3 days while her water first went out on Monday, Feb. 15. By the weekend, her water supply had still not returned to full capacity. With the temperatures reducing, Levy shared that she used layers of covers for warmth and lit candles for light. As for clean water and plumbing, Levy had to get creative.

"I took some buckets and filled them up with water to flush the toilets," Levy shared in a text message. "One of the ground keepers also suggested to use the pool water to flush the toilets too," she added.

For some, the snow storm reminded them of seasonal hurricanes, except for the cold. Michael Ross, a 52-year-old Texas resident who resides in Dallas, compared the aftermath of this snowstorm to previous hurricanes.

"For me everything that is happening has happened after a hurricane, but the fact that you can compare the aftermath of a storm to a natural disaster is unbelievable," Ross shared in a phone call.

Many Texas residents said they were shocked at the system failures and the lack of efficient preparation. Unlike other states, Texas runs on its own separate grid that relies on the Electric Reliability Council



Dallas resident Michael Ross and his family said the Texas storms reminded them of the kind of disasters caused by seasonal hurricanes.

of Texas, or ERCOT, to operate its power grid. Most of Texas also cannot gain power from the Eastern or Western Interconnection power grids that serves the rest of the country and is subject to federal regulations.

"Republicans didn't trust a lot of government intervention, so they [left] all responsibility to one company," said Pamela Harris, 50, a Houston resident, whose daughter attends college in New Orleans at Xavier University. "If [we were] a part of the regular power grid, we would be able to borrow power from other states," she said.

Harris added that she was one of the lucky residents to regain power but wished there was more she could do to help others.

"The worst of it was having to see people in neighboring suburbs suffer and you are helpless because people can't get to you and you can't

get to them. You can't offer heat or any resources so people are just stuck," Harris said.

Although some families could contact their relatives for help, most could not seek refuge elsewhere. Christian Cain, a 19-year-old from Dallas, Texas, shared that he offered shelter to members of his own family.

"My aunty and granny who live down the street and the people above them, [their] pipes burst and flooded their apartment so they're over here now," Cain said. Many other households didn't have this luxury and sought out shelter in the few warm emergency shelters, he said.

The property damage, deaths, and desperation from this winter natural disaster prompted many Texans to begin to ask what must now be done to protect households from extreme weather events. The

state's governor Greg Abbott, who has been heavily criticized during the disaster, and other leaders, have begun investigations to start to reevaluate the state's preparation for future weather emergency events.

"It gets cold in many parts of this country, so the country is accustomed to that," said Angela Jackson, a 57-year-old former principal. "So we should have not had to lose lights, power like that, homes that are damaged, and ultimately people died. It shouldn't have happened," Jackson said.

Texans can receive direct help by donating to any of the following organizations:

- The Salvation Army provides shelter, food, and other essentials.
- The American Red Cross is supporting at least 35 warming centers with cots and blankets statewide.
- In Austin, the #LoveThyNeighborTX campaign, is helping to raise money for hotel rooms, food, water, and clothing.
- Mercy Chefs is providing hot meals, clean drinking water and USDA Farmers to Families grocery boxes in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.
- The Houston Food Bank is distributing food.
- The Other Ones Foundation is also providing resiliency kits for residents of the campsite and for those experiencing homelessness.
- Lucille's 1913 Community Kitchen is preparing and distributing meals in the Houston area.
- Austin Pets Alive! needs heating pads, Styrofoam coolers, dog beds, heat lamps and monetary donations.

State & Local, Continued from page 6.

chooses between two things that are good for him. You either choose the water or you choose the flavored water."

She also serves him infused waters. "Kids love to see the fruits in the water, it gives them that flavor and makes them think that they are drinking something else other than water," she said. Reed added that she has found that setting herself as a role model makes her son want to follow the actions, she is partaking in.

"If he sees me drinking water this will make him want to drink water. Setting this example for him, and letting him know about other alternatives has helped," Reed said.

Families partake in certain health choices due to what is a part of their routine and the resources that surround them. If a child's community consists of fast-food restaurants and corner stores, it is less likely they will eat healthy and consume the proper nutrients necessary, the health experts said. It is important that restaurants are providing healthier options for kids on

their menus, said Dr. Vyoone Segue Lewis, the local restaurant owner of Vyoone's, who said she strives to focus on making her food options healthy for the community.

"Many restaurants in New Orleans are community advocates, we make a lot of effort around that," Segue Lewis said.

"Even with our kid's menu, we don't have a lot of fried foods. We try to be conscious about the choices that we offer in terms of kid's menus. Not just with the sugar content, but fats as well," Lewis said.

In order to see changes with

our children's health, parents must be more aware of and monitor the foods and drinks kids are consuming, said Stephenie Marshall, a Registered Dietician, a Licensed Nutritionist, and the Executive Director of the Ascension DePaul Community Health Center.

"We have got to come to grips that we are in a different day and time where we have more children with hypertension, heart disease, and diabetes," Marshall said. "We've got to do better in the options that we're offering them," she added.

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