

*Lighting The Road To The Future*

New Orleans

# Data

**News Weekly**

*"The People's Paper"*

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## They Did Dat!

Saints are 4-2

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*A Data News Weekly Exclusive*



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# Federation Files Motion on Behalf of Black Farmers, to Intervene in Lawsuit

*This Blocks \$4 billion Debt Relief in Section 1005 of the American Rescue Plan*



John Boyd and other farmers of color have struggled for generations, now they are facing the threat of losing their land and livelihoods.

**NNPA Newswire Greene County Democrat**

East Point, GA — After decades of longstanding racism in the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) loan programs, Black farmers stand to lose their farms, land and livelihoods after a temporary injunction halted an estimated \$4 billion in debt relief passed by Congress as part of the American Rescue

Act. The Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Public Counsel, and pro bono counsel Winston & Strawn LLP, filed an intervention motion on behalf of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund (the Federation). The motion was filed in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas in Miller v. Vilsack.

Section 1005 of the American Rescue Plan, signed

into law on March 11, 2021, was designed to provide debt relief to Black farmers, and other farmers of color, who have long suffered at the hands of the USDA’s harmful discrimination. The USDA’s long documented and acknowledged racist policies of denying and delaying loans prevented Black farmers from operating successful farm businesses, forcing foreclosures and continuing the shameful legacy of Black land loss in

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**DATA NEWS WEEKLY**  
P.O. Box 57347, New Orleans, LA 70157-7347 | Phone: (504) 821-7421 | Fax: (504) 821-7622  
editorial: datanewseditor@bellsouth.net | advertising: datanewsad@bellsouth.net

Terry B. Jones	Contributors	Art Direction &
CEO/Publisher	Edwin Buggage	Production
Edwin Buggage	Fleur De Lis	Pubinator.com
Editor	Erika Styger	Editorial and
Sharonda Green	City of News Orleans	Advertising Inquiries
Executive Assistant	NNPA Newswire Greene	datanewsweeklyad
	County Democrat	@gmail.com
June Hazeur	Audubon Nature	Distribution
Accounting	Institute New Release	by Terrence Lee

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the United States.

In *Miller v. Vilsack*, five White Texas farmers filed a lawsuit against the USDA alleging that loan forgiveness payments violate the U.S. Constitution. This case is one of many ongoing lawsuits involving Section 1005 in other jurisdictions, including Florida, where a federal court issued a preliminary injunction against the program. Plaintiffs specifically argued that Section 1005 of the American Rescue Plan of 2021 (“ARPA”) violates the equal protection rights promised under the Constitution for farmers and ranchers who stand eligible for USDA loans but do not qualify for debt relief under the program.

“The USDA has a documented history of discriminating against Black people and communities of color. The federal government’s attempt to rectify this injustice



Encountering years of unfair loan terms, mistreatment by the USDA, and discrimination at every turn, Black farmers are now currently less than 1% of all farmers in the country.



Black Farmers continue to fight for equality in the farming business despite obstacles that threatens them surviving for future generations.

should be applauded, not stopped,” said Damon Hewitt, president and executive director of the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. “If this critical assistance is not provided soon, Black farmers and other farmers of color who have struggled to overcome decades of discrimination and the economic impacts of the global pandemic will face the threat of losing their land and their livelihoods.”

Farmer declarations included in the intervention cite multiple instances of discrimination, including:

- Misplaced loan paperwork and approval delays of more than two years
- Inability to sell equipment to repay loans due to vandalism at the auction house in the form of racist graffiti on the tractors up for bid



John Boyd, founder and President of the National Black Farmers Association, is a leading voice for equity in agricultural policy.

- Loan paperwork being filed on time but funds chronically arriving too late for planting season
- Inaccurate advice about whether FSA loans could be restructured, and
- Receiving loan funds weeks later in the season than White farmers in the same area, providing them with an unfair advantage in planting and harvesting a profitable crop.

Encountering years of unfair loan terms, mistreatment by the USDA, and discrimination at every turn, Black farmers are now currently less than 1% of all farmers in the country. This has not always been the case. In 1920, one out of every seven farms were owned by

a Black farmer, but the number of Black farmers in America has dropped significantly — plummeting by 98% over the past century.

“The Federation was encouraged by USDA’s and Congress’s attempt to address the disproportionate impact of the debt burden that farmers of color face because of historic and on-going race-based discrimination in agricultural credit,” said Cornelius Blanding, Executive Director of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund. “Black farmers have always honored their commitments to their communities and our nation; our hope is that the Department will be allowed to honor its commitment to our farmers and other farmers of color.”

A temporary injunction against the program stands in the way of critical debt relief for those who need it the most. Without debt relief, these farmers face losing their land, livelihoods and equipment, while also bearing the additional financial burden of the farming costs they’ve taken on in anticipation of debt forgiveness. Today’s intervention positions The Federation to vigorously defend Section 1005 and ensure that the narratives of Black farmers are heard as this debt relief is critical to their survival.

For more information on this lawsuit intervention, or to discuss other issues with discrimination and land loss, contact Attorney Dania Davy at the Federation office at: [daniadavy@federation.coop](mailto:daniadavy@federation.coop) or call 404-765-0991.

This article originally appeared in *The Greene County Democrat*.



Jubilee Justice co-founder and president Konda Mason. Photo by Erika Styger.

# They Did Dat

*Saints are 4-2 and Finding Ways to Win*

**Fleur De Lis**  
Data News Weekly Contributor

What's up my beautiful people of New Orleans, this is your peeps Fleur De Lis. Our Saints had a bye week, and they came back to win against the Seattle Seahawks, in a low scoring game 13-10. It's been quite a season thus far, as the Saints been playing home games away from home, as well as this being the first season since 2006 without number 9 leading the Saints offense.

But you know what, while it is not always pretty to watch, they are finding ways to win. It can be argued that they could be tied for the lead in their division with a record of 4-2. Jameis Winston, is showing he has the poise to lead the Saints offense without all

**Data Zone,**  
Continued on page 5.



Jameis Winston, is showing he has the poise to lead the Saints offense without all his weapons and find a way to win.



Mr. All Around, Alvin Kamara, continues to have a great season for the Saints.

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Louisiana's Shot For \$100 is a rewards program offered by the Louisiana Department of Health's Bring Back Louisiana campaign to increase awareness of COVID vaccine availability and provide reliable efficacy and safety information. If you would like further information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine initiative in Louisiana and vaccine availability, **call the Vaccine Hotline at 1-855-453-0774.**



## Data Zone, Continued from page 4.



Team leader, linebacker Demario Davis getting the Saints motivated to play hard and win.

his weapons and find a way to win. The defense is handling their business as one of the league's best, by keeping opponents from putting points on the scoreboard. This is a season that some expected the Black and Gold to have an average season, but they

are showing that they are a legitimate team to be reckoned with in the NFC. This will be tested next week, as they host the Super Bowl Champs, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, led by Tom Brady. They have shown that they can shut down a great QB, in week

one where Aaron Rogers and the Green Bay Packers only put three points on the scoreboard in a 38-3 route.

Many fans who were first skeptical are coming around, because the one thing that matters is happening...the Saints are winning

games. While not in the fashion we are used to, but it is getting the job done. In this new era for the Saints, it is beginning to shape and its looking good. Until next time this is Fleur De Lis, giving you everything Black and Gold and 5-0-4.

## ADVERTORIAL

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## NEW ORLEANS,



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# Mayor Cantrell Allocates \$7M for Affordable Housing Development

## City of New Orleans

NEW ORLEANS — The Mayor's Office of Housing Policy and Community Development has released a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the development of Affordable Rental Housing in New Orleans. The funding will be comprised of U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) dollars, General Obligation Bond Proceeds and Neighborhood Housing Improvement Funds (NHIF). The deadline to apply for the available \$7 million is Nov. 4, 2021.

"I've said repeatedly that affordable housing is a priority and has been for my administration since day one, and we are taking all the right steps to provide our people with access to the housing they deserve," said Mayor LaToya Cantrell. "We've prioritized bringing more affordable units online through new construction projects, and others in the pipeline that were blighted since Katrina. We are intentional in

matching resources from our state and federal partners to address housing availability in amenity rich neighborhoods while investing in neighborhoods that have been divested of such amenities necessary for healthy environments."

Since 2018, the City has issued Annual NOFAs totaling \$26 million for Affordable Housing Development. As a result, 1,097 mixed-rate housing units have either been completed, are currently under construction, or in predevelopment stages and scheduled to break ground within the next 90 days. Mayor Cantrell recently approved the Redevelopment Framework which will make available underutilized publicly owned lots for development. The Redevelopment Program will be ideal for budding developers and will provide infill development, which is often not the first choice of large-scale developers.

The City is incentivizing long-term affordability, project readi-



New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell, is continuing to make affordable housing a top priority during her administration.

ness and place-based development through this NOFA. Disadvantaged neighborhoods will be supported

with economic resources through the Mayor's Office of Economic Development and New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA) which offers financing to entrepreneurs and reconstruct existing store fronts.

The City held a well-attended informational session for stakeholders on Oct. 21, 2021. The NOFA is expected to fund five to seven developments that will produce 400-600 units. The funding awarded by the City will likely be matched with other federal and state funding such as Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). These dollars serve as gap funding and usually comprise 10-15 percent of the project's total development costs. In addition to providing much needed housing units, there are also secondary benefits to housing development, such as providing a huge economic impact and increase to the area's tax base.

The \$7 million NOFA is allocated for Affordable Rental Housing only. However, the City recently

allocated an additional \$7.6 million for renters interested in becoming homeowners. A homebuyer can qualify for up to \$65,000 for down payment assistance and \$5,000 for closing costs. "Under the Cantrell Administration, no one is left out," said Marjorianna Willman, Director of the Office of Housing Policy and Community Development. "There are opportunities for renters and homebuyers, as well as home and business owners. We are not leaving any funding on the table; we will remain good stewards so that we are contenders for any future available resources from our partners."

Proposals that fall below the funding line will be placed on the City's waitlist. The City maintains a pipeline of viable projects in case an awarded project fails to meet critical benchmarks or if new funding becomes available. Interested persons can contact Richard Boseman at [rnboseman@nola.gov](mailto:rnboseman@nola.gov) for further information.

## Early Voting Begins Oct. 30 thru Nov. 6

### Edwin Buggage Editor-in-Chief Data News Weekly

While all elections are important, in our role as "The People's Paper" Data News Weekly, continues to encourage all to get out to early vote. The days to early vote are from October 30th through November 6th. This is taking place before the primary that's scheduled for November 13, 2021.

This election cycle includes several local, and statewide races. When going to the polls voters will choose candidates for the Office of Mayor, City Council, State Representative, and Sheriff. Also, there are races for City Council District Seats A, B, C, D, E, and at-large Division seats 1 and 2, Assessor, Clerk

of Criminal District Court and four Constitutional Amendments.

Voters will need to bring a photo identification, or signature on a voter affidavit. Also, masks are required in all polling locations along with COVID-19 social distancing protocols.

Voting is one way the citizens of New Orleans can have a hand in making a difference in the direction and the agenda for the future of the City. Let your voices be heard at the polls, during early voting, and Election Day on November 13, 2021.

### Early Voting Sites:

**City Hall**  
1300 Perdido Street, Room 1W24  
New Orleans, LA 70112

**Algiers Courthouse**  
225 Morgan Street, Room 105  
New Orleans, LA 70114

**Chef Mentour Voting Machine Warehouse Site**  
8870 Chef Mentour Highway  
New Orleans, LA 70126

**Lake Vista Community Center**  
6500 Spanish Fort Blvd.  
New Orleans, LA 70124

**LSU Health Science Center (Lions Eye Building)**  
1st Floor, Lions Eye Rm  
2020 Gravier St.  
New Orleans, LA 70112

Data News Weekly  
in our role as

"The People's Paper"  
is encouraging all to  
get out and vote.

Early voting is from October 30th,  
thru November 6th.

Election Day is on  
November 13, 2021.

Visit [www.ladatanews.com](http://www.ladatanews.com) for more voting information.



# Audubon Nature Institute Gives Thanks this Holiday Season

## Audubon Nature Institute New Release

Join Audubon Nature Institute in giving thanks to the community this November and December. November will be Military Appreciation Month and December will be Frontline Heroes Appreciation Month. Jefferson Parish Appreciation Day will also take place on November 13, 2021.

"This holiday season we are giving thanks to our community," said Audubon Nature Institute President and CEO Ron Forman. "Audubon Nature Institute is about inspiring action in our local community, and this initiative engages new communities to visit our facilities and create moments that define and improve relationships between our world and the natural world, for good."

In November, Audubon will honor active duty, reserve, retired, and veteran members of the military, including the Army National Guard, with free general admission to Audubon Zoo and Audubon Aquarium of the Americas for the entire month. Plus, up to four immediate family members of qualifying individuals will receive 50% off general admission on the date of their visit. Military members must show military ID to receive complimentary admission.

The entire month of December, Audubon will honor first responders such as law enforcement officers, firefighters, emergency medical services, and 911 dispatchers as well as healthcare professionals in Louisiana by offering them free admission to the Zoo and Aquarium with proof of occupation. Plus, up to four immediate family members of qualifying individuals will receive 50% off the general admission price on the day of their visit.

### Frontline Heroes Include:

- Law Enforcement
  - o Police Officers
  - o Sheriff / Sheriff's Deputies
  - o Correctional Officers
  - o State Troopers
  - o Federal Law Enforcement Officers
- Firefighters, including career and volunteer firefighters
- EMT/EMS (Emergency Medical Technician / Emergency Medical Services)



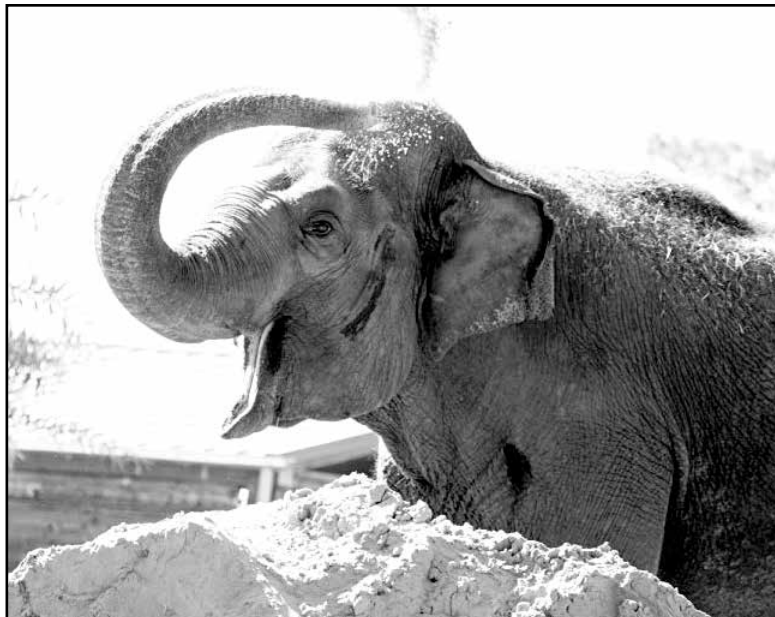
- 911 Dispatchers
- Healthcare Professionals
  - » Medical Doctors
  - » Nurses
  - » Physician Assistants
  - » Medical Technicians
  - » Nurse's Aides

The general admission discount is available online or at the front gate. Validation will be checked at the front gate. A 20% discount will be available on concessions, gift shop, and Memberships. The Membership discount is only available at the front gate. Some terms and conditions may apply, including limit of one discounted Membership purchase per guest with proof of eligibility. The discount is not applicable to Membership gift vouchers.

Thanks to a generous grant from Jefferson Parish, residents, and Jefferson Parish Government Employees (regardless of residency) can visit the Zoo and Aquarium for half the regular ticket price (adult or child) on November 12th.

Jefferson Parish residents must present a photo ID showing a Jefferson Parish zip code. Jefferson Parish Government Employees must show proof of Jefferson Parish employment, but they do not need to reside in Jefferson Parish. The Jefferson Parish Appreciation Day discount is valid on full-priced admission tickets only and is valid during regular hours. The offer is not valid in combination with any other discount and does not apply to special admission events at any Audubon attraction.

Audubon's Community Connect Program offers year-round access for Orleans Parish residents.



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