

Lighting The Road To The Future

New Orleans

Data

News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

WBOK Annual Christmas Party

December 25 - December 31, 2021 56th Year Volume 35 www.ladatanews.com

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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

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The Year in Review

Living Through Changing Times

Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief Data News Weekly

2021: Continuing to Live in a New Normal
As this year ends, we have had to adjust living during these uncertain times as COVID-19 continuing to be

a part of our everyday lives. Indeed, it is changing the very essence of our existence. Where masks, vaccines, booster shots, remote work and school are part of our new normal. Moreover, this and other unforeseen events such as Hurricane Ida, a wave of crime and violence, and continuing inequality threatens our city's future at is very core. Leaving questions as to what will we do to make

New Orleans a better city for all its citizens regardless of race, income, and zip code? Additionally, can the city leadership chart a course with sound policies to reach its full potential where all can thrive? And most importantly, what will the citizens themselves do to improve their own lives, and those of their families and communities in which they live?

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DATA NEWS WEEKLY

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Please call 504-309-9913 for subscription information or to obtain a back issue of the paper ONLY.
Dated material two weeks in advance. Not responsible for publishing or return of unsolicited manuscripts or photos.

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A Tale of Two Cities

Today New Orleans continues to be a city that has an amazing cultural life. One that draws people from all over the world to come and experience its wonder and splendor. Also, it is one that since Hurricane Katrina began to experience gentrification and demographic shifts. A phenomenon that is making the city unaffordable for many residents who are priced out of the housing market all over the City of New Orleans.

Some would argue that changing the racial make-up of the city is good for business, but we must ask ourselves where the investment in those who are living on the margins in our city. Where is the investment in helping hard working people earn a living wage? Also, where is the investment that will provide resources that will equal better outcomes for young Black boys who continue to be part of the school-to-prison pipeline? Where is the investment in making all the schools of quality with a commitment to excellence? Furthermore, the city must diversify its economy, and widen the lanes of opportunity



to give citizens that already live in the city a bridge to the middle class. The city can only survive when everybody can thrive.

Hurricane Ida

This fall during, we experienced Hurricane Ida, a storm that left many in New Orleans with damaged homes and exposing the continued problem of the city's infrastructure. While on a positive note the city's levees held, but an outdated

sewerage system that needs to be modernized continues to cause street flooding with even minor rain events. Thus, causing damage to homes, businesses, and property. Also, power outages left many in the dark during the hot days following the storm. Hurricane Ida also shed light on the need by city leadership to coordinate more efficient and effective evacuation, and recovery efforts.

Elections, Leadership, and the Future of New Orleans

In 2021 there were several elections, where in 2022 we will have a mix of old and new people holding various posts across the city. In these crucial times we must hold our elected leaders to higher standards and realize whether you voted or not that their job is to work for the betterment of all the people. This requires a larger vision by the leaders, but ultimately shaped by

the needs of the people of the city. Decidedly, meaning that a focus on those who are the most vulnerable must be part of the equation when considering public policy. For this reason, it must be viewed through a lens that its goal is to eliminate inequality and increase opportunities for more of the citizens of New Orleans.

Indeed, elected, business and civic leaders are important, but the change agent that will make the biggest impact on the city is the citizens. So, in 2022, let us take the future of our city in our own hands by doing our part in contributing to solutions to the problems that are facing New Orleans.

This means all of us. From those who have been here for generations to the newcomers. We are all neighbors, friends and family and we must build bridges of common understanding in these perilous and uncertain times where COVID-19, hurricanes and crime and violence impact us all. We must remember we are one New Orleans, and we can move forward together.

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NewOrleansChamber.org



WBOK Annual Christmas Party

Data News Staff Edited Report

The Equity Media Partnership formed three years ago. Last Saturday, Troy Henry, Jeff Thomas, Wendell Pierce and Cleveland Spears welcomed special guests at their 1st Annual Holiday Celebration. The partners own and operate WBOK 1230 am radio station. The station is the oldest African American owned radio station in the state. Today, WBOK is the fastest growing radio station in the Gulf South. They offer live Black talk throughout the day from 6:00 am until 7:00pm. Legendary hosts like Sally Ann Roberts and Norman Robinson join fantastic new talent like the Professor, Gerod Stevens and Reggie Flood. Tune in at 1230 am or stream them live at WBOK1230.com.

The holiday celebration at The New Orleans Jazz Market featured the singer Casme and the Jazz Orchestra quartet. Guests took pictures at the picture booth and boogied with the DJ between sets. Over 300 guests enjoyed catered food and cool drinks. The party was a smashing success, and everyone is looking forward to next year and Data was there!!



WBOK owners Troy Henry, Cleveland Spears, Jeff Thomas and Wendell Pierce.



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



I'm a mom first.

I may be Dr. Nina Ford-Johnson a pediatrician, but I'm a mom first. My babies are my top priority, always. With this Delta variant going around affecting Black kids at a higher rate, I'm telling any parent with children 5 and older to get the COVID vaccine.



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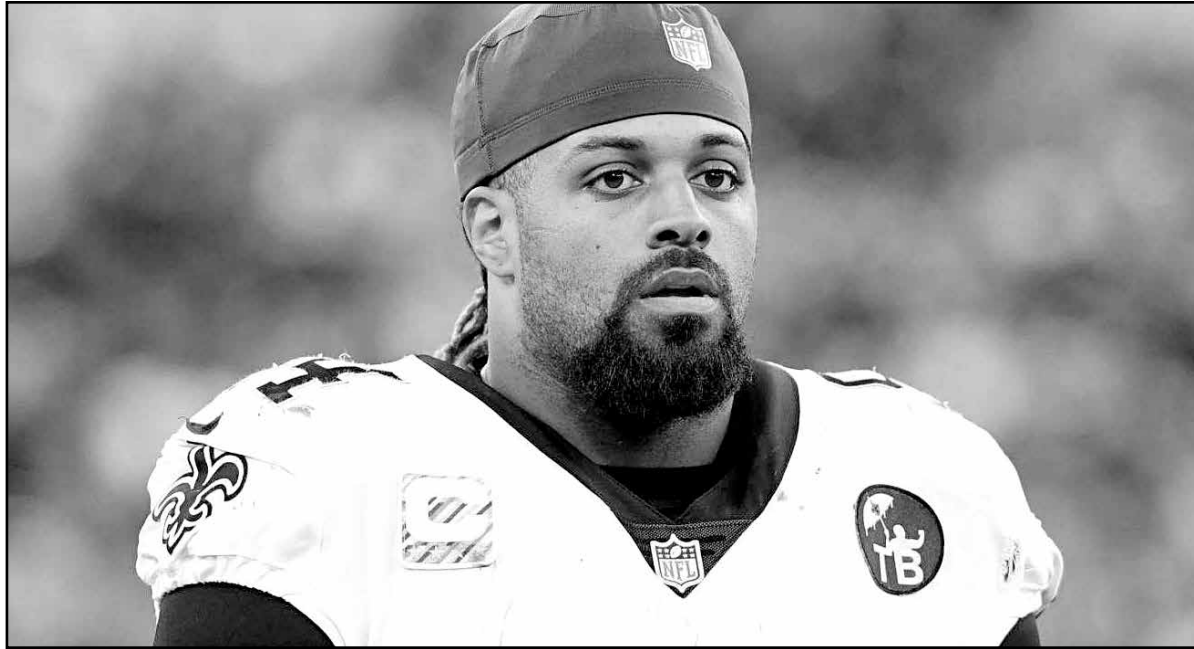
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The Saints Back in Playoff Hunt

Fleur De Lis
Data News Weekly
Contributor

They're Back!!!! The Saints showed they have what it takes to be one of the best teams in the NFL with their 9-0 win over the defending Super Bowl Champs the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. In a defensive effort led by Cam Jordan and company, the Saints kept Tom Brady from putting any points on the board.

More importantly, this was truly a team effort with the Saints being without Sean Payton on the sidelines and Defensive Coordinator Dennis Allen stepping up to the plate to lead the team to victory. In a season where injuries have plagued this team, they still find themselves in the playoff hunt.



New Orleans Saints Defensive Lineman Cam Jordan recorded his 100th sack against the Tom Brady in the Saints 9-0 win against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. The Black and Gold are still in the hunt to make the playoffs.

In a year where no one expected great things from the Saints, its first without Drew Brees, they have shown that they can compete with the best teams in the league. Despite their 7-7 record, they've convincingly beat both teams that went to the NFC Championship last year.

The Saints are finding ways to win, and if they make the playoffs, they are a team to watch. So, for the next couple of weeks we are keeping our fingers and toes crossed for the Black and Gold to be playing in the post season and in the hunt for the Super Bowl. Either way we are proud of our Saints, who have played this year through injuries and beat some of the best team in the league.

Happy Holidays to all, and until next time this is Fleur De Lis, giving you everything 5-0-4.

State & Local News

COVID-19 Omicron Cases on the Rise in Louisiana

Data News Staff Edited Report

Louisiana again is starting to see growing numbers of COVID-19 cases, with the state at risk of another spike as the Omicron Variant of the virus spreads.

Data released on December 20, 2021, by the Louisiana Department of Health shows the number of new cases of the coronavirus illness reached more than 2,300 since Friday — and more than 4,800 over the past week. That is more than double the number of new cases from the prior week.

And the Health Department warned those numbers are expected to balloon as dozens of cases of the fast-spreading Omicron Variant have been confirmed in Louisiana. The largest number of cases so far has been in the New Orleans area, but probable cases of the variant have been detected in every region of the state, according to the Health Department.

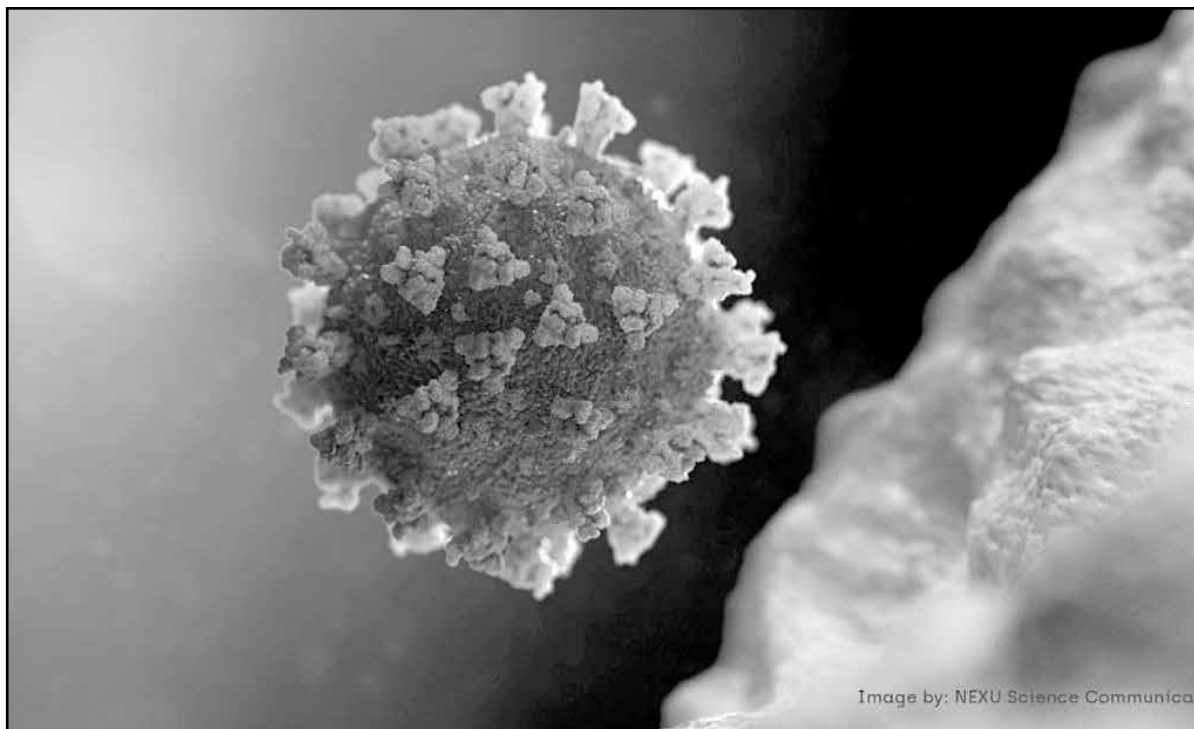


Image by: NEXU Science Communicat

"We feel very confident in saying that Omicron is now circulating throughout our state, and that the proportion of cases attributable to

Omicron is likely to increase dramatically over the next few weeks," State Epidemiologist Theresa Sokol said in a statement.

Gov. John Bel Edwards and his public health advisers continue to urge people around Louisiana to get immunized against the corona-

virus illness and booster shots if eligible, saying that is the best way to lessen the impact of an infection. Of those currently hospitalized with COVID-19, 80% are unvaccinated, according to the state Health Department.

Much remains unknown about Omicron, including whether it causes more or less severe illness. Scientists say Omicron spreads even easier than other coronavirus strains, including Delta, and it is expected to become dominant in the U.S. by early next year. Early studies suggest the vaccinated will need a booster shot for the best chance at preventing an Omicron infection but even without the extra dose, vaccination still should offer strong protection against severe illness and death.

Louisiana has one of the nation's lowest immunization rates against the coronavirus. More than 2.3 million people in the state are fully vaccinated, according to the Health Department, just under half of Louisiana's total population.

Dear Mama

Dedicated to Glenda Buggage

1946-2021



By Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief,
Data News Weekly

Proverbs 16:1

"The plan of the mind belongs to man, But the answer belongs to God."

This is surely going to be a different holiday season for my family and I this year. Earlier this month, on December 12th, our mother Glenda Buggage, surrounded by her children Lloyd, Norvin, Kevin, Gerelda and I, peacefully transitioned to be with the Lord at age 75. As I am writing this with tears welling up in my eyes, I realize that mama left me with so much for which to be thankful. She was kind, loving, selfless, and cared not only about her children, but ministered to and helped so many others who were in need throughout her long and purposeful life.

Mama was a lifelong learner who loved reading, interior design, music and keeping up with news and current events. When I think about my life's journey, and many of the things I am interested in; it is she who has had the most impact on my life and who I have become. *She is my original superhero.* I saw her do so many things in her long and beautiful life that required superhuman effort. I know like so many others who have also had great mothers, it was the sacrifices, nurturing, encouragement, and unconditional love received that made mama amazing.

I think of all the love and support she gave me and my siblings doing the best she could to make sure we could be our best selves. Teaching us to always strive for excellence. Today, I can say that while I am on this mission to pursue greatness without her being present in the physical form, that I am still armed with the tools to meet any challenge and overcome any obstacles or ad-



My Aunt Eloise Bell Oliver who lives in California. The late Geraldine Lamar, my grandmother and guiding light and my mother Glenda Buggage, who gave me unconditional love and support. Providing my siblings and I the wings to fly. May she rest in eternal peace.

versity to live my best life. Mama instilled them within me, and I draw upon them daily. Mama, I want you to know as you rest in eternal peace, all that you have given the world lives on in so many of the lives you touched. And as your "baby boy" I will carry on all that is good in you

for not just the betterment of myself but others.

I would like to thank my mama for introducing me to God and the power of prayer at an early age. I remember the smell of the candles at Our Lady of Guadeloupe Church/Shrine of St. Jude, going there with



my mom and my late grandma, Geraldine Lamar. I reminisce about the peace and serenity I felt going there as a little boy. Recently, while mama was in the hospital my siblings Lloyd, Gerelda and I went there and prayed for her. I returned to that same place after her transition and was overcome with a feeling of peace knowing that she had gone home to be with the Lord. Sitting alone, immersed in the quietness of the church, knowing that her work on earth was done, I felt a calmness sitting there alone thinking about mama, and all those who went before her who have impacted my life.

Feeling good in my heart knowing that while I will miss her early morning phone calls, her beautiful smile, infectious laugh, words of encouragement, her gentle hugs and unconditional love that she is with the Lord and others who preceded her in transitioning.

As mama has earned her wings, she lives forever within me, inside of me touching my soul. I still hear her angelic voice telling me, "Everything is going to be alright; you have everything you need to win in life." *Today, I can say moving forward, I am in "peace not pieces" and that you left me and my siblings whole and full of the best of you to continue to honor and glorify your life and legacy Mama.*

Thank You Mama...

Love You Forever

Your Son...

Edwin Benjamin Buggage

CELEBRATE SAFELY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



THE GREATEST GIFT YOU CAN GIVE THIS SEASON IS
the gift of good health.

**Protect yourself, your family and your friends from COVID-19.
Talk to your doctor about the safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine.**

THE COVID-19 VACCINE IS PROVEN TO BE SAFE AND EFFECTIVE IN CHILDREN AS YOUNG AS 5 YEARS OLD. THE VACCINE IS SO SAFE THAT THE CDC AND AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS (AAP) URGE ALL ELIGIBLE PEOPLE TO GET THE COVID-19 VACCINE AS SOON AS IT IS AVAILABLE TO THEM.

PROTECT YOURSELF TODAY.

ON NOV. 26, 2021, THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) CLASSIFIED A NEW VARIANT, OMICRON, AS A VARIANT OF CONCERN.

**The best thing you can do to prepare is get vaccinated
or get a booster shot if you are already vaccinated.**



GET THE FACTS:
visit covidvaccine.la.gov or
call the Vaccine Hotline at
1-855-453-0774.

