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Concert Collects Coats for Children in Need



The Dirty Dozen Brass Band performs at Gallier Hall for the Annual Koats for Kids drive on Nov. 17th.

Story and Photos by Kennedy Shanks
Data News Weekly Contributor

Koats for Kids hosted its Annual Concert at Gallier Hall to recognize 14 years of service to the community and to fundraise for children in need over the holidays. From Grammy winners the Dirty Dozen Brass

Band to Big Chief Darryl Montana, the benefit concert brought together musicians and artists for a good cause.

“It is all about sharing. Kindness doesn’t cost much money. Anything will help even one child,” said Jee-Yeoun Ko, a Cellist and Professor of Strings at Xavier University of Louisiana, who is the Executive Director

and Organizer for the Koats for Kids Drive.

Koats for Kids receives donations year-round. Whether it is a coat, a \$25 donation, or a \$100 donation to support a local at-risk juvenile Musical Rehab Program, Ko shared that there are several ways to support Koats for Kids and its initiative.

A newly formed group under Koats for Kids called

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the "Junior Koats for Kids" helped facilitate the event as well as collect coats from concert attendees. The group comprised university students from Xavier, Tulane, the University of New Orleans, and Dillard, who volunteered at the annual event.

In addition to local universities, The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, the New Orleans Tourism and Cultural Fund, the Urban League of Louisiana, Loving Hearts of LA among other benefactors sponsored the event.

The demand for winter season coats is up around the country, advocates said. Due to inflation, cities in the north like Chicago, Pennsylvania, and New York, require shelter, food, and resources like coats for families in need. The average age of a homeless person is 9 years old and the need for more coats for kids without shelter in particular has been on the rise since the COVID-19 Pandemic in 2020, organizers said. Koats for Kids not only provides for the communities here in New Orleans, but cities that tend to be a lot colder for a longer period and need more resources for ex-



Xavier University's Orchestra performs at Gallier Hall for the Annual Koats for Kids drive.

tended, harsher winters.

Xavier's President Reynold Verret said that support for Koats for Kids also includes a new initiative to reach out to detention centers

and teach children how to compose songs. Through using the arts, the initiative will work to provide a safer environment for children to explore their abili-

ties through music that expands creative opportunities for at-risk young people in New Orleans. To support Koats for Kids residents can donate coats to the non-prof-

its website at koats4kids.com.

"We are in one of the most wealthy countries in the world, it is our responsibility to give back," Ko said.

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Fashion Gets Lit



Tracee Dundas
Fashion Stylist

Get ready for fashions to light up the night at Luna Fête Festival 10th Edition taking center stage December 7th-10th. The event celebrates all things that illuminate and this year for the second time fashions will add a fashionable touch to the event with local designers showing their creativity by taking couture fashions to the next level.

Luna Fête combines dynamic contemporary art, film, and technology in a multi-day large-scale Public Art Festival that will include a Gala Ball with an interactive fashion presentation by local designers, including returning Designers Renee Johnson and Van Shawn Branch. Themed "Wild Creation", it will celebrate the transformative power of costumes, with a focus on lighted fashion. Designers will bring a range of styles, textiles, accessories, and LED lights will be the cohesive theme seen throughout all the fashions on the runway. It promises to be an evening wonderment and excitement as illuminated costumes, couture, and original designs take center stage at the Arts New Orleans' LUNA Fête presented by New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center and New Orleans & Company.

Visit www.artsneworleans.org for more information on the event.

Photo Credit – Arts New Orleans



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

50th Bayou Classic

Photos by Terry B. Jones

The 50th Annual Bayou Classic, a celebrated event in college football, particularly within the realm of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), concluded with Southern University securing a victory over Grambling State University. The final score was 27-22 in favor of Southern. The event was marked by a substantial turnout, with a total of 64,698 fans attending, reflecting the enduring popularity and cultural significance of this historic rivalry. The Bayou Classic is more than just a football game; it's a celebration of tradition, community, and the spirited rivalry between two prominent HBCUs. This year's game was particularly special, marking the 50th iteration of this special event that showcases Black Excellence.



Ron Busby (L-Red Blazer) National President of US Black Chambers, Inc. was in New Orleans in support of the Bayou Classic.



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

Why Don't Black People Vote?

Kenneth Cooper
Columnist Think 504.com

Black people don't be about voting. Yeah, I know, that's a statement covered in blankets. But the numbers don't lie, at least here in Louisiana. Pick a parish and peep at the last big race like the governor's election. Time after time you'll see White people outperforming Black people at the polls, even in those parishes where Black people have an overwhelming advantage when it comes to qualified voters.

In Orleans, Black people hold a 54% to 37% advantage when it comes to qualified voters. And yet, for a major race like the governor's race, with a Black man on the ballot no less, only 25% of those voters showed up compared to 33% for Whites. That is a waste of political power. And it's the type of apathy that could be one of the reasons why soon-to-be-governor Landry feels emboldened enough to set up a crime committee in Orleans Parish with minimal engagement of Black people.

Ride upriver to St. John Parish, where Black people hold a whopping 61% to 34% advantage, and the numbers get worse. Only 36% of qualified voters bothered to show



up for the governor's election, compared to 41% of Whites.

In East Baton Rouge where the numbers are almost even – 49% for Whites, 44% for Blacks – the gap was even wider. Only 30% of qualified Black voters actually voted, while 42% of Whites did.

The same scenario played out in Caddo. Despite a 48% – 47% split in qualified voters, only 25% of Blacks showed up. Whites showed up at 37%.

One of the first things that jumps

out from those stats is that voter apathy is a problem in this state for both races, but more pronounced among Blacks. And that leads to the forever asked question of why. Why are so many Black people, who should have all the motivation necessary to vote, not voting?

Like most questions that involve getting into the heads of a mass amount of people, there can be no definite answer. But there are factors that traditionally coincide with low voter turnout. And in Louisi-

ana, those factors are still prevalent among Black people.

Poverty is the first one that jumps off the list. Poor people and voting don't mix. And Louisiana has perpetually been one of the poorest states in the country. Poverty has been spread out among Black people disproportionately. Black people make up 33% of the overall population compared to 62% for Whites. But Whites

This has been a generational issue. While some people inherit wealth, there have been generations of Black people inheriting poverty. Louisiana constantly ranks in the bottom among states when it comes to income and income inequality. Mainly because citizens, especially Black ones, are trapped in low paying jobs with not much room for advancement. Could this systematic exploitation be one the reasons for systematic disenchantment when it comes to voting for Black people? Historical trends say so.

Another factor has been the candidates themselves. Outside of presidential elections, there's one thing that has been shown to get people to the polls. And that is stars. Candidates with star power. Jeff Landry rode Trump's star power

to a big lead in the governor's race and never looked back. For Black voters, there wasn't a star on the horizon.

The old school focus on policies as the driving force to get people to the polls is giving way to the politics of personality. Not to say that policies don't matter. It's to say that personality is factoring in more and more. In Louisiana it doesn't help that the State Democratic Party has been non-existent, and that the Republican Party has devolved into Trump clones. Could it be that Black voters look out at the electorate and see more value in just staying home with their phones?

Most likely, we'll get no definite answers soon. The next major election will be the presidential election, which as mentioned earlier tends to bring the voters out. Last election, Black people voted at 63% and Whites at 74%.

But going forward, Black people are setting themselves up to be an untapped majority. With the Black population rising to 33%, the State Democratic Party should be making a push to attract their attention. Maybe they can start with the three P's that have been traditional hindrances – poverty, personality, and policies.

State & Local News

Representative Delisha Boyd Received the "Citizen of the Year" Award at The New Orleans Coalition of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. Achievement Week Banquet

New Orleans Agenda

State Representative Delisha Boyd of District 102 has been recognized as "The Citizen of the Year" during the 2023 Achievement Week for the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Achievement Week has been observed every November since 1920.

It was designed to recognize individuals on the local and international levels who have contributed to uplifting, motivating, and inspiring their community. The New Orleans Coalition of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., held their Annual Achievement Awards Gala November 11, 2023, at the English Turn Clubhouse. In addition to the "Citizen of the Year" Award,



State Representative Delisha Boyd



they recognized various other award recipients.

"I am deeply grateful and honored to be selected as the 2023 Citizen of the Year by the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Special thank



you to the Gamma Rho Chapter for this prestigious recognition, it inspires me to continue making a positive impact in our community. Congratulations to all the Honorees, said Representative Boyd".

Biden's Dance with the Black Press

A Forgotten Rhythm?

Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

However, just one year before the critical 2024 Presidential Election, where he'll likely face a rematch with Donald Trump, the question arises: has the President forgotten the rhythm that drew him to the dance?

With his campaign flailing, then-presidential candidate Joe Biden knew his fate hinged on African Americans.

Like many successful campaigns, political and otherwise, Biden looked to the Trusted Voice of Black America during what had become a critical, if not grave, moment of reckoning. On a brisk morning, Feb. 26, 2020, Biden received an essential reminder of the historical significance of the Black Press and how its backing could sway the all-important Black electorate.

On that crisp February morning in 2020, a chartered bus rolled into historic downtown Charleston, carrying over a dozen Black Press publishers and leaders. The Mills House Wyndham Grand Hotel on Meeting Street hosted a critical gathering between Biden, his team, and the stalwarts of the Black Press. The stakes were high, and South Carolina held the key to the fate of Biden who trailed badly in the polls as rumors began to fly that he contemplated suspending his campaign.

The strategy was simple: connect with the "Trusted Voice of Black America," a legacy that spans nearly two centuries when Samuel Cornish and John B. Russwurm boldly proclaimed, "We wish to plead our own cause," and started



the Black Press in New York.

The boldness of Russwurm and Cornish's statement lies in the fact that they started Freedom's Journal with those daring words before slavery ended. From Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to Mamie Till, the Black Press has been the conduit for crucial messages that have reverberated globally.

Biden's interview with NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. broadcast over the expansive social media channels of the Black Press, became a lifeline for his campaign. His words could now reach over 30 million people, particularly African Americans. A subsequent national feature article about the get together ran in many of the more than 230 Black-owned newspapers and amplified Biden's message to the African American electorate.

"The Black vote will determine the nominee... and hopefully the next president and The Black Press

is the heart and soul as to why I got involved," Biden acknowledged during the interview, recognizing the pivotal role played by African American voters.

His promises were explicit, and a breath of fresh air in comparison to Trump:

- Addressing housing discrimination
- Investing \$640 billion over a decade for affordable housing
- Dismantling redlining
- Creating opportunities for first-time homebuyers

Those commitments voiced through the Black Press resonated with the Black community, a critical demographic that would propel Biden to victory. And it certainly didn't hurt Biden that shortly after his sit down with the Black Press, and after he promised to appoint the first Black woman to the U.S. Supreme Court, the kingmaker, South Carolina Democratic Rep. James Clyburn, for-

mally endorsed him.

Today, Biden's dance seems to have lost its rhythm. Despite numerous policies benefiting African Americans, his messaging remains non-existent. With the 2024 election looming, polls indicating major declines in Black support, Biden's campaign has ignored, as Biden once said, "What brought me to the dance," the Black Press.

The recent Biden-Harris ad campaign, "History," showcases the administration's investments in rural Black communities. While commendable, it raises questions about excluding Black-owned media in those advertising buys. Biden's campaign boasted a 16-week, \$25 million ad buy targeting Black voters, yet the Black Press, with its unmatched influence and historical significance, is conspicuously absent.

As most understand, and the Biden campaign apparently does not, there's a massive difference between Black-targeted and Black-owned. While to the campaign's credit, they are running an ad with Byron Allen's TheGrio, a Black-owned entity, they haven't done so with the Black Press — despite televised promises from various individuals in the Biden camp, including DNC Chair Jaime Harrison.

That's also despite the ever-dwindling support of the Black electorate.

As the President gears up for a potential rematch against Trump, the question lingers: has Biden forgotten the rhythm that brought him to the dance, a rhythm inscribed in the ink of the Black Press? Only time will tell if the President can return to the beat that secured his place in the Oval Office.

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