

Lighting The Road To The Future

New Orleans

Data

News Weekly

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Safety and the City

Can New Orleans Truly Turn the Tide on Violence?



Violence and crime remain pressing issues in New Orleans, despite recent declines in overall crime statistics, prompting ongoing efforts by city leaders, community groups, and residents to search for lasting and equitable solutions.

Benjamin Bates
Data News Weekly Contributor

New Orleans is a city known for parades, po-boys, and a profound cultural legacy, and remains one of America’s most iconic yet conflicted places. Beneath its rhythmic spirit and community pride, the city con-

tinues to grapple with a deep-rooted crisis: violence. Yes, undoubtedly, in 2024, there were measurable improvements. The city reported a 26% drop in overall crime, including a 35% decline in homicides, 44% fewer nonfatal shootings, and sharp decreases in armed robberies and carjackings. These statistics reflect targeted efforts by the New Orleans Police Department,

which has leaned into smarter deployments, data-driven strategies, and faster response times. Community partnerships like the NOLA Coalition have also stepped up, investing in youth programs and initiatives meant to interrupt cycles of violence before they begin, with a focus on mental health support, job training, and mentorship.

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With the upcoming mayoral election and several high-profile races on the horizon, public safety remains a top concern for voters. Candidates will be closely watched for how they plan to address ongoing violence and crime in New Orleans and implement lasting solutions to make the city safer for all residents.

Creative efforts, too, have gained traction. From grantmaking by the Foundation for Louisiana's TOGETHER Initiative to the "PlayStations for Guns" buyback program, grassroots and governmental actors alike are trying to rethink what public safety can look like—more prevention, less punishment, more opportunity, less despair. Schools,

faith-based organizations, and neighborhood leaders are also playing critical roles, reinforcing the idea that safety is everyone's responsibility.

Yet, despite these hopeful numbers and bold ideas, the reality on the ground remains more complicated. New Orleans is still a city where too many resi-

dents live with the daily threat of violence. A single shooting can unravel trust. A string of crimes can reignite fear. In neighborhoods long plagued by disinvestment and inequality, the promise of change often feels out of reach. For many, statistics mean little when safety remains a luxury, not a guarantee.



So, the question remains: what will it take? What bold, sustained, and equitable strategies are needed to truly transform New Orleans into a city where safety is not a headline, but a lived reality for everyone, from the French

Quarter to the forgotten blocks of Central City? As the city moves forward, that answer may define the next chapter in its ongoing story. And whether New Orleans can not only bounce back but finally break the cycle.

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FIND MORE WAYS TO SAVE AT ROUSES

French Quarter Festival 2025 Brings Big Sounds, Bold Flavors, and Community Spirit

Photos by Demian Roberts
Data News Weekly Contributor

The 42nd Annual French Quarter Festival lit up the heart of New Orleans with four unforgettable days of vibrant music, mouthwatering cuisine, and community celebration. The beloved free event featured more than 300 local musical acts across 22 stages, showcasing the soulful sounds that make the Crescent City a global music capital.

From jazz and funk to brass and bounce, the festival celebrated the diversity of New Orleans' Musical Heritage while serving up culinary favorites from over 70 local vendors. Data News Weekly was on the scene to capture the energy, flavor, and culture that make this event a must-attend tradition.



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

New Orleans

The Soulful Birthplace of JAZZ



Preservation Hall, with its many featured performers and the world-renowned Preservation Hall Jazz Band (pictured), continues to preserve the spirit of traditional New Orleans jazz. Visitors from around the globe travel to this iconic venue to experience the birthplace of a timeless musical gift that New Orleans proudly shares with the world.

Fleur De Lis Data News Weekly Contributor

New Orleans, Louisiana, pulses with the rhythm of history, culture, and soul—rightly revered as the Birthplace of JAZZ. This vibrant city gave rise to the genre in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, shaped by a swirling mix of African, Caribbean, French, and Spanish influences. In the heart of the city, Congo Square served as sacred ground where enslaved and free people of color

gathered, filling the air with drumbeats, dances, and the spirit of resistance. It was here that the earliest seeds of JAZZ were sown—where rhythm met resilience, and melody met movement.

Among the trailblazers was Charles “Buddy” Bolden, an electrifying cornetist whose booming sound and magnetic stage presence echoed through uptown New Orleans in the 1890s. Bolden’s spontaneous improvisations lit the flame for a new musical language—one shaped by African call-and-response

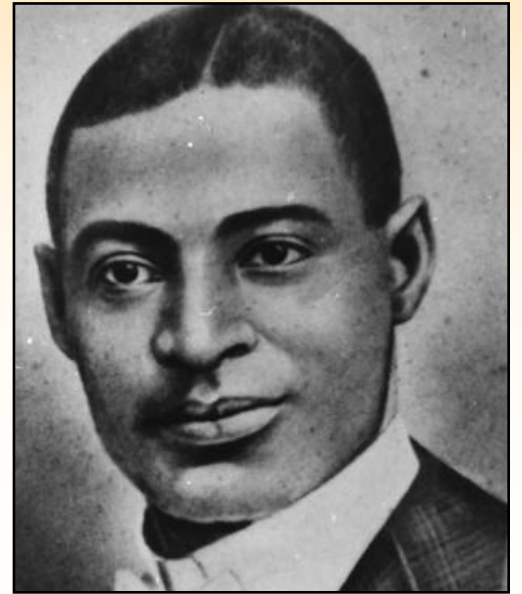
chants, Caribbean polyrhythms, and the infectious energy of local brass bands. From dancehalls to street corners, JAZZ was not just played—it was lived.

Today, that spirit is alive and swinging. Preservation Hall stands as a sacred temple of sound, echoing with the soul of traditional New Orleans JAZZ since 1961. Meanwhile, the New Orleans JAZZ Museum, housed in the historic Old U.S. Mint, serves as a living archive, celebrating the genre’s past and future through per-

formances, artifacts, and education.

JAZZ still flows through the streets of New Orleans like the Mississippi River itself—deep, mighty, and timeless. From Bourbon Street to Frenchmen Street, the city’s soundtrack remains as bold and beautiful as ever, inviting the world to listen, dance, and feel the beat of its legendary legacy.

April is JAZZ Appreciation Month.



Jazz pioneer Charles “Buddy” Bolden is widely regarded as one of the founding fathers of New Orleans jazz. Known for his powerful cornet playing and magnetic stage presence in the early 1900s, Bolden’s innovative style laid the foundation for the improvisational spirit and soulful rhythms that define jazz today. His legacy lives on in the streets of New Orleans and in the music that continues to inspire generations.

Who adopted who?

Adopt a teen. You can't imagine the reward.

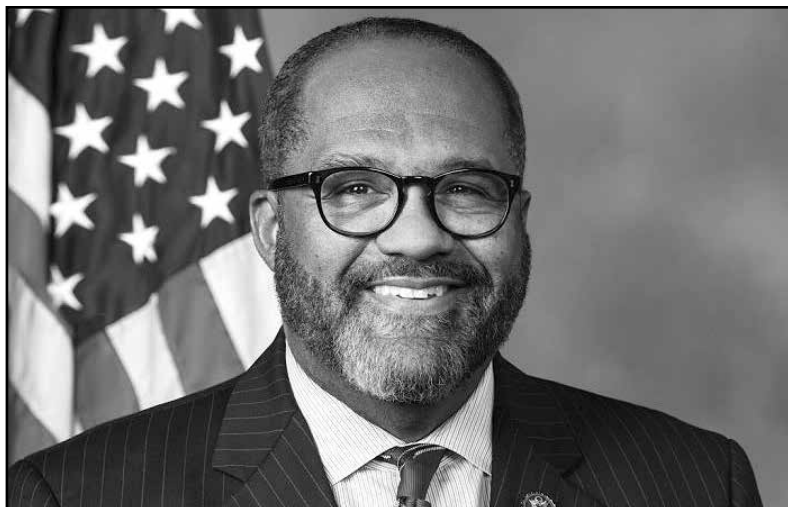
Bipartisan Louisiana Delegation Introduces Flood Insurance Bill to Protect Homeowners and Market Stability

Reps. Carter, Fields, Letlow, and Ezell Introduce Flood Insurance Bill to Provide Stability to Property Owners and the Real Estate Market

Data News Staff Edited Report

Congressman Troy A. Carter, Sr. (D-LA), Congressman Cleo Fields (D-LA), Congresswoman Julia Letlow (R-LA), and Congressman Mike Ezell (R-MS) have introduced the bipartisan National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Authorization Extension Act which will extend the federal authorization for the NFIP. The bill would extend the program through December 31, 2026, significantly longer than the typical short-term extensions passed by Congress.

"I am proud to introduce this bill to provide the long-overdue stability our communities deserve," said Rep. Carter. "For too long, homeowners, small businesses, and local economies have



Congressman Troy Carter has joined with fellow lawmakers in introducing a bipartisan flood insurance bill aimed at protecting homeowners and ensuring market stability.

lived under the cloud of short-term NFIP extensions, often attached to contentious government funding bills. This clean,

multi-year reauthorization brings much-needed certainty to policyholders and ensures uninterrupted access to flood insurance

across the country. As flooding becomes more frequent and severe, we must protect families and businesses by keeping this program operating while we work to deliver lasting, comprehensive reforms to strengthen and modernize the program."

"Passing the NFIP Authorization Extension Act is essential to protecting hardworking people across Louisiana. Given our state's history with extreme weather events, we must ensure that flood insurance remains accessible to all. My colleagues in both the House and Senate will continue to fight for those most affected by flooding throughout the state and across the country," said Rep. Fields.

"Given the frequent storms and flooding our state endures, I'm a strong advocate for renewing the

National Flood Insurance Program and making sure it serves those who depend on it. For many Louisianans, flood insurance is not just a policy—it's a lifeline. I'm committed to working with my colleagues to strengthen this vital program and ensure our communities get the support they need when disaster strikes," said Rep. Letlow.

"For far too long, families, businesses, and entire communities along our coast have lived with the uncertainty caused by short-term extensions of the National Flood Insurance Program. The NFIP Authorization Extension Act delivers the stability South Mississippians need and deserve as they continue to face the devastating effects of flooding and natural disasters. By

Newsmaker, Continued on page 7.

State & Local News

Greater St. Stephen Ministries to Host Greater Good Friday Grocery Card Giveaway



Data News Staff Edited Report

The true joy of the season comes not from what we receive, but from the kindness and generosity we share with others. In an effort to give back, Greater St. Stephen Ministries is hosting a Greater Good Friday Grocery Card Giveaway. This free community initiative will take place on Friday, April 18th at

8:00 a.m. at Greater St. Stephen, 5600 Read Blvd., New Orleans, LA 70127.

The goal of the Greater Good Friday Grocery Card Giveaway is to spread hope and offer support during a time when many families may be facing a financial strain. Greater St. Stephen Ministries will distribute two hundred gift cards to the community. Everything will be first come, first served.

"At the heart of Greater St. Stephen Ministries is the commitment to uplift and support those in need," said Bishop T. Delbert Robinson, Senior Pastor of Greater St. Stephen. "This initiative is our way of making a difference, allowing families to focus on what matters most - spending quality time together. Christ's resurrection is the ultimate gift of love. May we reflect that love by giving selflessly to others."

The Corporate Playbook Book Signing + Meet & Greet Brunch

Author Deb Grant at Baldwin Books

Glenda Bell
Data News Weekly
Contributor

Brunch meets bold insights at an engaging literary event featuring Author Deb Grant, who will discuss her latest release, *The Corporate Playbook*. With a blend of humor and sharp commentary, Grant dives into the unspoken rules and power dynamics of corporate life, offering a fresh take on the workplace experience. Whether you're an aspiring executive or simply curious about boardroom culture, this lively conversation promises inspiration, laughter.

Deb Grant, a seasoned executive coach, leadership strategist, and independent director, brings more than 30 years of senior-level experience to her work helping individuals and organizations excel. Renowned for her sharp insights and practical approach, Grant is widely respected for her ability to transform complex leadership

challenges into clear, strategic solutions. Her dynamic blend of business acumen and empathetic guidance has made her a sought-after speaker and trusted advisor in boardrooms and beyond.

"I'm thrilled to share *The Corporate Playbook* with you," Deb says. "This book blends my passion for leadership with practical strategies to elevate your career. Designed for busy leaders, it offers bite-sized insights, timeless

Meet & Greet, Continued on page 7.



The Black Economy

April Ryan
NNPA Newswire Contributor

"We are in the midst of a storm," according to Allan Boomer, Chief Investment Advisor for Momentum Advisors, who discusses Black Americans wallets amid this downward economic spiral created by President Donald Trump. The president's economics include the proposed 10-year budget, massive tariffs, and the firing of federal workers. The stock market and global markets are shaking because the U.S. has implemented tariffs on imports to this country. The expectation is that the costs will be transferred to consumers. There's been no rhyme or reason for each country's percentage of tariffs it's receiving for imported goods to the U.S.

The National Urban League, an Economic Rights Organization, urges people to "resist" and fight



against these drastic financial shifts. Marc Morial, the President and CEO of the organization believes federal government firings will create "an impending slowdown [that] will drive Black unemployment up." 18 to 19% of all government employees identify as Black or African American. Morial also added, "DOGE is a disaster

for Black people" as it "targets those agencies that have invested in the most vulnerable- the Department of Education, Minority Business Development Agency, National Institutes of Health, and Veterans Affairs." Another concern of the president's economic plan is his budget. Reverend William Barber, founder of Repairers

of the Breach, calculated, "60% of Black people in this country are poor and are low wealth" and will be severely impacted by the president's budget that cuts out money in Medicare and Medicaid.

Barber emphasized, "Eight hundred billion dollars would be cut from Medicare for the 10-year plan. It would cut 36 million people from Medicare, impacting more than 6 million Black people." Barber says the president's proposed 10-year budget is just as "dangerous and it's deadly" as "800 people die a day from poverty." "Black people need to be in the budget battle," says Barber. Amid financial concerns for Black wallets, Boomer says consumers should "take a hard look at your spending. Are there areas where you could make cuts? Now is the time to increase your savings and to put cash aside to make more investments."

Newsmaker, Continued from page 6.

extending the program through the end of 2026, we're sending a clear message: we are committed to protecting our coastal communities, giving them the tools to recover and rebuild, and working in a bipartisan way to strengthen and modernize the program for the future," said Rep. Ezell.

The Senate Companion NFIP Authorization Extension Act was introduced by Senators Bill Cassidy, M.D. (R-LA) and John Kennedy (R-LA) in March 2025. Congressmembers Marc Veasey (D-TX), Jared Moskowitz (D-FL), and LaMonica McIver (D-NJ) are original co-sponsors of the House Legislation.

"Rather than experiencing a 33rd short-term extension, NFIP Policyholders deserve certainty, and NFIP as a program requires stability. A two-year reauthorization will provide a runway for

Congress and stakeholders to hold conversations and hearings around catastrophic insurance and towards highly demanded Comprehensive NFIP Reform, like a means-tested benefit for affordability, a third-party review of the Risk Rating 2.0 Methodology, and proper incentivization of flood risk mitigation," said GNO, Inc. President Michael Hecht.

"Extending the National Flood Insurance Program would ensure continuous operations and greater stability for policyholders until a long-term reauthorization is enacted into law – a valuable source of certainty for counties and our residents," said National Association of Counties Executive Director Matthew Chase. "Counties thank Representatives Carter, Fields, Letlow, and Ezell for their leadership, and we look forward to working with our Bipartisan Congressional Partners to secure passage of this legislation."

Meet & Greet, Continued from page 6.

principles, and 'Ways to Play' you can immediately implement. Each chapter features videos to help you bring these ideas to life.

"Leadership is about inclusive strategies and meaningful impact," says Deb Grant. "The Corporate Playbook is designed to help you

set clear goals, embrace continuous growth, and succeed. Are you ready to play three-dimensional chess in a world of checkers?"

The book signing is presented by Baldwin Books & Co., 1030 Elysian Fields Ave, N.O. LA 70117 on Saturday, April 19th, 2025, at 11:00 a.m.

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Freelance Writers Wanted

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Compensation is competitive and great story ideas will be appreciated.

If you are interested, please email your resume and 3 writing samples to: terrybjones@bellsouth.net and datanewseditor@bellsouth.net.

We can't wait to hear from you!

Job Opportunity

Administrative Assistant Wanted

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