

Lighting The Road To The Future

New Orleans

Data

News Weekly

"The People's Paper"




Met Gala -
Superfine Spotlight

Data Zone
Page 4

May 24 - May 30, 2025 60th Year Volume 4 www.ladatanews.com

A Data News Weekly Exclusive

A Legacy of Leadership



Mary Haynes-Smith's Transformative Impact
on New Orleans Education


Page 2



Newsman
Mass Escape at
Orleans Parish
Jail

Page 6

State & Local
Pope Leo XIV's
Creole Roots



Page 6

A Legacy of Leadership

Mary Haynes-Smith's Transformative Impact on New Orleans Education

Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief Data News Weekly

For over four decades, Mary Haynes-Smith has been a pillar of educational excellence in New Orleans. As the Principal and CEO of Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary Charter School in Gentilly, her unwavering commitment to student success and community empowerment continues to leave an indelible mark on the city's educational landscape.

A Leader in Action

During a recent visit to Bethune Elementary, just days before the end of the school year, Haynes-Smith could be seen in her element, encouraging students, attending a kindergarten graduation, and working closely with her staff. She leads with both vision and presence, having cultivated a school culture centered on excellence, collaboration, and love for students.

A Calling Realized

Reflecting on the journey that led her to education, Haynes-Smith shared, "I remember graduating from Southern University in Baton Rouge and moving to New York, where I worked for a minority recruiting agency for nine years. I worked near Radio City Music Hall and often saw teachers taking children to shows. Something stirred in me. I realized I wanted to do something more rewarding, and I decided to return home to New Orleans to teach."

She began her career as a 7th-Grade Math Teacher and immediately felt she had found her calling. "I was delighted. I wanted to show the kids compassion, encourage them to pursue excellence, and truly touch their lives."

Resilience and Heart at Bethune

Haynes-Smith's leadership at Bethune has been defined by resilience, innovation, and a deep understanding of the chal-



Principal Mary Haynes-Smith of Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary Charter School exemplifies a lifelong dedication to education, leading with compassion, vision, and an unwavering commitment to the success of every student she serves.

Cover Story, Continued on page 3.

Photos courtesy of Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary Charter School

INSIDE DATA	
Cover Story	2
Data Zone	4
Newsmaker	6
State & Local News . .	6
Fleur De Lis	6
National News	7

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	Benjamin Bates	Pubinator.com
Editor	Stacy M. Brown	Editorial and
Sharonda Green	Tracee Dundas	Advertising Inquiries
Executive Assistant	Eric Connerly	datanewsweeklyad
June Hazeur	Fleur De Lis	@gmail.com
Chief Operating Officer		Distribution
		by Terrence Lee

Please call 504-606-1362 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.

Cover Story, Continued from page 2.

lenges her students face. Under her guidance, the school not only recovered from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina but also emerged stronger. She handpicked a team of dedicated educators, prioritizing those with a passion for teaching and a positive mindset. She has always emphasized the importance of listening to students and creating a safe, nurturing environment.

"I remember my experience with a 4th-Grade Teacher who treated me horribly," she recalled. "We were poor, one of 11 children. I didn't have fancy clothes or hairstyles, and the way she treated me made me feel like I didn't belong. That moment stayed with me. I knew I had to become a teacher so that no child would ever feel the way I did."

Leading with Compassion and Purpose

Haynes-Smith brings her whole self to her work. "Being genuine, loving people, and loving what I do, that's what drives me," she said. "I understand people because I know where I come from and how others treated me. You have to have a pas-



sion to make a difference. I pray for my school family, my students, and their parents. I won't turn my back on these kids."

Former students regularly return to Bethune to share their progress, challenges, and gratitude. Haynes-Smith is always there to listen and lend a helping hand. "Kids from past years come back, and I do what I can to help. I've even worked to help some get jobs, so they can earn their own money and build their futures."

A Lasting Legacy

Mary Haynes-Smith's decades-long career is a testament to the transformative power of dedicated educators. Her leadership continues to inspire generations of students, teachers, and community leaders across New Orleans. Through her example, she has shown that education, when led with heart and purpose, can uplift entire communities.

As we watch the graduation cer-



emony complete with students playing second-line music and children waving white handkerchiefs, while parents cheer proudly for their children, I find myself tearing up, moved by the joy and promise being celebrated. I turn to Principal Haynes-Smith and ask how she feels during moments like this, when student achievement and excellence are on full display.

"Graduations always fill me with joy," she says. "Watching our

kindergarteners walk across the stage, knowing that some of their parents once attended this school and now return with kind words about how much their children love it, it's incredibly meaningful. Moments like these give me the energy to wake up each day and continue doing this work, knowing we're helping shape the next generation of leaders who will make a positive impact on New Orleans and the world."

ROUSES MARKETS

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE
WEEKLY SPECIALS

WWW.ROUSES.COM/WEEKLY-ADS

Prices good at New Orleans, Metairie, Gretna,
Kenner, Marrero, Covington, Mandeville and
Slidell locations May 21st - 28th, 2025.

SAVE
\$2.22
LB



VALUE PACK
80% Lean
Ground Beef

GROUND FRESH DAILY!

ROUSES MARKETS
VALUE PACK

ONLY
\$3.77
LB

SAVE
\$1.02
LB



PREVIOUSLY FROZEN
Boneless
Skinless
Chicken Breast

ONLY
\$1.97
LB

Eat Right
WITH ROUSES

Hot Boiled Louisiana Crawfish available 11 AM - 7 PM daily. Live Crawfish sold in sacks by the pound.

AVAILABLE ICE COLD!



SWEET RED SEEDED
LARGE
Watermelon

\$5.88

SAVE
up to \$1.72



22 - 28 OZ CAN
Bush's
Baked Beans
OR 28 OZ BOTTLE
Sweet Baby Ray's BBQ Sauce

\$1.97

SAVE
\$1.22



6 - 8 OZ PACK
Rouses Chunk,
Sliced or
Shredded Cheese

SAVE
\$1.22



SAVE
up to \$10.99
When You Buy 2



12 CT SINGLE SERVE
Community
or Starbucks
Coffee

BUY 1, GET 1
FREE

FIND MORE WAYS TO SAVE AT ROUSES

Met Gala - Superfine Spotlight

Celebrating 'Tailoring Black Style'



Tracee Dundas
Fashion Stylist

This year's Met Gala dazzled under the theme "Superfine: Tailoring Black Style," chosen to honor the rich history of Black Dandyism and the vital role of Black tailors and designers in shaping style and identity from the 18th century to today. The gala spotlighted impeccably tailored suits, bold silhouettes, and a celebration of elegance born from resilience.

Tailored menswear took center stage with zoot suits, pinstripes, and impeccably fitted waistcoats that blurred gender lines and paid homage to Black Dandyism. Supercharged drama arrived via flowing trains and sculptural silhouettes—most memorably Diana Ross's 18-foot embroidered cape—while bold pregnancy-reveal dressing worn by Rihanna reminded us that couture can also make headlines. Her look stole hearts as soon as she appeared in a sheer, jewel-encrusted Marc Jacobs Gown. Created in collaboration with Nigerian designer Ugo Mozie, Diana Ross's triumphant return—ascending the steps in her record-breaking train—felt like a standing ovation in fabric form, a majestic celebration befitting a living legend. Zendaya's sleek Louis Vuitton Zoot Suit offered a masterclass in understated yet powerful styling, proving minimalism can still command the spotlight. Additional standout styles included Alicia Keys and Swizz Beatz's coordinated regal ensembles and Gabrielle Union walked the red carpet in a custom strapless black Prada Gown, complete with a sweeping white floral train and coor-

Data Zone,
Continued on page 5.



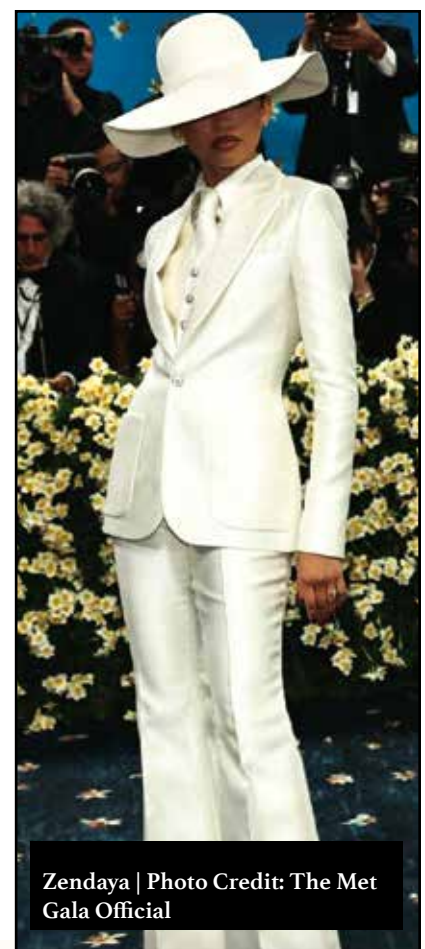
Diana Ross | Photo Credit: Angela Weiss/Getty



Rihanna | Photo Credit:
The Met Gala Official



Diana Ross With Son Evan | Photo
Credit: Lexie Moreland/Getty



Zendaya | Photo Credit: The Met
Gala Official

**Data Zone, Continued
from page 4.**

minating headpiece.

All outfits reinforcing the theme's celebration of Black creativity and craftsmanship.

André 3000 and Janelle Monáe hit all the right notes – channeling their Avant-Garde Spirit in a bespoke suits that wove storytelling into every seam. On the menswear side, Burna Boy arrived in a searing Crimson Tuxedo by Oswald Boateng, complete with a leather cape and adding a pop of color with a brilliant yellow silk shirt—an irresistible blend of tradition and modern flair.

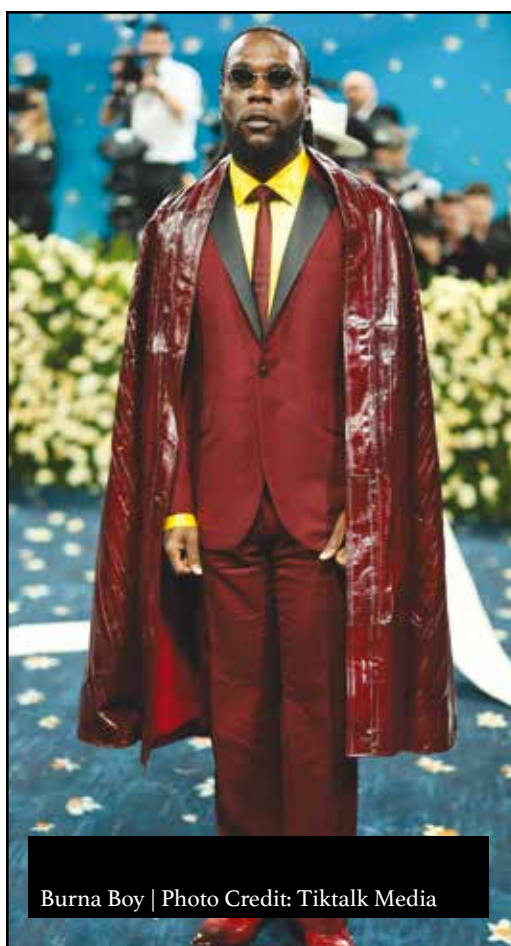
This year's Met Gala proved that when fashion honors history with creativity and purpose, the results can be triumphs and unforgettable.



Janelle Monae | Photo Credit: The Met Gala Official



Andre' 3000 | Photo Credit: Jamie McCarthy/Getty



Burna Boy | Photo Credit: Tiktalk Media



Alicia Keys & Swizz Beatz | Photo Credit: The Met Gala Official

Mass Escape at Orleans Parish Jail Sparks Statewide Manhunt and Investigation

Benjamin Bates
Data News Weekly
Contributor

In a brazen overnight breakout, ten inmates escaped from the Orleans Parish Justice Center on May 16, 2025, by exploiting a structural vulnerability behind a toilet in their shared cell. Authorities believe the inmates used tools to dismantle the fixture and access a concealed passage through the wall, enabling their escape under the cover of darkness. The incident went undetected for several hours and was only discovered during the routine morning headcount at 8:30 a.m., approximately seven hours later.

As of May 19th, four of the escapees have been recaptured, while six remain at-large. The fugitives include individuals facing serious



Law enforcement intensifies the search following the escape of ten inmates from the Orleans Parish Justice Center, as investigations unfold and concerns grow over security lapses and potential inside involvement. Members of the public have voiced growing fears about safety, with many urging officials to act swiftly to apprehend the fugitives still at large.

charges such as murder, attempted murder, and armed robbery, heightening public concern and triggering a citywide and statewide alert. Law enforcement officials have not ruled out the possibility of an inside job, with three jail employees suspended pending an internal investigation.

Louisiana Governor Jeff Landry responded swiftly, ordering a comprehensive review of security protocols at the Orleans Parish Correctional Facility and broader investigations into the state's criminal justice oversight. "This failure in supervision and infrastructure cannot be ignored," said Landry in a public statement. "We will hold accountable anyone responsible for endangering public safety."

In an effort to expedite the manhunt, the FBI has announced

a \$10,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of each remaining fugitive. Local authorities are working closely with federal agencies, and residents are being urged to remain alert and report any suspicious activity.

Surveillance footage has been reviewed and made available to the public, showing how the inmates carried out their escape. Officials continue to assess the extent of the security breach and how such a major lapse could have occurred in a high-security facility.

The incident has reignited debate over the conditions, staffing, and oversight of correctional institutions in Louisiana, particularly in New Orleans. As the search continues, the community watches anxiously, hoping for a swift and safe resolution.

State & Local News

Pope Leo XIV's Creole Roots

A Historic Connection to Louisiana's 7th Ward

Eric Connerly
Data News Weekly
Contributor

Pope Leo XIV, born Robert Francis Prevost, has deep familial roots in Louisiana's Creole Community, particularly in New Orleans' 7th Ward. Genealogical research reveals that his maternal great-grandparents, Ferdinand D. Baquie and Eugenie Grambois, were married in New Orleans in 1864, and his maternal grandparents, Joseph Norval Martinez and Louise Baquie, were married there in 1887. Records indicate that his maternal grandmother, Louise Baquie, was baptized at St. Louis Cathedral in 1840. These ancestors were identified as Black or "mulatto" in 19th-Century Census Records, reflecting the complex racial history of the region.

In the early 20th Century, Pope Leo XIV's maternal family migrated from New Orleans to Chicago, a move characteristic of the Great Migration, during which many African American families relocated from the South to the North seeking better opportunities. Upon settling in Chicago, census records show that the family began identifying as white, a change understood



His Holiness Pope Leo XIV

by historians as a strategy to navigate the racial dynamics and systemic discrimination of the time.

The revelation of Pope Leo XIV's Creole Heritage has resonated deeply within New Orleans and among Creole Communities, highlighting a shared history and cultural connection. Local leaders and historians view his election as a significant moment for representation within the Catholic Church,

bringing attention to the contributions of Black and Creole Catholics. There is hope that his papacy will acknowledge and celebrate this heritage, fostering greater inclusivity within the Church.

This aspect of Pope Leo XIV's background underscores the diverse tapestry of American Catholicism and reflects broader themes of identity, migration, and resilience within the Church's history.

Fleur De Lis

Uptown Music Theatre Marks 25th Anniversary with Masterclass and Summer Camp



Uptown Music Theatre founder Delfeayo Marsalis (right), current students, and alumni gather with The Wiz cast member Sai Anthony (center) following an inspiring theatrical masterclass.

Fleur De Lis
Data News Weekly
Contributor

Uptown Music Theatre (UMT), founded in 2000 by acclaimed Trombonist and Composer Delfeayo Marsalis, is celebrating its 25th Anniversary with an exciting summer lineup aimed at cultivating young talent in the performing arts.

The 2024 UMT Summer Camp kicks off on Monday, June 2nd, at the Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) and will run for seven weeks. Open to students ages 8 to 17, the program will culminate in a full-scale musical production featuring acting, singing, and dancing. Instruction will be led by a talented team of artists including Marsalis

himself, The Voice finalist Tonya Boyd-Cannon, Choreographer Matthew Carroll, and others.

As part of the anniversary celebration, UMT recently hosted a high-energy masterclass led by Broadway Performer Sai Anthony, currently touring with The Wiz. During the workshop, Anthony led over 50 participants through dynamic sessions focused on energy, vocal projection, and stage presence. Students hailed from Homer Plessy Community School, NOCCA, Amber Dance Academy, Spotlight Dance, NOLA Dancing Grounds, and included several UMT Alumni.

Scholarships are available for the summer program. For more information or to register, contact Morgan Stewart at (504) 498-7802.

Biden's Diagnosis Renews Focus on Prostate Cancer Risks

Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

Former President Joe Biden has been diagnosed with an aggressive form of prostate cancer that has spread to his bones, according to a statement released by his office on Sunday. The statement said Biden's diagnosis was characterized by a Gleason score of 9 (Grade Group 5), indicating a high-grade cancer with bone metastasis. Physicians noted that while the disease is advanced, it is hormone-sensitive, which allows for treatment options that can help manage the cancer. Biden, 82, had undergone further medical evaluation after a small nodule was discovered on his prostate. His office said he and his family are currently reviewing treatment plans with his doctors. Prostate cancer remains one of the most common forms of cancer among men, second only to skin cancer, according to the Cleveland Clinic. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that 13 out of every 100 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer during their lifetime, with age being the primary risk factor.

Cancer specialists say that despite the seriousness of Biden's diagnosis, advancements in prostate cancer treatment have led to improved outcomes, even for those with advanced diseases. "There are a number of highly effective treatments available," said Dr. Tanya Dorff, an Oncologist at City of Hope Comprehensive Cancer Center in Los Angeles. "Even with aggressive or late-stage prostate cancer, patients can often live many years with a good quality of life." Biden's diagnosis comes at a time when at-



Former President Joe Biden

tention is increasingly focused on racial disparities in prostate cancer outcomes. According to ZERO Prostate Cancer, a national nonprofit dedicated to supporting patients and families, Black men in the United States are 1.7 times more likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer and more than twice as likely to die from it compared to White men. One in six Black men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime—compared to one in eight men overall. They are also more likely to be diagnosed at an advanced stage of the disease.

While no single explanation exists for these disparities, research has shown that systemic inequities contribute to poorer outcomes. Black men are less likely to be offered PSA (prostate-specific antigen) tests during routine screenings and, when diagnosed, less likely to receive timely or effective

treatment. A recent study reported by ZERO Prostate Cancer revealed that Black men with early-stage prostate cancer are significantly

less likely to receive any form of treatment compared to White men. Socioeconomic factors also play a role. Racial inequality in the United States continues to affect access to care, insurance coverage, and overall health outcomes, particularly for Black and African American communities. Biden, who concluded his term in January, was the oldest person to serve as president. His successor, Donald Trump, assumed office at age 78. While the former president and his doctors continue to explore treatment options, Biden's diagnosis has cast a new spotlight on addressing both men's health and the racial disparities that remain embedded in cancer care. "Too many Black men are dying from a disease that can be detected early and treated," ZERO Prostate Cancer officials posted on its website. "We must ensure that awareness, access, and action reach every community."



FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

 **KMEZ 102.9**
 **@mykmez1029**
 **@kmez1029**

www.kmez1029.com

This space can be yours for only \$80

CALL NOW!!!

504-821-7421

DATA CLASSIFIED

Call 504-821-7421 to
place your classified ad.

Job Opportunity

Freelance Writers Wanted

Data News Weekly, "The People's Paper," is looking for freelance writers to join our team print and digital team. We need writers who can cover New Orleans news stories, ranging from local high school sports, community events, City Hall and entertainment. Experience in print is necessary, experience in digital and social media are encouraged.

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

Data News Weekly, "The People's Paper," is looking for an administrative assistant.

Compensation is competitive and detail orientation will be appreciated.

If you are interested, please email your resume to: terrybjones@bellsouth.net

This space can be yours for only \$50

Call Now!

504-821-7421



PLAN SO YOUR FUTURE FOLLOWS SUIT.

Start building your retirement plan at

ThisIsPretirement.org

