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Zulu Ball Fashionistas

Data Zone Page 6

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CELEBRATING 300 YEARS Inside of Black Mardi Gras

Louis Armstrong reigning as King Zulu in 1949.

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Newsmaker #HBCUWalking Billboard

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42 Tribes Big Chief Devin "OX" Williams



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Celebrating 300 Years

Inside Black Mardi Gras



Zulu Parade, Mardi Gras, New Orleans, 1938 (photo courtesy of Time, Inc.)

By Eric Connerly
Data News Weekly Contributor

New Orleans: A Colorful History

As we are in the 300th Anniversary of New Orleans, with its rich and

colorful history; it is one where the African influence is seen in everything from the food, music, dance and culture. It is everywhere you look and is the heartbeat that continues to pump the blood through the veins of the City keeping it alive.

The Crescent City has just finished

the Carnival Season, with its many balls and parades bringing people from across the globe to explore the spectacle and splendor that is the Big Easy.

Black Mardi Gras

The Black Traditions of Mardi Gras, which for a long time was

unknown to those outside of the African-American Community have come to the forefront are now being discovered by others and given their true place and being recognized.

We at Data News Weekly would like to briefly explore some of these great traditions.

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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 CEO/Publisher	Contributors Eric Connerly	Art Direction & Production MainorMedia.com
Edwin Buggage Editor	Kichea S. Burt Bnola.net	Editorial Submissions datanewseditor@bellsouth.net
Cheryl Mainor Managing Editor	Glenn Jones Delaney George	Advertising Inquiries datanewsad@bellsouth.net
Calla Victoria Executive Assistant	Oba Lorrius Jade Myers	Distribution On The Run
June Hazeur Accounting	Julienne Malveaux La'Shance Perry	Courier Services
	Freddie Allen	

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Cover Story, Continued from page 2.



As part of the Mardi Gras Celebration in New Orleans, the Baby Dolls were formed in 1912.



Mardi Gras Indian Big Chief Darryl Montana, with suit with depiction of his father, the late legendary Big Chief Tootie Montana. New Orleans Bayou St. John Indians "Super Sunday" 2007.

Zulu Parade

They have Marched in Mardi Gras as early as 1901 but made

their first appearance as the Zulus in 1909. Their original routes were through the Black neighborhoods

of New Orleans. Today they have a route that goes through both African-American and the traditional

route along St. Charles Ave. where their beads and customized painted coconuts are highly sought after by people of all races.

Additionally, their Annual Mardi Gras Ball and Lundi Gras Celebration on the River has become major events drawing thousands of people into the City of New Orleans.

Baby Dolls

As part of the Mardi Gras Celebration in New Orleans, the baby dolls were formed in 1912. The baby dolls were a group started in an area outside the legal red-light district called (Black) Storyville.

The style of the baby doll in the Mardi Gras Celebration was tight or skimpy clothing, some adorned with money and cigars, throwing it at the observing men. Their instruments included the washboard, the kazoo, the guitar, and a big No. 3 tub for the bass drum. Throughout the years, the women expanded their group, collecting dues and possibly becoming the First Women's Organization in the Mardi Gras Celebration. Their styles then varied, even being dressed as actual babies, or baby dolls, depending on the group.

There was a period of decline, but after Hurricane Katrina where an emphasis on preserving a cultural tradition many groups calling themselves the Baby Dolls formed including: the 504 Eloquent Baby Dolls and other older groups continued to carry on the tradition including the Gold Digger Baby Dolls, the Treme' Million Dollar Baby Dolls and the Ernie K-Doe Baby Dolls.

Black Masking Tradition (Mardi Gras Indians)

The Black Masking Tradition (Mardi Gras Indian) is as old as the City itself beginning in 1718. As slavery spread slaves began to escape and found refuge with the indigenous people. They eventually begin to intermarry and form communities. The Africans who were already masking integrated some of the native people's traditions with their own to create what is known as the Black Masking (Mardi Gras Indian) Tradition.

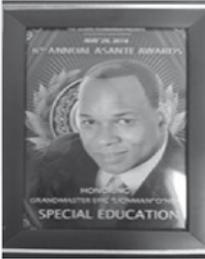
New Orleans Blacks many coming from the Senegambia Region of West African were already using masks, feathers and beads to create costumes for ceremonies. Blending these traditions and taking a year to make a suit the aim is to tell a story and to make a "pretty" suit to be debuted on Carnival Day. Mardi Gras Indians traditionally were divided based on wards and parts of town. In post-Katrina there is more of a togetherness among the tribes where they come together in the spirit of unity to keep this great tradition alive.

Black New Orleans Traditions and its Future

The City is at a crossroads where many of the traditions and institutions are under assault, but the Black presence continues to be important.

As more of the untold stories of Black New Orleans are being told and unfolding it is showing that it is something worth not only studying but preserving and allowing it to thrive.

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Local HBCUs Mark History with Social Media Campaign

By La'Shance Perry
Data News Weekly
Contributor

Students from Xavier University gathered on a bright and warm Thursday afternoon to celebrate the School's Legacy in their university apparel. They joined students at Shaw University in Raleigh, N.C., and Bowie State University in Bowie, Md., on Feb. 8, 2018 to mark the HBCU Walking Billboard Campaign, a new effort to raise awareness for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). A calendar for the Month of February designated days to different HBCUs nationwide to encourage members of various schools to wear spirit apparel and to participate on social media using the hashtag: #HBCU-WalkingBillboard.

"The purpose of the campaign is to help expose and promote Historically Black Colleges and Universities," said Kansas City, Mo. Middle School Teacher Shanelle Smith in an official video about the campaign. Smith, who attended Fisk University, is the Founder of the HBCU Walking Billboard Campaign that is in its third year and has gained momentum as more current students and alumni became active participants in 2017. Other Louisiana Colleges such as Dillard University marked the Campaign on Feb. 8th, Southern University at Baton Rouge on Feb. 14th and Grambling State University on Feb. 27th.

New Orleans' HBCUs have a lot to celebrate this month. The federal budget deal forgave a combined \$330 million in Hurricane Katrina debt from Xavier, Dillard and Southern University at New Orleans, along with Tougaloo College in Mississippi. The four HBCUs borrowed the funds from the U.S. Department of Education and were expected to begin repaying the millions of dollars in April 2018. Congressional Representatives from both states worked to negotiate the debt forgiveness, something that both Xavier and Dillard's Presidents acknowledged in official statements would allow these institutions to continue their unique work of educating African-American students.

"I chose to go to a HBCU because I wanted to be exposed to Black culture, Black professionalism, and Black academics," said Miss Xavier, Shalani Taylor, who will graduate in May, and who

said that she felt that attending an HBCU is a liberating experience. "I can honestly say that Xavier University has had such a profound effect on who I am as a Black woman in my professional development and

community involvement. I love my HBCU," Taylor said.

It was fitting to add the Campaign to Black History Month Celebrations, said Amber Davis-Prince, Xavier's Director of Campus Activi-

ties and Student Programming. "This is the first time Xavier has participated in this event," she said. The Student Government Association and the Office of Campus Activities used social media platforms to

engage the campus community to show their HBCU pride, she added.

"I came from a community that wasn't diverse and I wanted to be

**Newsmaker, Continued
on page 10.**

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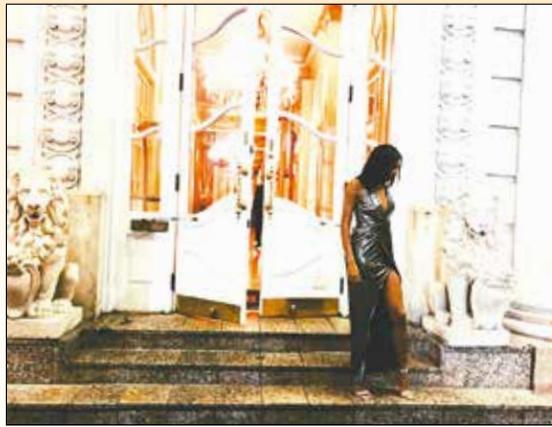
The Black Met Gala of New Orleans



Delaney George
Columnist

This year Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club held their Annual Zulu Ball to top off Mardi Gras Season. The ball is historically and internationally known across the globe and has become the Black Met Gala of New Orleans. Thousands of people swarm the New Orleans Convention Center on one night, once a year, dressed like royalty from head to toe. And this year, Delaney's Armoire has found 20+ noteworthy, jaw dropping, gowns that capture the essence of true Zulu Ball Style.

The gowns selected display elegance, style, innovation, and the sexiness that lives within all women. Think you made the list? Check out these beautiful gowns from the Zulu Ball Attendees.



Hollywood glitz and glamour was the trend for the evening. Tulane alumni and stylist, Melanie Mainor returned from New York to partake in the Zulu Ball tradition styled in a silver shimmering gown, @ohsoyoumel via Instagram.



The epitome of grace and elegance. This gorgeous black gown from @thepaulashow via Instagram



Shimmer, Glam and Sparkle from @afrimodiste via Instagram



Breathtaking in Blue from @bria.symonee via Instagram.



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An Eye catcher from head to toe, from Singer/Performer @whoisdenisia shot by @bdragonimagery via Instagram.

On the Street for Mardi Gras

Photos by Kichea S. Burt
Data News Weekly
Contributor

More than just parades, it's the People, make the party! We took a stroll through every area of New Orleans, searching for the people with the Mardi Gras spirit. And we found them. Until next year, be well, and next time, maybe we will see you in your finest costumes. Data will be there.



Black Masking on Mardi Gras Day, So Pretty

Photos by Bnola.net
Data News Weekly
Contributor

The Tribes were shining bright and were so so pretty as they took to the streets in their finest suits to celebrate the day, and showcase the Black Masking traditions for the public. Their Spirits were with us all on Tuesday, and Data was there to catch it.



Big Chief "Bo" Young, Cheyenne



Big Chief Fiyiyi, Mandingo Warriors



Big Chief Fiyoy, Hard Head Hunters



Big Chief Pie, Monogram Hunters



Big Chief Jeremy, Monogram Hunters

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

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Trump's Parade Plan a Waste of Money



Julianne Malveaux
NNPA Columnist

Now "45" wants a parade. He wants it in November, probably before the mid-term elections. Some see it as move to mobilize his base and stroke his own ego; others actually believe that he wants to celebrate and honor members of the

military. It's been reported that he wants the parade, because he saw a parade in Paris on Bastille Day. If he went to the zoo, would he want zebras and tigers roaming the lawn at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue next?

The last parade we had in Washington was in 1991, when we "won" the Gulf War. That parade cost \$14 million (\$21 million in today's dollars), and drew 800,000 people. Given 45's propensity for wanting the biggest and "the huuuugest," he'd probably want to spend twice what George H.W. Bush spent in 1991. That \$42 million represents less than a millionth of one percent of the nearly \$500 billion

federal budget increase that the Senate proposed in bipartisan legislation on February 7. I am among the many who will look askance at the possible cost of a parade. There are lots of things we could do with \$42 million, like job creation, small Pell grant increases, or even more amenities for our armed forces. But in the scheme of things, some will argue that \$42 million is not that much money; they might suggest that a parade is more about symbolism than anything else.

What does a show of military might signal in these times? There has been no significant military victory, nothing to celebrate, except 45's already-inflated ego. France's

Bastille Day parade is a response to the fact that France had been invaded twice, most devastatingly by the Germans in World War II. Their parade is as much a show of military might as it is of European unity. These days, troops from several countries, including Germany and the United States, participate in the parade. Some carry the flag of the European Union, even though the EU has no military. Would 45's parade include other countries, or is this exhibition just about "us"?

Instead of the show of unity that Bastille Day parade represents, 45's parade will likely be a reflection of his braggadocio. His button is bigger, so is his parade, and so is the

U.S. military. The president's parade sounds like a show of muscle, but to what end? Even the inhabitant of the world's smallest country must know that the U.S. has the world's "greatest" military. So, why do we need to show off? Because 45 is a show-off, a blowhard, and an Electoral College-selected buffoon. Meanwhile, consider the impact a parade might have on the District of Columbia, the used-to-be majority Black city that is mostly occupied by Democrats. How will the streets survive huge tanks rolling down Pennsylvania Avenue, and who will pay for repairs? How extensive will this parade be, and will it happen on the weekend or a weekday? What will it mean for workers, transportation, and the District's infrastructure? The president could care less about any of it. He passed the hot potato of the parade to the Secretary of Defense, and now General Jim Mattis and his team are stuck with the task. Both Democrats and Republicans have verbalized opposition to the parade, and they are likely to be labeled "treasonous" by 45, since anyone who disagrees with him, or fails to clap (or bow) when he speaks is obviously a traitor. He is behaving like a despot like his rival, North Korea's "Supreme Leader" Kim Jong-un.

While 45 finds it convenient to idolize the military and insist that the rest of us do so, as well, he didn't find it convenient to serve in the military. He was excused from military service during the Vietnam era, because he had flat feet or bone spurs or something like that. More than likely, he was excused from military service, because his family had money.

The president wants a parade to celebrate the military and glorify our country's military might. Next he will want to have someone crown him king. Yes, it is a good thing he doesn't go to the zoo, because we might end up with a menagerie in the backyard at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Julianne Malveaux is an author, economist and founder of Economic Education. Her latest book "Are We Better Off? Race, Obama and Public Policy" is available to order at Amazon.com and at www.juliannemalveaux.com. Follow Dr. Malveaux on Twitter @drjlastword.

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Big Chief Devin "OX" Williams, Unified Nation Tribe

By: Glenn Jones
Data News Weekly
Contributor

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Big Chief Devin "OX" Williams

Due to our press time, it was necessary to conduct this interview before Mardi Gras. We met with Chief Williams on a rainy day, perfect for sewing, especially close to Mardi Gras morning. It is from this location where he will stand in front of his tribe and nation to sing their prayer, "Indian Red", for protection and safe travels. After the ceremony, Chief Williams will lead his tribe to meet other tribes, friend or foe.

When we first stepped foot onto the porch, we were met by Travis Williams, older brother of Chief Williams, who wears many crowns in the tribe, yet doesn't mask. Travis plays a myriad of key roles such as visionary illustrator, suit designer, consiglieri, griot, secret service agent, and basically "The Plug" you don't want to mess with. Mom, Chiquita Williams, and daughter, Imani Williams, represent the heart and soul of the sewing team. Unified Nation is a young, progressive tribe with family values at its core. At first glance, the Tribe resembles a burgeoning seedling, coming out of the ground preparing to bloom. Unified Nation Tribe has well-established roots, steeped in wisdom and bursting with vibrancy.

The Seed:

Big Chief Williams is by far the youngest Chief we had the honor of learning from that received lessons directly from Legendary Chief of Chiefs Tootie Montana. Chiefs' cousin Stacy and Noonie Man Baptiste were spy boys for Monogram Hunters. Stacy is credited with being the first Black Masking Indian he saw at the age of 7. To this day Chief says he still remembers that



Big Chief Devin "OX" Williams, Unified Nation Tribe (Photo by Oba Lorrius)

Yellow Suit. His Grandmother made him wait till he was 10 to join the Yellow Pocahontas." That's what makes me so dangerous. Tootie taught me how to really dance to the beat. When you Indians dance you've gotta dance to that beat, you've gotta do the tambourine beat with your feet. When he taught me that, it was the best time in my life as a youth". Chief Williams has a multitude of close cousins and distant relatives with a masking background and spent 10 years with the Yellow Pocahontas Tribe led by Big Chief Darryl Montana. In the 10th grade just two months shy of Mardi Gras, Chief Williams made a suit and started the Trouble Nation with Big Chief Marquis Tero and original Chief the late Big Chief Emmanuel Hingle. I asked Chief Williams why they started a tribe in 1999 at such an early age and he said, "There was a low in the game and we really wanted to mask, but nobody was masking. We were wild. We tore the 7th Ward up me and Marqui." Older now, Big Chief has his own tribe and preserves this Black Masking Culture by embody-

ing the lessons he received from wise elders while growing through a fiery trial of errors. This year in the Tricentennial of New Orleans and with five years as Big Chief under his belt Chief Williams is anxious but poised to come out strong.

Q) In this culture what is sewing for you?

A) Sewing is relaxing. Some people do sequins and some people do beadwork. I feel like sequins are cool but they're not really culture. Native Americans you don't ever see them doing sequins, they do all beads, and even African tribes it's all beads. People criticize me for my beadwork and I ask them, "do you see what I'm doing? This is awesome!". Sewing keeps you out of trouble, keeps you inside, and I love to teach people how to sew. If I teach somebody, even if they don't choose to mask, they can still help me sew.

Q) What is the Spirit of your Tribe?

A) I have that Spirit right now and I've been having that same Spirit since I first masked, since I first hit the floor in an Indian Practice. When that spirit hits you like I said it always hits me the same way, and either I'm gonna be wild or I'm just gonna be calm but I'm behind that mask and you never know what you're gonna get.

Q) How important is the music in Black Masking Culture?

A) Music is very important. If you don't have a second-line you might as well stay inside, you need that. My little cousin, his name is Isaac Williams, he's been beating the bass drum for me since he's been five and he still does it. When he beats that drum, it's going like Donkey Kong then. When he's putting it on, I get tears in my eyes, because it's about to go down and I know everybody behind me is beating their drum...got me nervous talking about it.

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N.O.M.T.O.C. Parade Celebrates New Orleans' 300 Year Anniversary

By Jade Myers
Data News Weekly
Contributor

NOMTOC XLVIII, considered the Premiere Parade on the West Bank of Orleans Parish, began with a humid atmosphere and dull skies, but the people who attended the parade kept the spirit alive. The 27-float Annual NOMTOC Parade began early Saturday morning on Feb. 10th at 10:45 a.m. This year the krewe's theme was "300 Reasons to Love New Orleans," in celebration of the City's 300-year Anniversary. It started and ended on its traditional route in Algiers. The parade's theme highlighted famous people and events from the City over the past 300 years. Among the celebrity rides in the parade were New Orleans Saints Player Brandon Coleman and WVUE-TV Reporter Kristi Coleman, who served as Grand Marshal.

The founders of N.O.M.T.O.C. (New Orleans' Most Talked of Club) are the Jugs Social Club, es-



NOMTOC Parade Float celebrates "300 Reasons to Love New Orleans"

tablished in the Spring of 1951. Although the organization was established over 50 years ago, NOMTOC Parades did not start rolling until February 1970.

"I've been attending NOMTOC Parades for over 30 years," said Ria Joseph-Dokes, a New Orleans ninth ward resident.

"When I first brought my mother to this parade about 15 years ago, she was so excited because we never heard of a Black parade like this

one before," Dokes said.

The parade is also known as a neighborhood parade, which makes it convenient for residents to attend the parade. On some streets, the parade may pass directly in front of residents' homes. At the parade, families and friends were seen barbecuing and socializing in front of their houses while watching the parade pass by, as children ran up to the cars and floats to receive cups and flower-



NOMTOC XLVIII parade Queen for 2018 is Rae'Lyn Fazande. (Photos by Jade Myers)

shaped throws.

"My favorite memory about the parade is attending it with my family and having a competition to see who can catch the most beads," said Nia Dokes, who is a New Orleans East native.

"The most important part is for our people to keep implementing in our children the importance of supporting and attending Black parades like this one," Dokes said.

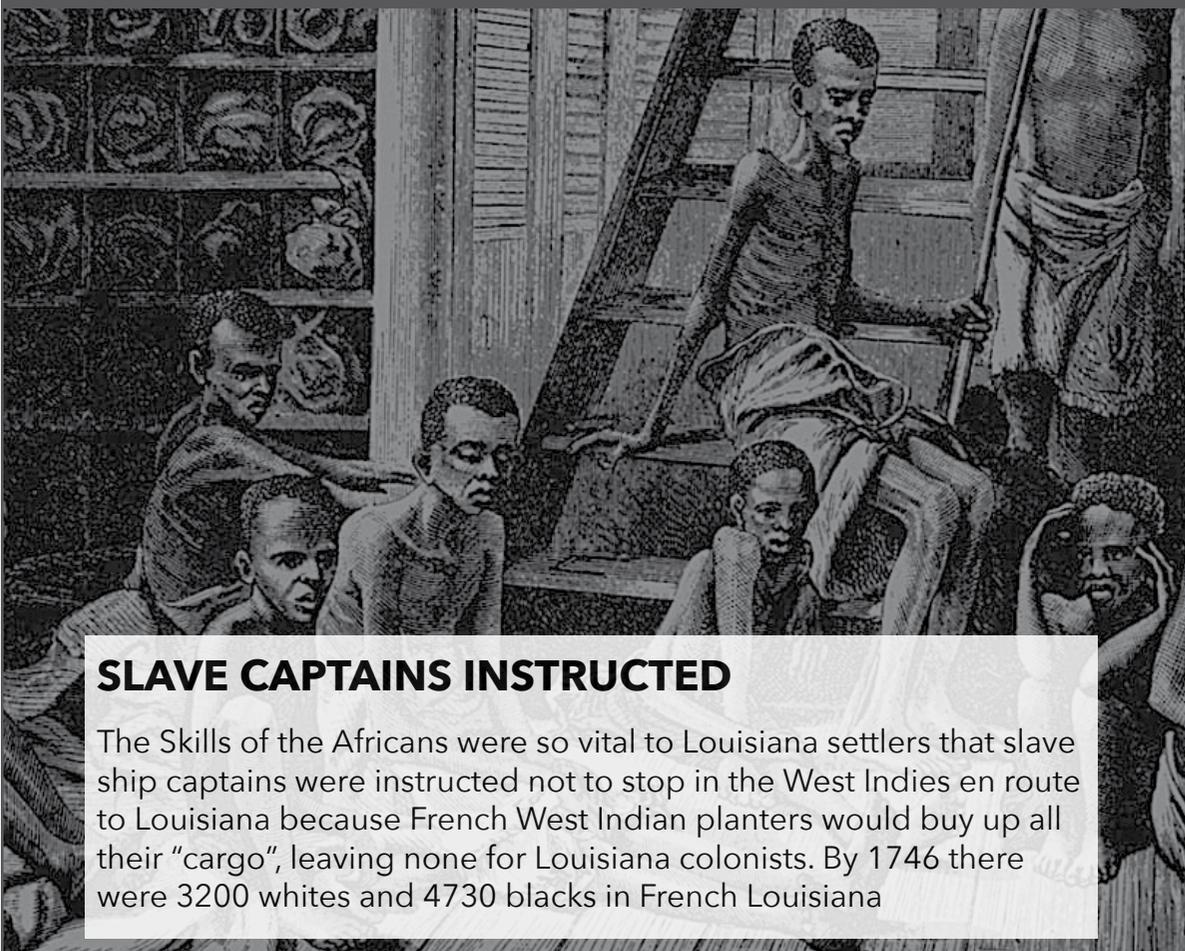
The Krewe's King, Barry

Charles Guy Sr. and Queen Rae'Lyn Denise Fazande, a senior nursing student at Dillard University, graced the crowd with their vibrant floats. The parade lasted for a little over an hour, but the neighborhood parties and gatherings continued.

"I like that this is a neighborhood parade and being able to see my family members participate in it," said Barbara Sanders, a New Orleans East resident.

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TRI-CENTENNIAL BLACK FACTS



SLAVE CAPTAINS INSTRUCTED

The Skills of the Africans were so vital to Louisiana settlers that slave ship captains were instructed not to stop in the West Indies en route to Louisiana because French West Indian planters would buy up all their "cargo", leaving none for Louisiana colonists. By 1746 there were 3200 whites and 4730 blacks in French Louisiana

This week's Black Facts are provided by Plessey And Ferguson Foundation

Newsmaker, Continued from page 5.



Xavier University President Dr. Reynold Verret (3rd right) and Vice President for Student Affairs Dean Joseph Byrd (3rd left) join student leaders on campus for the #HBCUWalkingBillboard campaign on Feb. 8, 2018. (Photo by La'svance Perry)

around people who shared the same background and professors that care a little bit more about my education," said Laci Davis, a first-year biology major at Xavier, from Cincinnati, Ohio. Davis said that being a freshman and seeing upper-class students take pride in the school "feels like a family."

The campaign also helps promote the upcoming film directed by Stanley Nelson "Tell Them We Are Rising: The Story of Black Colleges and Universities." The film is a documentary that examines the mission of Black education on HBCU campuses and the significance HBCUs have played in American culture. The film is set to air nationally on Monday, Feb. 19, 2018 as part of the PBS Series "Independent Lenses." Private screenings were held nationwide on many college campuses, including at Xavier on Feb. 5, 2018.

Prince-Davis said she wanted students to walk away with one message. "One of the things students always talk about is their lack of student morale, so walking away with the understanding that current Xavier students, future Xavier students, past Xavier students have a huge sense of pride for this institution and [they need] to continue to carry that," Prince-Davis said.

The Parade Must Go On, with Thunderstorms 'n All



Thunderstorms and clouds couldn't dampen the spirits of parade goers at this year's Endymion Parade. (Photos by Jade Myers)



The Warren Easton High School Fighting Eagles Marching Band



HBCU Mississippi State Valley University's "Mean Green Machine" Marching Band

By Jade Myers
Data News Weekly
Contributor

Cloudy skies and treacherous rains welcomed the Krewe of Endymion on the Saturday before Fat Tuesday, but as this was expected, the show continued. The krewe began the parade at 4:15 p.m., on Saturday, Feb. 10th on its traditional route at the intersection of City Park Avenue and Orleans Avenue. Bad weather didn't stop the dedicated Mardi Gras-Goers from attending and enjoying the historical parade. New Orleans Saints Rookies of the Year, Alvin Kamara and Marshon Lattimore were among the Krewe's Special Guests. This year's celebrity Grand Marshal was New Orleans Native Jon Batiste, the Bandleader for "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert."

The super krewe started rolling in the Mardi Gras Parades more than 50 years ago and is the only parade to ride to and through the Mercedes Benz Superdome in New Orleans. The krewe has 3,000 plus members and currently holds the record of having the largest float in Mardi Gras, "Pontchartrain Beach, Then and Now," which consists of 250 riders and is over 300 feet long.

"In whatever weather that was going on in the parades, we had to march in it. Whether it was cold or raining," said Kendra Washington, a New Orleans East native who said she danced in past Endymion Parades when she attended Xavier Preparatory High School.

"One thing that I did see, the kids marching in the parades have that we didn't have back then: is rain coats. We didn't have that. We

just got wet," Washington said.

As the parade shifted to night, the dark blue sky captured the creative characters and electrical colors of the vibrant floats. The float riders had a variety of colorful and unique throws to match the theme of their floats, like light-up fidget spinners and beads, stuffed teddy bears, and feathered scarves. Parents held their children on their shoulders to carry them closer towards the floats to receive Endymion throws from the float riders. As the floats continued to move forward, some parade-goers ran after them to hopefully get the specific throw they wanted.

"I wasn't going to miss this parade regardless of the thunderstorm," said Missy Johnson, a New Orleans East native.

"I enjoyed coming back and seeing the marching units and dance

teams, it reminded me of when I used to march in the parade along with my friends. It brings back such wonderful memories, and I can't wait to come again next year," Johnson said.

The parade had a total of 37 floats, along with a line-up of local and non-local marching bands and dancers. For some people it wasn't their first time attending this parade, but for others it was worth standing in the rain, they said.

"I've never attended such an exciting and vibrant parade like this one, the lights, the colors and the people can't be found nowhere else in the world," said Camryn Jones, a Xavier University student who attended for the first time.

"To keep it simple, I'm glad I went and I'm looking forward to going again, even if it's raining," Jones said.

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