



The Bugle 09/01/25

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Shout-Outs

Here's a shout-out to Dee and Marcus Huntley for their contribution to making Game Night at Bastion a success! And to Joe III and Sandra for taking over game night due to scheduling issues. Appreciation goes to all the Bastion staff for their presence, professionalism, and compassion, and congratulations on opening up the San Antonio Headway branch! As always, a special thanks to Oliver, Ms. Sylvia, and Shanrise for their tireless efforts in providing us with delightful meals. Kudos to Deja, for filling in at the food pantry! Please contact Susan with shout-out requests that you may have, so that people can be recognized.

Upcoming One-Off Events for September

09/01 Labor Day, Bastion Staff Out of Office

09/04 at 11am - Yoga

09/10 at 5:30pm - Game Night at Bastion + Pizza

09/11 at 5 to 7pm - Meal followed by Warrior Writers, Vets and Active Duty only

09/12 - Acupuncture 12-3, Massage 12-2

09/13 - 7 to 9pm - Board Games & Beer at Skeeta Hawk Brewery

09/17 at 10am to 1pm - NOLA VA Suicide Prevention Summit (offsite)

09/18 at 5:30pm - Open Resident Council Meeting

09/19, 09/20, & 09/21 - Purple Heart Room is Closed due to Training

09/22 at 11am - Meditation

09/24 at 8am - Breakfast by Ms. Sylvia

09/24 at 5 to 7pm - New Orleans Veterans Coalition (NOVC) at Skeeta Hawk Brewery

09/25 at 3pm - Meditation

09/25 at 5pm - Village Feedup

09/26 - Acupuncture 12-3, Massage 12-2

09/27 at 1 to 4pm - Women's Fellowship by Ms. Sylvia, all women are welcome

Offerings will increase in October. Let the Bastion staff know if you are having any issues with basic needs such as food in the meantime.

BLUE BOLD TEXT is for events that are open to the public.

“Jackson's Corner” by Jackson Smith, JD, Executive Director

Dear Friends,

On the eve of the 20th anniversary we've all been watching loom closer on the calendar, I don't want to spend my column this month recounting recollections of Katrina, as I know so many of us around the community already carry enough painful memories of that tragedy. Instead I want to write to you about the 20 years since then, and what you have built here. Katrina is central to our origin story, both in terms of our location at the foot of the London Avenue Canal Breach, and in the model of care that you all have pioneered here. What we do here is what New Orleans is all about - what the people of this city proved about themselves in the weeks and months after August 29, 2005. There is no other place in America that knows what it means - what it really means, to love your neighbor. Around here we know better than anyone what it feels like to be knocked down hard, and only be able to get back up on our feet with each other's help.

The two decades since Katrina have been far from easy. We continue to struggle with the scars and wounds that storm left on our city. We struggle to raise children who spent their precious early years being tossed back and forth by the chaos and displacement of Katrina's aftermath. We face new challenges like COVID and inflation, and sometimes it feels like the next crisis is waiting around the corner.

But we are still here, together.

Here, in this city and especially in this community, we have found a way to keep moving forward through the power of our connections to each other. The people of this city have proven time and time again that we are survivors. But at Bastion we have shown there is a better way than just surviving. Here, you show that we can go from surviving, to healing, to thriving when we walk our path together. That recognition did not come from our programs or our staff. It came from you. You all have shown what is possible when we truly live as a community, one united around the goal of working together towards a common good.

Now people all over the country are starting to take notice. Leaders at the VA and in Washington have heard about what is happening here on Mirabeau Avenue, and it won't be long until we can make what we do here available to so many more veterans who need it. Never forget that the bright future we are heading towards is yours. You earned it. You built it. You have put in the effort, the empathy, and the compassion it takes to truly build a better way. You will forever have my gratitude for that, and it will forever be one of the greatest prides of my life that I have the privilege to walk the path alongside you all.

With Love,

Jackson

"Digital Detox" by Breyana Robinson
Social Work Intern

What do trees do in September? They turn over a new leaf! Get it?

With the fall season in front of us, it's important to be mindful of how much screen time we're getting while trying to stay out of the cold. This week I want to come to the community with the topic of digital detoxing. In a gist, digital detoxing is being intentional about spending time away from phones, computers, TVs, and other electronics. This doesn't mean that you have to completely throw away your devices, but more so that you set time in each day to put them away and connect with yourself. Some of the benefits of doing a digital detox are better sleep, better focus, and less stress.

Because we all know that our devices are important, try starting by making a plan. Choose a set time each day to put your device down. In these deviceless moments try doing some deep breathing, stretching, or a task that you've been putting off. An important part of being intentional is recognizing the changes that have been made. Acknowledge the changes in your mood or your sleep schedule. You may even find that you pick your device up less overtime.

September is a great time to get ready for the holidays, catch up with neighbors, and get your body moving. Check out Bastion's Little Library to read a physical book, feel a cool breeze on a walk, or make a fall inspired dish. It may also be helpful to get closer to community members by attending a Bastion event or activity.

"Katrina Memories" by Glenn & Melissa

I tried not to, but since this is the 20th anniversary, I had to write an article about Katrina. So here goes.

We were lucky. At the time, we were living in Algiers, on the Westbank, so we didn't flood. But Algiers looked like a war zone. Even though we didn't flood, we lost our roof, and we ended up being dislocated for over a year.

Thankfully, I didn't lose my job. After a couple of weeks of being in limbo, the company I worked for relocated from NO East to Baton Rouge and they rented homes for us displaced employees to live in until we could return to New Orleans. We ended up living in Walker, LA until October 31, 2006.

Another blessing was that we got a new roof on our house pretty soon after the storm. A church from Pennsylvania sent a work crew down with roofing supplies and experienced roofers and we were one of the homes that they worked on.

One of the bright spots during this time was Christmas 2005. We had a very special Christmas because of all that we had been through by being displaced. We also had a lot to be thankful for. It was a very special time for our family that we will remember for a very long time.

Yes, Katrina was a horrible and frightening experience. But God got us through it, and we became closer as a family. For that I am very thankful.

PS. It also didn't hurt watching the Saints beat the "dirty birds" in the first game back in the dome!

Meet Your Neighbor: Pearl White



Our new neighbor Pearl White grew up in the 7th Ward, and spent 2 years as a triage nurse in the Army. After that, she spent 30 years in the hospitality industry, working for a variety of places including Marriott & Chateau Sonesta, as well as

program director of Echo Senior Center. Currently she works as a private sitter for the elderly, taking care of them in their home.

She lives at Bastion with her granddaughter Gionne (age 26), who recently underwent a car accident and might have internal injuries, and is now in physical therapy. They are joined by Kozy, their golden doodle.

Family is obviously very important to her, the photo above is one of her with her son Cornelius (RIP) and her daughter Pebbles.

Her favorite quote is one she made up herself: "Love self, live self, reward self; always stand in your truths, never waver to anyone and always allow God to guide your footsteps."

Ms. Pearl could use some household goods, things for her dog, and bed linens for a queen sized bed. She says she can help Bastion through cooking and baking.

When asked what she wanted me to include in her profile, she said:

Whenever you're in need, speak on it.
Don't ever feel a need to suffer in silence.
Always lend an ear to listen and be there for one another.
Never feel left out.

Please make her feel welcome if you see her.

Air Conditioner Tips

- Request filter change once/month in summer
- 78 degrees F in summer and 68 in the winter
- Not more than 20 degrees lower than outdoor temp
- If you work your unit too hard, it will shut off
- Turn down the temp only 2-3 degrees at a time, repeat in 2-2 degree increments

Texting / Email Issues

If you have missed some texts and/or emails from Bastion, please contact Susan at 504-657-4097 or suelutz@gmail.com to set up a time where she can look at your phone and her computer at the same time to try to troubleshoot the issue.

"Bastion Feels Like Hope" by Susan Lutz

When interviewing former occupational therapy intern Jordan Wingrove for the Bugle, he expressed beautifully, "Bastion feels like hope." This profound sentiment resonates deeply with me.

I find myself experiencing that same sense of hope each day I take steps toward my goal of becoming a web designer. It's a hope that fills my heart every time Malik calls out to me with an enthusiastic "Suuusssannnn!" I sense that hope in abundance when I witness the warmth of people embracing one another, during our many events, and as we forge new and lasting friendships along the way.

The new Wellness Center stands as a beacon of hope and renewal, a place where the essence of Bastion's magic can be shared with other veterans. We will have the opportunity to share Bastion's magic with other veterans, and offer them hope as well.

Bastion Photos



Jackson accepting donation from American Legion Post 307



Jackson, Drew Brees, and Malik at Pickleball Fest



Wellness Intensive folks enjoying an outing at Five O Fore Golf + Entertainment

Resident Council



The Resident Council met twice in August, once on 08/07 and again on 08/21 for an Open meeting.

During the 08/07 meeting, we confirmed that the gasoline generators are in working condition. Malik discussed plans for the adult pool party to take place on 08/17, and we made plans to implement the raffle for the solar generator. We also discussed the plan for the event commemorating the 20th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. It was decided that there should be reminders communicated to the residents to please clean their porches and retrieve their garbage cans in a timely manner.

At the 08/21 meeting, we discussed the desire to be more consistent in welcoming new residents to the community. We will try to be proactive about contacting Bastion staff regularly to find out when a new resident moves in so that we can give them a card and a small gift such as a mug with the Bastion logo on it. Clarissa sought funding for her gardening and after a question and answer period was granted funds. We accepted Caity's requested date of 12/18 at 5pm for a combined residential and Headway Christmas party. Autumn won the raffle for the solar powered generator.

We value your input! Feel free to reach out to us at council@joinbastion.org.

List of September Events..

Mon. 09/01 - LABOR DAY - Bastion Staff Out of Office

Wed. 09/03 at 12pm - Sobriety Support Group *

Wed. 09/03 at 1:30pm - Trauma Releasing Exercises (TRE) *

Wed. 09/03 at 4pm - Food Pantry *

Thurs. 09/04 at 11am - Yoga

Mon. 09/08 at 6pm - Light refreshments followed by Bible Study *

Wed. 09/10 at 12pm - Sobriety Support Group *

Wed. 09/10 at 1:30pm - Trauma Releasing Exercises (TRE) *

Wed. 09/10 at 4pm - Food Pantry *

Wed. 09/10 at 5:30pm - Game Night at Bastion + Pizza

Thurs. 09/11 at 5pm - Meal followed by Warrior Writers, Vets & Active Duty only

Fri. 09/12 - Acupuncture 12-3, Massage 12-2

Sat. 09/13 - 7 to 9pm - Board Games & Beer at Skeeta Hawk Brewery

Mon. 09/15 at 6pm - Light refreshments followed by Bible Study *

Wed. 09/17 at 12pm - Sobriety Support Group *

Wed. 09/17 at 1 to 4pm - NOLA VA Suicide Prevention Summit (Offsite)

Wed. 09/17 at 1:30pm - Trauma Releasing Exercises (TRE) *

Wed. 09/17 at 4pm - Food Pantry *

Thurs. 09/18 at 5:30pm - Open Resident Council Meeting + meal

09/19, 09/20, and 09/21 - Purple Heart Room Closed due to Training

Monday 09/22 at 11am - Meditation

Mon. 09/22 at 6pm - Light refreshments followed by Bible Study *

Wed. 09/24 at 8am - Breakfast by Ms. Sylvia

Wed. 09/24 at 12pm - Sobriety Support Group *

Wed. 09/24 at 1:30pm - Trauma Releasing Exercises (TRE) *

Wed. 09/24 at 4pm - Food Pantry *

Wed. 09/24 at 5 to 7pm - New Orleans Veterans Coalition (NOVC) at Skeeta Hawk Brewery

Thurs. 09/25 at 3pm - Meditation

Thurs. 09/25 at 5pm - Village Feedup

Fri. 09/26 - Acupuncture 12-3, Massage 12-2

Sat. 09/27 at 1 to 4pm - Women's Fellowship event by Ms. Sylvia, all women are welcome

Mon. 09/29 at 6pm - Light refreshments followed by Bible Study *

Offerings will increase in October. Let the Bastion staff know if you are having any issues with basic needs such as food in the meantime.

Coffee Cart is every weekday from 9:30am to 10:45am, and is open to the public!

BLUE BOLD TEXT denotes events that are open to the public.

Asterisk (*) = weekly event. Check emails and texts for the latest information about events.