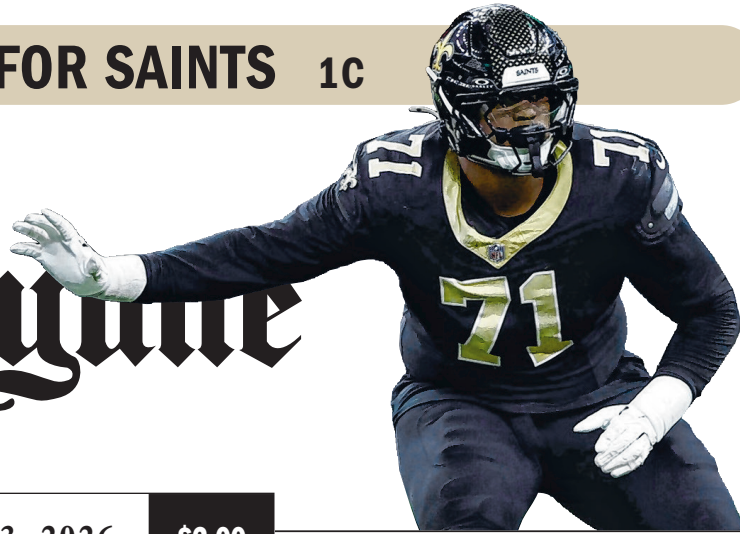


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Brian Sidlauskas, curator of the Royal D. Suttkus Fish Collection and director of the Tulane University Biodiversity Research Institute, stands Dec. 17 among shelves of preserved fish specimens in the Royal D. Suttkus Fish Collection in Belle Chasse. STAFF PHOTOS BY BRETT DUKE

AQUATIC PRESERVE

Former World War II bunker houses vast archive of fish specimens for Tulane

BY ALEX LUBBEN Staff writer

Downriver from New Orleans, behind heavy doors in grass-covered bunkers that stored artillery during World War II, are millions of dead fish. They're preserved and cataloged in rows of glass jars, each one a time capsule, a specimen pulled from a particular place on a particular day, labeled so future scientists can return to the exact moment it was collected. Together, these jars form the Royal D. Suttkus Fish Collection, a kind of morbid library of the Gulf's fish life. "It's the world's largest collection of postlarval preserved fishes," said Brian Sidlauskas, the director of the Tulane University Biological Diversity Institute, or TUBRI, and the curator of the fish collection. "We're getting ready to add another 3 million specimens." At a moment when many research institutions are losing funding, shrinking storage and closing collections, Tulane is expanding this one. Scientists say these "libraries" of preserved animals have become more valuable in an era of rapid environmental change. "If a scientist, 100 years from now,



Paddlefish are kept in a jar in the Royal D. Suttkus Fish Collection at the Tulane University Biodiversity Research Institute in Belle Chasse.

wants to access a particular fish," Sidlauskas said, "it'll be there for them to check out of the library." The Suttkus collection holds more than 8 million fish specimens, the vast majority of which were acquired by the collection's founder, ichthyologist Royal D. Suttkus, who, over the course of a nearly six-decade career, amassed more than 7 million fish in jars. The collection

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La. gets \$208M for rural health care

Funds to aid hospitals, those with chronic conditions

BY MATTHEW ALBRIGHT Staff writer

Louisiana will get more than \$208 million from the federal Rural Health Transformation Program, which the state plans to spend on efforts like treating chronic health conditions, recruiting and retaining doctors and nurses and shoring up hospitals and health clinics, officials announced Monday. The \$10 billion program was created in the Working Families Tax Cuts Act — otherwise known as the "One Big, Beautiful Bill" — that enacted much of President Donald Trump's domestic agenda. Louisiana's share of the program is "among the highest in the nation," the Louisiana Department of Health said in a news release. Nearly 1.1 million people live in rural parishes, more than a third are on Medicaid and more than 1 in 5 are

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Swiss officials say sparkling candles ignited fire

BY JOHN LEICESTER, JAMEY KEATEN and STEFANIE DAZIO Associated Press

CRANS-MONTANA, Switzerland — Investigators said Friday that they believe sparkling candles atop Champagne bottles ignited a fatal fire at a Swiss ski resort when they came too close to the ceiling of a bar crowded with New Year's Eve revelers. Authorities planned to look into whether sound-dampening material on the ceiling conformed with regulations and whether the candles, which give off a stream of upward-shooting

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Magazine Street sees evolution

Popular shopping destination attracts national retailers

BY JONAH MEADOWS Staff writer

With its historic architecture and mix of trendy shops, galleries and restaurants, Magazine Street has long been a popular pedestrian promenade attracting residents and visitors alike.

For much of its century-and-a-half history as a commercial corridor, the street tended to attract small, locally owned boutiques and antique stores to the 19th-century cottages and shotguns that line the thoroughfare, which extends for 6 miles along a natural ridge-line from Audubon Park to Canal Street downtown. Over the past decade, that has begun to change, with more national brands taking notice and moving in. Among the post-pandemic na-

tional newcomers to the busy Uptown stretch of Magazine between Louisiana and Napoleon avenues — one of four swanky commercial clusters on the street — are Reformation, Gorjana, Greyson Clothiers, The Shade Store and Visual Comfort. They join a handful of other national chains, all in the 3900 block, that began populating the street about a decade ago. They include Warby Parker, Marine Layer,

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Popular women's clothing store Reformation opened its first Louisiana store on Oct. 30 at 3909 Magazine St. STAFF PHOTO BY JULIA GUILBEAU

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