Black History Month

ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE BLACK CITIZENS OF THIBODAUX, LA
This presentation was created by the **Jack Conrad Thibodaux Massacre Foundation**.
In this presentation we will explore the remarkable contributions of the African American community in Thibodaux, La. From the time when segregation was the law of the land, to the struggle for integration and advancement, the Black community has developed businesses, structures, and opportunities in the city of Thibodaux. We hope you enjoy the untold stories of the Black citizens of Thibodaux.
Thibodaux, Louisiana

Thibodaux is a city in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana. It is about 65 miles from New Orleans. At one time, sugarcane plantations in Thibodaux produced almost 15% of the world's sugar supply.
19th Century

Black Heroes in Thibodaux
Born in 1834 on the Caillouet Plantation, Jack Conrad was a Civil War Veteran in the 84th US Colored Infantry. His pension file became the voice and told the story of the 1887 Thibodaux Massacre.
To increase the morale of Black American soldiers during World War I, Cordelia Washington was invited to deliver speeches to army units in Louisiana.

Cordelia M. Washington was a renowned Educator and public speaker from Thibodaux, La. She was born in 1876.
A medical student of prestigious institutions, including Harvard and Columbia, Dr. Lawless conducted research to treat syphilis and leprosy.

Born in 1892, Theodore K. Lawless was a world renowned Black dermatologist from Thibodaux, La.
Duplain Rhodes Sr. was a visionary whose business acumen advanced the funeral home services for Black Americans. He was one of the first Black people in New Orleans to own an automobile.

Born in Thibodaux in 1899, Duplain Rhodes Sr. owned the famous Rhodes Funeral in New Orleans, La.
Because of segregation laws, Louis Peltier was allowed to serve white customers in his barber shop.

Louis Peltier was the first Black Barber in Thibodaux. He was born in 1874.
Joe Gabriel had two sons and one daughter. His official employment was listed on the 1930 census as Merchant in the Grocery industry.

Joe Gabriel was the first Black citizen to own a grocery store in Thibodaux. He was born in 1885.
20th Century
Achievements of the Black citizens of Thibodaux
After the Emancipation Proclamation freed enslaved people of African descent, Reverend William Murrell became the first leader of the church. The church was a school for Black children in Thibodaux.

Founded in 1886, Calvary United Methodist Church is the oldest African American Methodist Church in Thibodaux.
In the 1930's, Nolan Billups Sr. owned two Dry cleaners in Thibodaux, and Houma. He was known for "heavy starch" and "fine creases" that allowed his customers to get more wear out of their clothing.

In 1930, Nolan Billups Sr. opened the first Black owned dry cleaners in Thibodaux, La.
In the 1920's Esther Hill was the first Black entrepreneur to cook and sell hot food to Black residents in Thibodaux.
The Sugar Bowl booked famous Black entertainers like Ray Charles, Ike and Tina Turner, Lee Dorsey. Hosea Hill was responsible the first integrated concerts in Thibodaux, booking entertainers like James Brown and Sam Cooke at Stark Field and the Morgan City Auditorium.

In 1932, Hosea Hill opened the famous Sugar Bowl bar and night club.
Annabel Brooks and Delores Jackson

Annabel Brooks and Delores Jackson were the first Black cashiers at the Harlem movie theater in Thibodaux. The theater opened in 1939.
On March 24, 1984, the day of her retirement, Thibodaux Mayor Bert Hebert declared it Eula Anderson day.

Born in 1922, Eula Mae Anderson was the first Black librarian in Thibodaux.
Bishop Shelton Fabre was the first African American Catholic Bishop from Thibodaux, La. He was born in 1963.

The fifth of six children, Bishop Fabre was ordained a Deacon on December 10, 1988 in Leuven, Belgium.
Mount Zion Baptist Church

The first African American Baptist Church in Thibodaux, Mount Zion was founded in 1869.

Today, Reverend Lionel Griffith is the pastor at Mount Zion Baptist Church.
The Harlem Movie Theater was owned by Paul Hill.

The Harlem Theater opened in 1939 for African Americans; it had one screen and 263 seats.
Harriet Scott served her clients in a shop at the back of her residence in Thibodaux.

Harriet Scott was the first Black licensed beautician in Thibodaux. She was born in 1918.
The Anderson Cafe was well known in Thibodaux, and had a soda fountain.

In 1945 Wilbert Anderson Sr. opened Anderson Cafe one of the first restaurants that served sit down lunch to Black residents.
St. Luke Evangelist Catholic Church

Founded in 1914, St. Luke Evangelist Catholic Church was the first Catholic Church for African Americans in Thibodaux.
In 1966, Linda Brickham, Bernard Jackson, Jr, Albert Morgan, and Francis James were the first Black graduates of formerly segregated Catholic High in Thibodaux.
Born in 1932, Gerald Peltier was the first Black citizen to have a street named in his honor.
Born in Thibodaux, Wiletta Thibodeaux was a pioneer in the field of early childhood education in New Orleans.

Born in 1918, Wiletta Thibodeaux was a Black entrepreneur who operated one of the first licensed Black owned daycares in New Orleans.
St. Luke Catholic School

Built in 1916, St. Luke was the first Catholic School for African Americans in Thibodaux.
Thaddeus Richard is a multi instrumentalist. Thaddeus Richard is a jazz musician and actor who has appeared on the tv show *Treme*. 
Gary Clement was known throughout Thibodaux for his contributions to the Black community through rhythm, love and soul.

Born in 1950, Gary Clement was a successful musician, song writer, and composer from Thibodaux, La.
Wilbert Anderson Jr. is featured on the Wall of Fame at St. Benedict College. His family has created a foundation in his name, the Wilbert Anderson Jr. Foundation.

Wilbert Anderson, Jr was the first African American to attend St. Benedict College in Atchinson, Kansas. He was born in 1937.
Sylvester Jackson

In 1978 Mr. Sylvester Jackson became the first African American to head the passport office in Houston.

A retired member of the Air Force, Sylvester Jackson created the passport for astronaut John Glenn to travel to the moon.
Thank you

If you would like to learn more about the work of the Jack Conrad Thibodaux Massacre Foundation, please visit thibodauxmassacre1887.org.

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