



Thursday, February 26, 2026 – Bowie’s Rabbit Hole, 100 Main Street

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Raise a Glass to Freedom: Bar Songs from Then to Now

Taverns were more than watering holes during the American Revolution—they were hubs of debate, dissent, and dreams of liberty. Join us for a rowdy, spirited celebration as we revive the raucous bar songs that echoed through colonial taverns—reimagined for today. Experience the soundtrack of revolution, reinterpreted with a modern twist, and step into the soundscape that inspired the founding of a nation.

In partnership with the Natchez Festival of Music

Bowie’s Rabbit Hole, 100 Main Street

Friday, February 27, 2026 – Natchez Convention Center, 211 Main Street

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Story Pirates Literary Children’s Event

Nashville Room, Natchez Convention Center

11:30am – 1:00pm

Vance Fellows and William Winters Scholars Luncheon

Location TBA

1:00pm – 9:00pm

Art Exhibits on “The Story of American Freedom” on display throughout festival in the Natchez Room.

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

NLCC Opening Ceremony with **Dewayne Middleton**, President, Copiah-Lincoln Community College; **Dan Gibson**, Mayor, City of Natchez; and **Pernell Goodwin**, Vice-President, Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Natchez Campus
Tupelo Room, Natchez Convention Center

“Weaving the Strands of American Freedom,” J. Janice Coleman, Dr. J. Janice Coleman is a professor of English at Alcorn State University, and she is also a quilter and a storyteller.

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

***The Tory’s Wife*, by Dr. Cynthia Kierner**, Professor of History at George Mason University, This engrossing book tells the story of Jane Welborn Spurgin, a patriot who welcomed General Nathanael Greene to her home and aided

Continental forces while her loyalist husband was fighting for the king as an officer in the Tory militia.

Tupelo Room, Natchez Convention Center

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

***King of the Gunrunners; How a Philadelphia Fruit importer Inspired a Revolution and Provoked the Spanish-American War*, by James W. Miller.** Mr. Miller retired from the University of New Orleans as the athletics director. Prior to his tenure there, he spent eleven years as a newspaper reporter and twenty-one years in the NFL. This book is about the untold story of a forgotten American whose adventures helped pave the way for the United States' emergence as an international power.

Tupelo Room, Natchez Convention Center

4:00 -- 5:00 pm

***How to Dodge a Cannonball* by Dennard Dayle**, Adjunct Professor of Writing at Columbia University, a New York-based author, specializing in writing, comedy, and illegal pranks. This book follows Anders, a teenage idealist who enlists and reenlists to shape the American Future—as soon as he figures out what that is, who it includes, and why everyone wants him to die for it. Escaping his violently insane mother is a bonus.

Tupelo Room, Natchez Convention Center

5:00 pm – 5:30 pm

Book Signing

Lobby, Natchez Convention Center

7:00pm – 9:00pm

Scholar's Mixer

Location TBD

7:00 pm – 9:00pm

Screening Event, *Natchez*, A potent choral portrait of a town reliant on its antebellum past to survive, and how its idiosyncratic citizens navigate-and reflect on-their town's history and memory. Winner of Best Documentary Feature at the Tribeca Film Festival.

Nashville Room, Natchez Convention Center

Saturday, February 28, 2026 – Natchez Convention Center, 211 Main Street

9:00am – 8:30pm

Art Exhibits on "The Story of American Freedom" on display throughout festival in the Natchez Room.

9:00 am – 10:00 am

***Southern Ladies and Suffragists*, by Dr. Miki Pfeffer.** Dr. Pfeffer is an independent researcher and native New Orleanian whose work has appeared in the *Encyclopedia of World's Fairs and Expositions*. At the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition, the Woman's Department became a petri dish where cultures clashed but where women from across the country exchanged views on propriety, jobs, education, and suffrage.

Tupelo Room, Natchez Convention Center

10:00 am – 11:00 am

***Whiskey, Women, and War: How the Great War Shaped Jim Crow New Orleans*, by Brian Altobello**, educational consultant in New Orleans—area schools and lecturer on the American Queen Steamboat Cruise Line. As the US entered World War I in 1917, a burst of patriotism in New Orleans collided with civil liberties. The author analyzes the mobilization of the local population in terms of enlistments and war bond sales, gives attention to Prohibition and the

closure of the red-light district, studies the political fistfight over women's suffrage, and examines race relations in the city, as African Americans were integrated into the city's war effort and cultural landscape even as Jim Crow was firmly established.

Tupelo Room, Natchez Convention Center

11:00am – 12:00pm

***The First Code Talkers*, by Dr. William C. Meadows**, Professor of Anthropology and Native American Studies at Missouri State University, Springfield. Drawing on nearly thirty years of research—in U.S. military and Native American archives, surviving accounts from code talkers and their commanding officers, family records, newspaper accounts, and fieldwork in descendant communities—the author explores the origins, use, and legacy of the Native American code talkers.

Tupelo Room, Natchez Convention Center

12:00 pm – 12:30pm

Book Signing

Lobby, Natchez Convention Center

12:00pm – 2:00pm

Ticketed Event

***Food Power Politics: The Food Story of the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement*, Dr. Bobby J. Smith, II**, Assistant Professor in the Department of African American Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. This book unearths a food story buried deep within the soil of American civil rights history. Drawing on archival research, interviews, and oral histories, the author re-examines the Mississippi civil rights movement as a period when activists expanded the meaning of civil rights to address food as integral to sociopolitical and economic conditions.

Rolling River Reloaded, 406 Main St, Natchez, MS

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Fannie Lou Hamer, J. Janice Coleman, Dr. J. Janice Coleman is a professor of English at Alcorn State University, and she is also a quilter and a storyteller. She has developed her patchwork art exhibit over 30 years, featuring a vast array of quilts, cotton sacks, tote bags, and other sewn items.

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

***Moving the Chains: The Civil Rights Protest that Saved the Saints and Transformed New Orleans*, Dr. Erin Grayson Sapp**. Dr. Sapp holds a PhD in English and American History from Tulane University. She has served as a scholar-in-residence for the Historic New Orleans Collection, writing for their magazine, giving talks on local athletics, and researching the Sugar Bowl and Saints-related topics. This book tells the untold story of the athlete protest that necessitated a backroom deal, as New Orleans scrambled to respond to a very public repudiation of the racist policies that governed the city.

Tupelo Room, Natchez Convention Center

4:00 pm – 5:00 pm

***Our Lady of Bewilderment*, Alison Pelegrin**, Mrs. Pelegrin is an American poet, writer, and English lecturer. She is the 2023-2025 Poet Laureate of Louisiana. Whether by way of visitations from secular saints, hauntings from childhood, or back talk from “indelicate broads,” a complicated world speaks to and through Alison Pelegrin in *Our Lady of Bewilderment*.

Tupelo Room, Natchez Convention Center

5:00 pm – 5:30 pm

Book Signing

Lobby, Natchez Convention Center

6:30 pm – 8:00pm

Ticketed Event: Banquet

A Protest History of the United States, Dr. Gloria J. Browne-Marshall.

Dr. Browne-Marshall is a writer, educator, legal advocate, and a playwright. She is a professor Constitutional Law and African Studies at John Jay College, was a Resident Fellow at the Institute of Politics at the Harvard Kennedy School, as well as a Visiting Professor at the Harvard Kennedy School. She won the 2024 American Bar Association Silver Gavel Award. This book explores 500 years of protest and resistance in US history—and what the unsung heroes of social movements past can teach us about navigating our chaotic world

Tupelo Room, Natchez Convention Center

Recognition of William Winter Scholars and William and Harriet Vance Fellows

Recognition of Richard Wright Literary Excellence Award