

Tulane alumni, families and students celebrate record-breaking Wave Weekend '23 with Green Wave spirit

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More than 10,000 people registered for “WAVE23” and its festivities, including reunions, concerts and WAVE23 tailgating for alumni/reunions and for Tulane families. (Photo by Sabree Hill)

Wave Weekend '23 was full of celebration for Tulane students, families, alumni, faculty and staff, friends, and fans. More than 10,000 people registered for “WAVE23” and its festivities, including reunions, concerts and WAVE23 tailgating for

alumni/reunions and for Tulane families. The football game was thrilling, including a sold-out crowd of more than 30,000 people at Yulman Stadium.

The festivities kicked off on Wednesday, Oct. 18, with authors Walter Isaacson and Michael Lewis in Conversation hosted by New Orleans Book Festival at Tulane University. Conversation flowed freely between the authors in front of a full house in McAlister Auditorium, as they spoke about their new books and growing up in New Orleans.

On Thursday, the Lavin-Bernick Center for University Life became a circus for Tidal Wave, with clowns, a tie-dye station and balloon flowers. Windows painted by student groups and a photo op station in front of the Goldring/Woldenberg Business Complex added to the festive atmosphere.

“There was a lot of interactive stuff, but even if you didn’t want to be interactive, there was still stuff you could see,” said first-year student Makai Williams.

“Every time we turn a corner, I see a lady on stilts or something,” said Nancy Pecora, whose daughter, Natalie, is a sophomore. “It’s just so much fun!”

Later in the evening, campaign donors and members of the university’s leadership boards and councils celebrated [*Always the Audacious*](#) — the new iteration of the *Only the Audacious* campaign — with an immersive event highlighting campaign priorities, including the student experience, research, athletic excellence and a vision for downtown expansion.

The uptown campus was a flurry of activity on Friday as more guests arrived. Alumni met former classmates and attended reunions while students showed their families around.

“I’m just happy to spend time with my mom,” said Madeline Livingston, a first-year student. Her mother, Carrie Livingston, added, “I want to get submerged in seeing what she does on a daily basis.”

“I haven’t been back since I graduated 25 years ago,” said Jamahn Lee, an alumnus of Tulane College, “so it’s very different but also very familiar.”

Lee and his former classmate, Darrick McGowan, reminisced about their time at Tulane and pointed out what had changed in Pocket Park since their time as students.

“It has grown, and it’s great to see how it’s grown,” said Lee. “It’s good to feel connected to it after all these years.”

“That flavor and the feeling of Tulane is even better now than it was then,” McGowan said.

On Friday evening, the seventh annual Tipping Point concert featured headlining performers Warren Haynes of Gov’t Mule, three-time Grammy Award winner Joe Bonamassa, singer-songwriter Allen Stone, and singer-songwriter and guitarist Celisse. More than 1,800 attendees were expected to rock out at The Fillmore for the all-star benefit concert, which supports scholarships that will enable qualified students to attend Tulane.

Spirits were high at the tailgating events on Saturday as students and alumni alike prepared for the afternoon game against the University of North Texas.

“I’m so excited to see everybody and have them enjoy it as much as we will on the field,” said Williams, who is also on the Green Wave football team.

“I think the people who don’t come back are really missing out,” said Alan Stone, an alumnus of the School of Engineering and the School of Law, “because it’s a great, festive atmosphere, and there are great events.” He added, “And the fact that we have a winning football team is great, too.”

Tulane’s Green Wave football team won the game, 35-28, to a sold-out crowd and jubilant cheers. This latest victory secured a bid for the Green Wave to a post-season bowl game, a fitting achievement to be made in front of a crowd celebrating the success of Tulane.