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The Soul of New Orleans

The Mayor or the Media?

When journalists become the news - Hell breaks loose



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COVER STORY

Who Was the Newsmaker The Mayor or the Media?
When journalists become the news - Hell breaks loose



By: Kai El’Zabar and Cheryl Mainor
Photos by Victor Holt

There is a frightening trend in today’s mainstream media of reporters becoming the newsmaker, opting to hold the spotlight, or change the course of events in place of their traditional role of reporting what has happened, telling the stories. And although the most recent and egregious accounts tend to reside in our nation’s capitol, - it is becoming clear, that the residual fallout of these practices are felt on the local level; and as the recent controversy surrounding New Orleans Mayor C. Ray Nagin amplifies, it can have serious consequences.

The conclusion brings to light perhaps one of America’s greatest flaws-poor or entertainment journalism. The term, once considered an oxymoron in the legitimate press, has become more flagrant

and is more far reaching today than it has been since the days of “yellow journalism in the 1920’s.” In those days, William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer featured news that was more fiction than fact. In the dog eat dog political climate America faces today, getting the story right, carries with it incredible responsibility. In the case of the city of New Orleans, and its mayor, the stakes are highest.

Integrity of journalism isn’t what it used to be and old standards have withered in light of commercial appeal and the bottom line of news agencies. Newspapers like The New York Times and The Washington Post who set the national standard, have hung their heads in shame as a result of negligent news reporting on behalf of reporters who failed to adhere to the journalist creed to seek truth and report it, minimize harm, act independently, and be accountable.- Instead, accusations of fabricated stories, failure to provide substantial supportive

documentation and an absence fact checking are proving to rule the day. Sometimes it’s for the sake of personal aggrandizement and recognition.

In the book New Media and American Politics, authors Richard Davis, Diana Owen assert that rumor and scandal are an American Tradition. They state, “Americans have a long-standing fascination with rumor and scandal inherited from their British ancestors.” Americans can easily detect this in their daily newspapers, television broadcast and cable news.

The Nagin Newsmaker Speech, what went wrong?

The firestorm on the ground here in New Orleans began when Washington Post Staff Writer, Hamil R. Harris a guest at the NNPA Foundation Newsmaker of the Year Dinner, headlined his story “Nagin Suspects a Plot To Keep Blacks Away.” The story goes on to say, “New Orleans Mayor C. Ray Nagin has suggested that the slow recovery and rebuilding of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina – which has prevented many Black former residents from returning – is part of a plan to change the racial makeup and political leadership of his and other cities,” yet fails to tell the complete story. Good journalists are careful in the art of suggestion and painting the picture for the reader to see; providing the context from which he draws his conclusion. If one listens to Nagin’s speech it is clear that he does not use the word “plot” nor does he define “race” as the incentive for the failure of Katrina’s recovery. Those two key points are the foundation for Harris’ convoluted conclusion. His tie-in to Nagin’s 2006 MLK Day speech citing the reclamation of New Orleans as Chocolate City is not clear, nor accurate.

What were the Mayor’s comments? Facts vs. Fiction

Mayor Nagin was in Washington D.C, Thursday, March 16 to be honored as the “Newsmaker of the Year” by the National Newspaper Publishers Foundation, a one hundred eighty year old federation of two hundred plus Black newspapers that make

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Mailing Address: PO Box 5033, Atlanta, GA 30302 | Phone: (404) 223-5958 | Fax: (404) 223-5491

editorial: datanewseditor@bellsouth.net | advertising: datanewsad@bellsouth.net

Editorial & Business Office: 170 Northside Drive, Suite 506, Atlanta, GA 30313

Terry B. Jones
CEO/Publisher
Glenn Jones
VP Advertising & Marketing
Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief
Cheryl Mainor
Managing Editor

Distribution
Glenn Jones

Contributors
Edwin Buggage
Lloyd Dennis
Hazel Trice Edney
Kai El’Zabar
Chris Fontenot
Dr. Aaron E. Harold
Terry Jones
Larry Lucas
Cheryl Mainor
Renetta Burrell Perry
Mel Whitman

Art Direction & Production
MainorMedia

Contributing Photographers
Victor Holt
Glenn Summers

Editorial Submissions
datanewseditor@bellsouth.net

Advertising Inquiries
datanewsad@bellsouth.net

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COVER STORY

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up the Black Press of America. In a quote, NNPA Foundation Chairwoman Dorothy Leavell says "that Nagin was chosen as this year's top award winner, in part, because of the need for the Black Press, in its 180th year, to focus attention on social and economic injustices still



prevalent in New Orleans and in cities across the nation." This being the basis for the award, it is necessary to review what Nagin said as well as the intention of his communication.

Nagin began his address, "Ladies and Gentlemen, what happened in

conduct a search on the internet and find pages of articles, studies and opinions on the impact on this City and this region as a result of Hurricane Katrina and the breached levees. We do ourselves a disservice when we talk or allow others to talk about this city and its progress and challenges as if the worst natural and man-made disaster in the history of this country did not happen. When more than 400,000 people are displaced under a mandatory evacuation, 80% of the city underwater and city services are shut down, it is not logical to think that the electoral make-up will remain the same. Everything has changed for everyone!" This portion of the statement was not included in the Post or Picayune articles.

Is This a Conspiracy Theory?

The fact is that the original make-up of New Orleans was what it was; predominately poor Blacks (67 percent Black and 28 percent White). To deny that is to deny the reality of what made New Orleans what it is, the same as what makes up Washington D.C.'s Black population. The question becomes, should the Mayor side step the truth because of fear being called a racist for pointing out such truths? Considering that the majority of those displaced New Orleanians were poor, Black and otherwise, logic dictates that their absence from New Orleans would make a difference in the racial and ethnic make-up of the city. Nagin's speech clearly refers to the social economic factor as the most obvious reason for failed response

"I have always been consistent in my statements and I have often challenged the media to be balanced, fair and accurate because at this time, more than any other time before, New Orleanians need and are in search of information to help them make critical life decisions. Unfortunately, this balance, fairness and accuracy have not always provided the media."

—Mayor C. Ray Nagin

New Orleans could happen anywhere. They are studying this model of natural disasters, dispersing communities and changing the electoral process in that community." This statement was one of the major points of contention in both the Washington Post and the Times Picayune articles which slammed Nagin for his remarks and built the "conspiracy" theory talk. However, the Mayor's remarks continued with, "You can

on behalf of those agencies that were to assist and aid the people of New Orleans. With no hint of a "plot" he makes an accurate statement as it pertains to life New Orleans and other urban areas of the nation. The poor districts are not treated with the same respect as the wealthier ones. Nagin was reporting the state of his city's affairs and calling upon the journalists in that room to consider class as a culprit in breakdown of prompt response and rescue to the Katrina

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NEWSMAKER

Blanco Says No to Second Term

By Cheryl Mainor
Managing Editor

With six weeks to go until the next major legislative session and nine months remaining until the expiration of her term as Governor, Kathleen Babineaux Blanco on Tuesday announced

her decision not to seek re-election to the highest office in the State.

Crediting her decision to a great deal of thought and prayer, Blanco has decided to step down from the office; a move which many feel is a result of serious setbacks and criticism from the

lack of progress with the Louisiana Road Home Program.

In her speech, Blanco expressed her frustrations at the partisan politics which she attributed directly and indirectly to the Federal government; which in her assessment has damaged the massive recovery effort for

the City of New Orleans, and its surrounding areas devastated by Hurricane Katrina and the flood which followed. "I am doing this so we can work without interference from election-year politics," said Blanco.

Blanco, who prior to Katrina was proud of her sweeping reforms, and was known for setting the bar high in matters of economic development; suffered from a steady decline in support after Hurricane Katrina devastated Louisiana. As accusations were being leveled around at all the responsible parties in Local, State and in the Federal governments, Blanco was not able to recover to the level of support she held pre-Katrina. The widespread dissatisfaction by Louisiana residents waiting for disbursements from the Road Home Program has been felt at the capital. That, coupled with the announcement by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development alleging that the state was wrongly requiring homeowners to wait for a series of reimbursements rather than offering the option of a lump sum at closing have been suggested by some to be the background for her decision. The State's approach in the Road Home Program, according to HUD, triggers long delays because of environmental and other regulations. To date the abysmal stats of the Road Home number stand at over 115,000 who have applied, yet only about 3,000 have received any grants to date. Hours before Blanco's announcement, officials with the Louisiana Recovery Authority announced that they would be changing the Road Home program to address the HUD concerns.

"Our state has a big agenda in the 110th Congress and all of us must continue to work together, regardless of politics or partisanship, to put our state and its people first."

Blanco's sudden announcement came after several weeks of speculation about whether she would remain in a race she seemed seamed likely to lose. Some Democrats have been pressuring her for months to step aside for a stronger party candidate. Congressman William Jefferson (D-La.) was somewhat surprised at Governor Blanco's announcement that she will not be seeking re-election. He pointed



Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco, is the first woman to be elected to the office.

out that right now, Louisiana has a huge surplus in its bank. If Governor Blanco could establish a better way to run the slow-paced Road Home program, she would probably fair much better in the polls. The Congressman said he believes that Governor Blanco's administration did fall short in many respects where the recovery effort was concerned. He says the Governor herself has acknowledged that. But with 8 months until the next gubernatorial race, Congressman Jefferson still believes the Governor had time to turn things around. He said, "if we were to take a snapshot of how things are for Governor Blanco right now- it would be a very bleak picture." But with some changes in how the Road Home program is run, the Congressman is convinced that the outlook for the Governor could have been more positive. But quitting when the going gets tough? What kind of statement does that send? "

Blanco's departure means that only two announced Democrats remain in the race, Public Service Commissioner Foster Campbell from Elm Grove and the Rev. Raymond Brown, a New Orleans activist, but they all point out that it is still very early in the race. On the Republican side, U.S. Congressman Bobby Jindal (R-La) leads in recent polls over the only other GOP challenger. Besides Jindal, State Sen. Walter Boasso of Arabi is the only other announced Republican candidate, although there is expectation that other candidates will also enter the race on both sides for the October 20th primary.

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STATE & LOCAL NEWS

Team Xavier Triumphs in \$50,000 Ford-HBCU Business Plan Competition



The four members of Team Xavier – (from left) Johnnie Wilson III of Helen Island, S.C.; Jovan Smith of New Orleans; Brenton Combre of Houston, Texas; and Brandon Leach of Marrero, La. – Team Xavier took home first place and a \$50, 000 scholarship prize.

(New Orleans)- A team of four Xavier University of Louisiana students has captured 1st Place honors at the annual Ford-HBCU Business Plan Competition in Washington, DC while earning \$50,000 in scholarship dollars for their school in the process. The “Team Xavier” students are: Brenton Combre, a sophomore business major from Houston, Texas (Strake Jesuit High); Brandon Leach, a senior accounting major from Marrero, La. (Ehret High); Jovan Smith, a junior business major from New Orleans (Warren Easton High); and Johnnie Wilson III, a senior biology major from Helen Island, S.C. (Beaufort High.). They presented their business plan for “One Source Realty, LLC: Offering Affordable Housing for Renters and Home Buyers in New Orleans Post-Katrina,” before a panel of prestigious entrepreneurs during the Annual Conference for the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO) in Washington, D.C. The Xavier students bested teams from Howard University, Florida A&M University, Morehouse College and Spelman College in the finals to claim \$50,000 in

scholarship prizes.

According to faculty moderator Dr. Louis Mancuso, professor of business and the Conrad N. Hilton Endowed Chair of Entrepreneurship, the students developed the business plan in his Introduction to Entrepreneurship class last semester and submitted the 10-page document to the Ford HBCU Business Classic Web site. The plan included the required five key elements: type of business, product service, pricing considerations, target market, competition and general operations. The original nationwide competition was open to HBCU students nationwide and more than 80 percent of the nation’s HBCU’s made submissions. Initial business plans were judged by a panel from SCORE “Counselors to America’s Small Business.” Using overall presentation, its viability and overall benefit to the community as their criteria, SCORE narrowed the competition down to the five teams that were chosen to advance to the finals in Washington, D.C. It was the second year in a row that a team of Xavier students had advanced into the finals of the annual Ford HBCU Business Plan Competition,

an event designed to promote the spirit of entrepreneurship among students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Xavier’s Entrepreneurship Institute’s courses give students the infrastructure necessary to own and operate successful businesses. The learning process includes conducting case studies for actual regional business that need help. The students enhance their expertise in entrepreneurship and the business receives a portfolio containing a business plan. The Entrepreneurship Institute’s mission is to infuse the spirit of entrepreneurship into Xavier’s curriculum through seminars, community outreach initiatives and a program in entrepreneurial studies. For more information on the Entrepreneurship Institute at Xavier contact Dr. Louis Mancuso at 520-5046.

photo cap The four members of Team Xavier “ (from left) Johnnie Wilson III of Helen Island, S.C.; Jovan Smith of New Orleans; Brenton Combre of Houston, Texas; and Brandon Leach of Marrero, La. “ Team Xavier took home first place and a \$50, 000 scholarship prize.

Delgado Architecture Students Win National Award at 2007 International Home Builders Show in Florida

NEW ORLEANS, LA. For the second year in a row, the Delgado Community College’s National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Student Chapter placed third in the nation for the Outstanding Student Chapter Award Program at the 2007 International Home Builders Show held Feb. 7-10 in Orlando, Fla. The event is the largest residential building construction show in the world, attracting more than 100,000 national and international participants. Architectural Professor and Student Advisor P. Victor Mirzai attended the show with 17 of his Architecture students to accept the award and attend a job fair that featured Fortune 500 home building companies.

Delgado students received a plaque, a check in the amount of \$750 and two dozen technical construction/estimating calculators at the awards ceremony. In addition, they received the enthusiastic accolades of the judges, who had been particularly impressed by Delgado’s accomplishments in the wake of hurricane Katrina.

Hornets, Partners Team Up To Revitalize New Orleans East

Homes, playgrounds and schools all part of plan to help revitalize that community

New Orleans – The New Orleans Hornets, the National Basketball Association, Toyota, the Recovery School District and a coalition of legislators representing New Orleans East, led by New Orleans City Councilwoman Cynthia Willard-Lewis, unveiled today a plan to rebuild and revitalize the historic and important New Orleans East community.

The plan encompasses building new homes, new playgrounds, making improvements to existing parks and a commitment to renovating athletics facilities at Sarah T. Reed High School.

“New Orleans East is one of this city’s most important areas, and we believe it will take a total team effort to bring it back to full strength,” said Hornets owner George Shinn. “I’m proud to say we’ve put together the right team to do just that, and together we can help New Orleans East regain its stature as a vital and vibrant community.”

Through the team’s Hoops for Homes initiative, 19 new single-family houses will be built in New Orleans East. Two have been completed to date, and 17 additional sites will now be selected and approved by Habitat for Humanity for construction in the area.

New playgrounds are planned for New Orleans East as well. A partnership with KaBoom!, a national leader in playground construction and an active participant in rebuilding and recovery efforts throughout the Gulf South, has already produced one playground in New Orleans East, and additional outdoor play spaces are in the planning stage now.

Plans to renovate, rebuild and improve parts of Joe Brown Park are also being developed. The Hornets have hosted a number of Jr. Hornets and Summer Hoops basketball clinics at the park’s basketball courts in the past, and plans include improvements to both indoor and outdoor recreation space.

Hornets guard Chris Paul, the NBA and Toyota have taken the lead in renovating athletics facilities at Sarah T. Reed High School by refurbishing the basketball court in the school’s gymnasium. Additional renovations will include new bleachers, locker rooms, training facilities, a football field and other outdoor athletic facilities.

The Hornets conclude their six-game home schedule in New Orleans tonight against the Los Angeles Lakers at the New Orleans Arena. The team will return full-time to the Crescent City for the 2007-08 season.

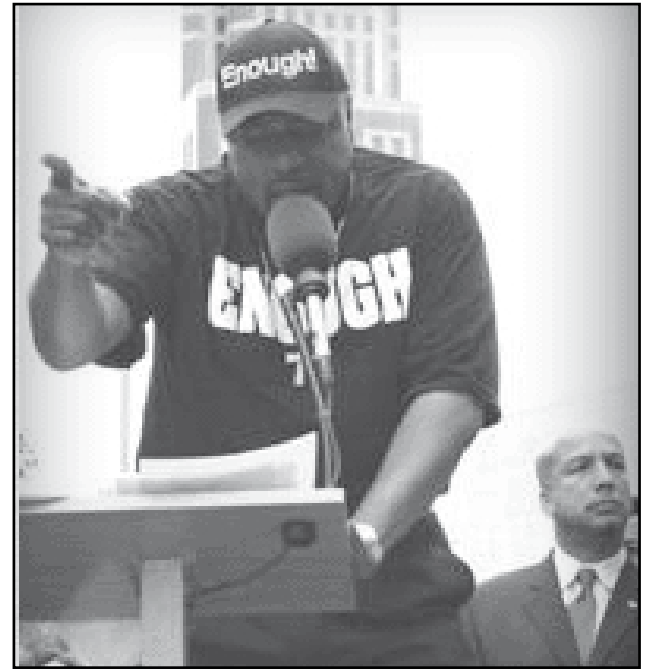
JMJ Foundation TRAIL BLAZERS

Pastor John C. Raphael Hope For a Troubled Community

Renetta Burrell Perry

On the opening page of New Hope Baptist Church's website there reads a small passage: "On Sunday March 4th, after we departed the sanctuary after our weekly worship service, bullets hit the church building and members ran for cover. The shooting shook us all up, but thank God no one was injured. After the excitement settled we discovered a bullet shell on the church's doorstep. The crime and violence that have plagued the streets of our city managed to make its way to the doorsteps of the church. Nevertheless, we still have hope." The recurring theme of hope is not coincidental at the historic New Hope Baptist Church set in uptown New Orleans where crime is commonplace and hope is dismal at best. It has for years, through the relentless struggle, sweat and sometimes tears of their devoted leader, Pastor John C. Raphael, been the norm. From the innovative, yet gut wrenching signs that loom over the city and line the streets along Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. and the surrounding areas declaring ENOUGH, to his presence and participation at the countless community marches against violence, to his eloquent speeches which conjure up feelings and emotions reminiscent of those delivered only by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. himself, Pastor Raphael has emerged as a passionate and powerful leader in New Orleans' most desperate fight - the fight to save African-American lives and diminish the cycle of violence that still plagues us. This fight, says Pastor Raphael, is one that is going on in our community and will have to be won in our community by the people in our community. But he sees it as an opportunity rather than an obstacle, a challenge rather than a chore. Perhaps it is his work at NOPD as a young, committed officer where he headed the Crime Stoppers division that provided his resilience, strength and love of community. Or maybe it was through his divine calling into the ministry in the mid 1980s that helped to mold this courageous forerunner, but whatever the case, Pastor Raphael is determined to build relationships and bridge the gap between law enforcement and the community and consequently between the lost and the saved. "My main motive is that people are not only dying, but they are dying and going to hell. When I was a child everyone went to church. Now people are not even going to church," he says, adding that the disparity in the upbringing of our children has played a major role in the breakdown of the community. As for the ongoing feud between the community and the law, Pastor Raphael suggests that the underlying problem is the collective absence of accountability. "We've lost something in the black

community," he observes. "It has become every man for himself. We have to establish the value of a black life when it is taken by another black person." That value of life, like the recurring theme of hope, is paramount in Pastor Raphael's ministry. It is this simple, yet complex moral issue that sets this pastor apart. He often walks the streets in his church's community, believing that this is the best way to get to know the citizenry thus establishing those much needed relationships. Many times he stands alone holding his "ENOUGH" sign. He jokes that sometimes he has to question himself for holding post on a neutral ground in the heat of the summer, or for setting up residence on the ground for days in the dead of winter, but he quickly remembers that it is on these streets that souls and lives can be saved. He pleasantly recalls a day when the heat was particularly overwhelming. As he stood quietly, observing a feud between African-American males, the occasional glimmer of hope that he strives daily to extract from the gloom was manifested. The youngsters dropped their quarrel in the presence of the determined, yet non-judgmental preacher and offered him some water. This act, says Pastor Raphael, is reassurance that people will respond. It is proof he says, that what is sometimes communicated in the media and by word of mouth is the misconception of despair and fear. "There are folks out there who still respect the church. There are folks out there who will respond. Perception is real to people. We have to go out of our way." Pastor Raphael adds that his church is not bound by what has become commonplace in today's congregations: the big business of church. He is more concerned with people. He is overjoyed when hardened "thugs" come down the aisle, faces adorned by tattooed teardrops, giving their lives over to Christ. He is overjoyed when he sees a mixture of high-end suits and "hood gear" occupying the benches on any given Sunday. And he is overjoyed when through his work with the National Baptist Convention of America's Foreign Mission, he visits Africa and helps to oversee progress with schools and churches in grossly impoverished areas of that continent. But he still sees the opportunity for more work, more challenges. In a recent sermon to his congregation, Pastor Raphael inverted the vastly referenced mantra of the Civil Rights Era. Instead of rhetorically stating that We Shall Overcome, he asked his congregants, "Shall We Overcome?" He submitted



Pastor C. Rafael Hope

to them that if we should overcome, it will be because we have risen to the calling of the church. Using the analogy of seeing the light in darkness, and relating the city after Katrina as a city in the dark, the pastor observes, "At midnight, I should be able to see your light. If I can't see your light in the darkest of darkness, then something is wrong." The light, says Pastor Raphael, should come from those who have been enlightened. He adds, "The church is almost getting like the world, but we are [one of the only entities] that can do something for nothing. We are mandated to do that. People in the community do not share enough common pain. We don't have enough fellowship. My frustration is that I know something can be done. After Katrina, we should have had some major spiritual response. The church has a great opportunity to step up and respond. This city can change. We can step up and be a model for other cities." New Hope Baptist Church continues its commitment to the community and its citizens through a plethora of services. Post-Katrina, they are even more committed to creating innovative ways for New Orleanians to return to the City and to take advantage of major opportunities. "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity that many of our folks are missing out on and others are taking advantage of." He warns that the "window of opportunity" is closing, therefore he and his congregation are steadfast in their approach. After Katrina, when crime hit an astonishing spike, Pastor Raphael prayed. He asked for several weeks, why the city had gone back to the same pattern of crime. He finally got his answer: it is because the church has gone back to their same pattern. When bullets hit his church earlier this month, he was reminded again of the importance of the church and its calling. He speaks of the church's job to evangelize. This is his goal. "We need a revival; a repentance," he says with a renewed sense of motivation. "We still have hope!"



at&t

DATA ZONE

Super Sunday: The Spirit of Brotherhood

by Edwin Buggage

photos by Glenn Summers

The Mardi Gras Indians is a New Orleans cultural tradition has been around for centuries. Annually men, women, and children mask Indian adorning themselves in beautiful costumes made of sequins, beads, and feathers in elaborate colors. The spirited songs they sing during the processions are the equivalent of a rallying cry as they are modern day griots whose sonorous cacophonous sounds unite a community. This

year's annual Super Sunday celebration filled the streets of an uptown New Orleans community that has become a virtual ghost town, but this day it was as if the apparitions reappeared bringing to life the spirit, zest, camaraderie and flavor to the cultural gumbo that is Black New Orleans. This year's celebration held special significance as two luminaries in the Mardi Gras Indian Tradition were recognized; commemorative plaques from the city were given to Big Chief Bo Dolls and Joyce Montana the widow of



concerned citizens are beginning to question what will happen to these traditions? Bertrand Butler feels it may cease to exist if the black population of New Orleans decreases, "I think it may die, but it is a tradition that should be preserved just like any other cultural tradition." Given that one of New Orleans biggest attractions in an economy that is heavily based on tourism is its music and culture, Super Sunday over the years hasn't received adequate funding from the City of New Orleans. A point not lost on Butler, "We have received some funding from the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation, but it was just a drop in the bucket, there is so much more we need to continue and have our event being what we envision because we want it to grow and be an important part of the cultural fabric of the city." But he is upbeat and feels good about the diversity that this year's event attracted, "We had a great crowd it was a great success, we had a gumbo of people Black and White, and people from all backgrounds came together to have a good time in the spirit of unity and that's what Super Sunday is about the different Mardi Gras Indian tribes coming together, and maybe this year

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the legendary Big Chief Allison "Tootie" Montana. Bertrand Butler, who is the spokesman for the Mardi Gras Indian Council and Mardi Indian Museum says, "This city acknowledging Bo Dolls contribution is long overdue, he toured the world making people aware of what we were doing recoding songs like Handa Wanda and sharing our rich cultural gift that is the Mardi Gras Indians to the world." This year's event filled the streets as many New Orleanians who have not been able to return to the city of their birth came from all over the country to experience and bask in the magic of this joyous day that cannot be experienced anywhere in North America, for many this homecoming gave them the temporary feeling the otherworldliness that is life in New Orleans. Renoir Red, who is a native of the Crescent City, traveled from Dallas, Texas to attend talks about how he misses the uniqueness of New Orleans. "I am in Texas right now and it is alright and there are economic opportunities, but its times like this that reminds me there is

nothing like home." As the day continued the chants of revelers resonated accompanied by the percussive drums, tambourines,



and cowbells; people danced in the streets transcending their bodies and at times it felt akin to a religious experience. The day was a that showcased one of the many things that is special and unique about life in New Orleans; and what's at stake as the city's future and fate lies in the balance. As some

with all the different people who came out to the event this could be a symbol for how the city can come back in the spirit of peace, unity, and togetherness." Photos on email

DATA ZONE

DaimlerChrysler Financial Services Announces 2007 Entrepreneurial Award Winners

Photos by Victor Holt



Winners of the 2007 DaimlerChrysler Financial Services/NNPA Foundation Entrepreneurial Award proudly display their checks after being announced at the National Newspaper Publishers annual Newsmaker of the Year Awards Dinner held Thursday, March 15 at the Capital Hilton Hotel in Washington, D.C. The award, now in its third year, celebrates the entrepreneurial and community-minded spirit of the Black Press of America. The Washington Informer newspaper (Washington, D.C.) won the grand prize of \$10,000 for its Financial Literacy Campaign. The Data News Weekly (New Orleans, La.) won Honorable Mention for its campaign to "ReBuild New Orleans". Picture (l-r) are Stephan Koller, Senior Manager of Corporate Communications and Public Relations for DaimlerChrysler Financial Services Americas; Cheryl Mainor, general manager, Data News Weekly; John B. Smith, chair, National Newspaper Publishers Association; Denise Rolark Barnes, publisher, The Washington Informer; Janet Marzett, vice president, Human Resources and Administrative Services for DaimlerChrysler Financial Services Americas; Dorothy Leavell, chair, NNPA Foundation; Terry Jones, publisher, Data News Weekly and Kevin McCormick, Manager of Diversity and Human Resources Communications for the Chrysler Group.

The Honorable C. Ray Nagin, Mayor of New Orleans, congratulates the Data News Weekly for winning Honorable Mention in the 2007 DaimlerChrysler Financial Services/NNPA Foundation Entrepreneurial Award. Pictured (l-r) are Terry Jones, publisher, Data News Weekly; Cheryl Mainor, general manager, Data News Weekly; Janet Marzett, vice president, Human Resources and Administration, DaimlerChrysler Financial Services Americas who presented the award and Mayor Nagin.



The Data News Weekly newspaper (formerly of New Orleans) won Honorable Mention in the 2007 DaimlerChrysler Financial Services/NNPA Foundation Entrepreneurial Award announced March 15th at the National Newspaper Publishers Association's annual Newsmaker of the Year Awards Dinner in Washington, D.C. The paper won \$2,500 for its campaign to "ReBuild New Orleans". Pictured (l-r) are John B. Smith, chair, National Newspaper Publishers Association; Cheryl Mainor, general manager, Data News Weekly; Terry Jones, publisher, Data News Weekly; Janet Marzett, vice president, Human Resources and Administration, DaimlerChrysler Financial Services Americas; Dorothy Leavell, chair, NNPA Foundation and Kevin McCormick, Manager, Diversity and Human Resources Communications for Chrysler Group.



Janet Marzett (right), vice president, Human Resources and Administrative Services for DaimlerChrysler Financial Services Americas presents 2007 DaimlerChrysler Financial Services/NNPA Foundation Entrepreneurial Award to Denise Rolark Barnes, publisher, The Washington Informer (Washington, D.C.). The Informer won the grand prize of \$10,000 for its Financial Literacy Campaign to educate its readers about ways to effectively manage their money and make good financial choices.

Winners of the 2007 DaimlerChrysler Financial Services/NNPA Foundation Entrepreneurial Award proudly display their checks after being announced at the National Newspaper Publishers annual Newsmaker of the Year Awards Dinner held Thursday, March 15 at the Capital Hilton Hotel in Washington, D.C. The award, now in its third year, celebrates the entrepreneurial and community-minded spirit of the Black Press of America. The Washington Informer newspaper (Washington, D.C.) won the grand prize of \$10,000 for its Financial Literacy Campaign. The Data News Weekly of New Orleans, won Honorable Mention for its campaign to "ReBuild New Orleans and special 2006 Municipal Elections issues, and its Get out the Vote Efforts".



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OPINION

Don't Judge or Preach Please Teach



The Love Dr.
Data Columnist

Don't judge or preach, please teach. We have to stop looking for people to blame and begin to look for allies and enemies. Unfortunately this doesn't mean that we can ever afford to forget how we arrived at this place in human history. This is particularly true when it comes to those of us who were able to take advantage of the civil rights movement because we were pre-positioned to do so by the strength of generations of family culture and support. Poverty has been a problem for many of our people, but not our enemy. Poverty is an economic state that can be simply overcome by opportunity. Be it farmers who remained on the land in rural areas or the craftsmen and tradesmen who flourished in New Orleans, when the civil rights laws passed those who had work ethic and family values passed from mothers and fathers only needed opportunities to change their economic state. Unfortunately, due to policies that did not allow households with fathers to receive public assistance, those who left the land and came to the cities found Jim Crow which shut men out of decent jobs and then welfare which gave women a more attractive economic option than unemployed and underemployed black men. It is several generations of children growing up with dual expectations: that working was an option and that men don't help raise children. The enemy was Jim Crow and a welfare state that displaced men in families. So now we have a lot of children growing up completely confused about the role of fathers and healthy mutually supportive relationships between men and women. So where do those of us who know better, because we were raised that way, get the moral high ground to judge these children, when they lack the understanding and confidence that comes from knowing what to do next, because the last generation handed us a road map. When you speak of "common sense" you are referring to the life's understanding that was passed to you by elders. Its human nature to be more compassionate for a five year old than for a twenty year old. We can hear a five year old child cussing like a sailor and compassionately understand that the child has little choice in its behavior, instinctively understanding that it is simply copying its elders. However, when we look up a see a twenty year old mother, our attitude changes. We expect her to have our "common sense"

with out doing the math. The little foul mouthed five year old was born when the mother was fifteen, so that means only ten years before she gave birth she was probably also a foul mouthed five year old victim of the same example. I don't want anyone upon reading the previous paragraph to think for one second that the twenty year old mother doesn't have "common sense", she does, but it doesn't match ours because it came from different places and has different issues to cope with. Where she lives, not being perceived as tough and hard will cost you your pocket change, may get you beat up or raped, or to a child perhaps just a bad, not included in the group. Being polite or soft spoken will get your behind kicked, or screwed if you are a boy, so cussing like a sailor makes a lot of sense. Neither the twenty year old nor the five year old want to limit themselves, but its all they have learned how to do, like her at fifteen, yearning for some man love. Just because she didn't have a daddy in her life doesn't mean he wasn't missed. Girls who never felt the power and safety of daddy love are confused and yearning for love from a man, so the first man that comes along and makes her feel special for a minute (a burger and fries) can get anything he wants in return. None of us who inherited "common sense" that serves us well has any moral ground from which to judge those whose package of "common sense" is limited to survival in the culture of cyclical single parenting in social environments limited to other people just like themselves. Those of us who know better live in other places. Then adding insult to injury, the people who need the most get the worst schools and the excuse for the schools being ineffective is a lack of "parental involvement" or educational support at home. Hell, if the kids had those two things there wouldn't be a cyclical poverty problem. So here we are, with a cyclical parenting problem and all we can say is if we had better parenting the (parenting) problem will go away. My experience is that when there is no opportunity to learn from experience, being taught by someone who knows is the only opportunity to know something different. My experience is also that judging others is a way to escape any responsibility for doing anything. Ignorance is not a character flaw, but a lack of opportunity to know better, and sometimes that lack of opportunity comes from a ghettoized peer pressure that makes doing well in school a dangerous and daring act, the "common sense" of day to day survival and inclusion in the world of cyclical poverty. Nothing comes from judgment except a false sense of superiority, and the non action we call neglect. Norman Vincent Peale had a favorite saying, "It is better to light a candle than curse the darkness." To me the metaphor of lighting a candle means teaching and helping people understand rather than cursing them for not getting the same "common sense" that we got from our elders.

Turning A City Of Renters Into Homeowners

Point of View
By Nurhan Gokturk

Returning to New Orleans is not easy. Stepping back into a flood-damaged environment is something none of us have ever done. There is no "how-to" manual to navigate permits, reconstruction and in general, getting a lost life back to normal. Despite this challenge, anyone wanting to return to New Orleans can. There's a lot of talk lately about the role apartments and public housing fit into the "new" New Orleans. What role will housing now play in the comprehensive plan our city desperately needs to get off the ground? While post-storm tax credits and other incentives are laudable initiatives, now is the time to advocate long-term home ownership over month-to-month rental ownership. New Orleans has always been a town of renters. Pre-Katrina, statistics showed this city's ratio of those owning homes compared with renters was the exact opposite of national trends. We need to be

a place where returning home can lead to keys that open doors we own – not that of government subsidized units and helping to pay a landlord's mortgage. We all know rents have skyrocketed since the storm. In this supply & demand dynamic, maybe now is the time New Orleanians should take a long look at the many private market incentives encouraging home ownership. Neighborhood revitalization groups and local banks offer free classes to educate the public to manage debt, establish credit and in general become worthy candidates to obtain America's number one goal: owning their own home. We can continue to plan and debate what New Orleans will ultimately look like as far as housing is concerned. But now's the time to change our thinking that has ruled the housing culture here for decades. Increasing home ownership rates could be a catalyst to attract outside real estate interest to New Orleans. The possibilities are endless.



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COMMENTARY

Never Ceases to Amaze Me!



Terry B. Jones
Publisher

committee is in an ongoing struggle to force the powers that be including the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide housing availability and opportunities for lower income New Orleanians (majority Blacks). There are almost no programs or incentives for middle income New Orleanians, who are mostly renters to come back (mostly Black). Tell me is this a coincidence, or is it by design?

My humble opinion is that the reason the complexion change of New Orleans after Katrina is so sensitive to the "powers that be" is because they want to set the

illusion that the culture of New Orleans will not change for tourism dollars sake, even though the majority of those New Orleanians, who create the culture, will not be here. If that is the case, then shame on you "powers that be"! And more importantly, it won't work!

Our passion for our city is obvious. When similar obstacles were present during the mayoral elections, there was a resounding passionate message of ownership of the future of our city. That passion is surely still there, if we look at how many consistent Data News Weekly readers either pick up the paper in Jackson

MS, Baton Rouge, and here in the city or those who read it on our website from across the country and those that also read The New Orleans Agenda website. They are tracking the progress and are looking for the opportunity to get back to our city! In looking at those examples, I truly feel that if there are "powers that be" they may slow, but they will not top the progress of New Orleans. Our return will be much higher than the assumed 33 – 35%. This will once and for all prove New Orleans is not the city of the "powers that be", but it is and was and always will be the city of the people.

New Orleans before Katrina, was a community of approximately 69% African Americans, about 3% Latino, and the rest Caucasians about 28%. Now it is a "no brainer" that large portions of the African American population, 69%, was lower-to-middle income, and a little larger than 50% of us were registered voters. We also understand that the majority of the 28% White were upper income and registered voters. This was the social political makeup of the City of New Orleans.

Now let's look at some of the other numbers. African Americans contribute approximately 700 billion as a consumer group to the American economy. The reason that we are the largest consumer market in the nation is not because of upper middle class black spending (incomes of 35k and up) but from middle and lower income African Americans (30k and under), who spend disproportionately from their incomes. Little goes into savings accounts of any kind in this consumer group, no stocks, no bonds, no mutual funds. Ironically, the majority of their entire income is spent on goods and services. My point being that before Katrina, New Orleans lower-to-middle Blacks were the largest economic bases for the city. Not to mention they were also the cultural and musical flavor of the city, which was and still is the driving force for tourism, the largest revenue base for the city.

Of course I am certainly not saying that White New Orleanians do not participate in the tourism trade, certainly Bourbon Street strippers, and Mardi Gras balls are majority white. I guess what I am saying is what part of Chocolate City pre-Katrina are you missing? Every time anyone alludes to the culture or the economic base changing after New Orleans rebuilds, there is an uproar when every study that I have seen says that New Orleans will probably be more around 33 – 35% Black when all is said and done.

Why?

Is it because we Black New Orleanians don't want to come home? I don't think so. The Road Home Program provides opportunity and incentive for homeowners (upper income) to come back. On the other hand, Congresswoman Maxine Waters (D-Ca) who now chairs the housing





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LSU AgCenter Inaugurates Youth Wetlands Week April 16-20

During the week of April 16-20, school children in every parish will learn lessons about Louisiana’s wetlands, and some will actually participate in wetland renewal projects at neighboring wetland sites. These lessons and activities are all part of “Youth Wetlands Week,” which educators at the LSU AgCenter hope will become an annual event in the state.

“The goal is that more people understand the critical importance of upland and coastal wetlands and the need to prevent further loss,” said Dr. Carrie Mendoza, coordinator of environmental education for the LSU AgCenter. “By targeting young people, our efforts will have a longer-term impact.”

More than 17,000 young people will participate in about six hours of lessons during Youth Wetlands Week, taught by 232 teachers in 135 schools. In addition, 43 schools have agreed to coordinate a restoration planting at a nearby wetland, Mendoza said.

“We are more than pleased with the response this first year,” said Dr. Mark Tassin, director of the 4-H program for the LSU AgCenter.

4-H agents across the state were in charge of recruiting schools to participate. These agents, along with members of AmeriCorps stationed in Louisiana, also will help with the teaching and carrying out the outdoor projects, Mendoza said.

Youth Wetlands Week came about through a \$1.5 million grant from the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR).

“This educational program will engage our young people in the fight to keep our wetlands alive,” said Scott Angelle, LDNR secretary.

Arts Council of Baton Rouge Presents ‘An Evening With Stephanie Jordan & Wess ‘Warmdaddy’ Anderson’

Baton Rouge, LA (BlackNews.com) - The Arts Council of Baton Rouge and the Baton Rouge Area Foundation are pleased to present a great night of jazz featuring Alto saxophonist Wess ‘Warm Daddy’ Anderson and jazz vocalist Stephanie Jordan with the Wess Anderson Quartet & Marlon Jordan (trumpet). An Evening with Stephanie Jordan & Wess ‘Warmdaddy’ Anderson is a cultural celebration of two great artists and two great jazz cities! The concert takes place on Thursday, March 29, 2007 at 8:00 PM in the Manship Theatre, 100 Lafayette Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70801. For both, the Louisiana tour is sort of a homecoming. Stephanie and Wess most recently performed together this past fall at the famed Allen Room of Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York. Ms. Jordan who has been living in Maryland since hurricane

Katrina is the fifth performer to emerge from a family of New Orleans bred musicians. Stephanie Jordan has recorded a commissioned piece for the Baton Rouge Area Foundation of Come Rain or Come Shine which is being used as background music for a series of television and radio promotions advancing the availability of assistance for those who may be suffering from post-disaster distress as a result of hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The campaign is part of the InCourage partnership; a healing initiative by the Baton Rouge Area Foundation. Both pieces include a narration by noted New Orleans Chef Leah Chase. Brooklyn native Wess Anderson was member of the Wynton Marsalis Septet since 1988, he also played lead alto for the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra from 1992 to 2005. As a leader, Mr. Anderson has recorded and released four solo albums. He

performs and teaches around the world, and is professor of saxophone at Michigan State University. Anderson is a frequent participant in Jazz at Lincoln Center educational events, and he served on the faculty of the Juilliard Institute for Jazz Studies. Following the Baton Rouge performance, the pair will head to Lafayette for two shows the following night on Friday, March 29, at 7:30 and 9:30 PM in The Ballroom, located at 417 Jefferson Street in Lafayette, Louisiana. For ticket information on the Lafayette shows, please contact the Performing Arts Society of Acadian: For ticket information on the Baton Rouge show at the Manship Theatre, please visit either: <http://www.artsbr.org/index0.html> or <http://www.manshiptheatre.org/main.php> Call 344-0334 for your tickets



Mark Lawes, Owner of Kisses Jazz Club is in a battle with Gentilly Civic Improvement Association (GCIA) and other local organizations to continue operating his nightclub

The GCIA is attempting to close his club, citing they do not want a bar in the neighborhood for fears of crime, Lawes contends there has been none.

By: Mel Whitman

A battle is brewing in Gentilly over the operation of Kisses Jazz Club, located at 3815 Frenchman St. Members of the Gentilly Civic Improvement Association (GCIA) and other Gentilly area neighborhood groups joined

forces to oppose the operation of the club, which prior to Katrina had been operated as another nightclub, under ownership other than its present owner Mark “Johari” Lawes. On Tuesday February 27, a hearing of the New Orleans City Planning Commission resulted in a 3-3

Legally Operated Black Business Under Siege

deadlock of the commission over the issue of whether or not to allow Lawes to continue operating the establishment under the Alcoholic Beverage Outlet license that he currently holds. A Times Picayune article about the upset Gentilly residents’ opposition to licensure of the nightclub reported that the City Planning Commission’s assistant director Leslie Alley alleged that the temporary permits awarded to Lawes to operate the club were given to him in error. Despite a recommendation in a written report by the City Planning Commission staff which said continued operation of the nightclub would not “adversely impact adjacent properties” and the lack of documentation proving that significant illegal or otherwise harmful activity has taken place at or near Kisses Jazz Club during the year it has spent at its Frenchman St. address, the commission was unable to approve a permit for conditional-use for the building, which would allow the venue to be legally run as a bar. Lawes questions the motives of the GCIA in raising such forceful resistance to the continued operation of his business. “The GCIA is a

political agenda that’s not doing such a good job of disguising its covert strategy to rid Gentilly of its current group of determined entrepreneurs; the people who put their money right back into this community immediately after Katrina. It’s the Cynthia Hedge-Morrell backed political version of ethnic cleansing in my opinion,” said Lawes. The same Times Picayune article quotes GCIA member Jeanne Marie Jean as alleging that “The bar has been a constant nuisance.” Jean said that over the years, there have been reports of rapes and robberies in the area around the club. Conversely, Lawes, who claims to be one of the earliest business owners after Katrina to open on lower Frenchman St., says that there have been no incidents of crime that can be attributed to his club during its occupancy of the building at 3815 Frenchman St. “I’m one of few business owners who quickly re-inhabited and rehabilitated one of the many destroyed buildings on Frenchman St. just months after Katrina. I operate a safe and classy establishment that allows many of our local musicians the opportunity to play music and take care of their families. Whatever crime they’re

referring to just hasn’t happened since the place has been Kisses Jazz Club,” responded Lawes. In a recent email exchange between Lawes and Gentilly Terrace and Gardens Improvement Association (GTGIA) President Norm Whitley, Lawes’ request to speak at the GTGIA’s next meeting was met with a strong warning from Whitley that chances are slim that anything Lawes would tell the organization would change their stance on Kisses Jazz Club. In his initial email, Lawes writes “I want to make myself available to answer any and all questions [regarding] Kisses and my intentions [in] operation of the business at 3815 Frenchman St. I am hopeful that this process will allow us to better understand each other’s fears and concerns.” Whitley’s stern rebuttal reads “I do want to state that I doubt that you will say anything to change our minds about this situation. We do not want a bar in or around our neighborhood. We have real, dire needs in Gentilly.” Since the City Planning Commission was unable to reach a decision regarding the club, the matter will be decided by the New Orleans City Council when it convenes in early April.

Cover Story, Continued from page 3.

disaster.

In Nagin's speech he mentioned a "They" who dispersed New Orleanians across the South and throughout 44 states after the flood. According to the Mayor, this statement meant the Federal Government, especially FEMA. It is a fact that people were moved and families were split up, many not knowing where they were, and none with a return ticket home. That statement has been categorized by the mainstream press to be one of a "conspiracy theory" and has been the subject of blogs for the past few days. Many have even gone so far as to call into question Nagin's "ability" to be objective, and say this is proof that is not "fit" to be Mayor and is a racist.

In response to these allegations Nagin talked exclusively to Data News Weekly and said, "I have always been consistent in my statements and I have often challenged the media to be balanced, fair and accurate because at this time, more than any other time before, New Orleanians need and are in search of information to help them make critical life decisions. Unfortunately, this balance, fairness and accuracy have not always provided the media."

The Mayor continued on to say, "Our city experienced a mandatory, not voluntary, evacuation - a 100% shut-down! This has never happened before in this country's recent history. And as a result, citizens - parents, grandparents, children, business owners, workers - lost not only tangible possessions, but are losing their rights as New Orleanians. As a result of still being displaced, many have to register to vote in other cities, change identification, etc."

He further stated, "As Mayor of the City of New Orleans - of all people, white, black, brown and yellow - I care about and will continue to represent and speak for the rights of our fellow New Orleanians to return to their rightful home."

Nagin's speech was a report on the current social, political and economic circumstances of the people of New Orleans as a consequence of the Hurricane Katrina disaster with the intention of appealing to the Black press to continue its efforts to tell the story of these people who continue to struggle.

In both articles in the Post and Picayune, the following statement was printed; Referring to Landrieu,

who is white, as "the golden boy," Nagin suggested his chance at re-election in the mayoral race had seemed slim because "they dispersed all of our people across 44 states with one-way tickets."

However in his speech the actual statement was much broader, and contextually different. Nagin said, "When they put the golden boy up, all the prognosticators were saying there's no way you're going to win, because, see, they had dispersed all of our people across 44 different states with one-way tickets out. They thought they were talking about a different kind of New Orleans, and they didn't realize that folk were awake and they were paying attention, and they weren't going to let a plan unfold that changed all the history of what we have fought for over many, many years."

Contrary to the other articles' assertions, Nagin carefully steered away from the "race" issue and clearly suggested the "class" issue. Further when asked for clarification, the Mayor stated that his use of the term, "the golden boy," referred to "the most well financed candidate running," who in fact was Republican challenger Ron Foreman.

Adding fuel to the flame, The Times-Picayune ran a story Monday compounding the problems with the Post's account. The Times-Picayune's story, most of which was attributed to the Post, said that Nagin "told" the newspaper group that a plot was afoot, whereas the Post story said that Nagin merely "suggested" such a plan. The point can be made the Mayor nor his speech was the Newsmaker, rather, the media through its misrepresentation of quotes in fact made the news what it was. The facts of the speech do not support their conclusions.

Good journalism beckons the journalistic instinct to pursue truth and accuracy at least. Investigation, research and fact-checking are essential. Without that you may have a story but it's not news it's fiction and unfortunately more and more fiction is being passed off as news reporting. Americans may be witnessing the demise of the news industry as we know it, as it becomes more and more entertainment driven. This may be the biggest injustice to all people, especially to those who are victims of its reckless scorn.

Obama: Sharpton's Alleged Jealousy 'Concocted by the Press'



Data News Weekly Publisher Terry Jones and Presidential Candidate and Senator Barack Obama (D-IL) stop for a photo during a legislative meeting between Congressional Black Caucus Members and members of the National Newspaper Publishers Association during Black Press Week.

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - U. S. Sen. Barack Obama, a leading candidate for the Democratic nomination for president, has denounced reports of a rivalry between him and former presidential candidate Al Sharpton. In response, Sharpton has all but declared that he will not run again for the Democratic nomination.

"This is just something that was concocted by the press, the New York Post," Obama said in an interview with the National Newspaper Publishers Association News Service at a reception celebrating the 180th Anniversary of the Black Press last week. "It had nothing to do with my campaign. We talk frequently and I'll be at his convention coming up in April," he says of Sharpton.

Responding to Obama's comments, Sharpton hinted this week that he will not run for the nomination again.

"I have not announced that, but I probably will announce it at the conference," Sharpton says. "All of the candidates are speaking at the conference. And after that, we'll decide where we're going and who ever we decide we're going to support, I'm definitely going to campaign for."

The National Action Network's annual convention is scheduled for April 18-21 in New York.

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Charlene Larche-Mason, Esq.

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HEALTH NEWS**Colorectal Health Screenings Can Make Life or Death Difference**

Larry Lucas
Data Columnist

I'd like to think I've learned a lot about human behavior over the years. For example, I've learned that nine times out of 10, people will tell you darn near anything if you just listen "they'll give you the play-by-play of their son's soccer game, the intimate details of recent spats with their spouses, even the particulars of their health concerns. In my work to represent America's pharmaceutical research companies, I've heard my fair share of the latter. Even so, there are certain important health topics that remain relatively under wraps. Colorectal health is one of them.

According to the American Cancer Society (ACS), colorectal cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer-related deaths in the United States. Even more disturbing, the ACS reports African Americans have the highest incidence and mortality. There is no single cause for colon cancer, and most cases have no symptoms "which is why proper screening is so important.

Understandably, talking about colorectal health isn't at the top of the list for polite conversation. But the topic needs to be discussed because too few people "African Americans in particular "are getting the regular screenings they need to stay healthy. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that colorectal cancer screening lags far behind screening for other cancers, such as breast and cervical cancers. In almost all cases, early diagnosis through regular screenings can lead to a complete cure, according to the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

One way colon cancer can be caught in its earliest and most curable stages is by colonoscopy. A colonoscopy is an internal examination of the colon (large intestine), using an instrument called a colonoscope, a small camera attached to a flexible tube. Almost all men and women age 50 and older should have a colonoscopy, according to the NIH. I know it sounds uncomfortable, but in reality most patients are asleep for the entire procedure. If Katie Couric can undergo a colonoscopy on national television, as she famously did in 2000 on the "Today Show," you can certainly do it in the privacy of your

doctor's office! Ignorance can be bliss, but this is not one of those cases.

Thanks to Medicare's expanded coverage, more people than ever have access to colorectal screening tests to help find pre-cancerous polyps (growths in the colon) so they can be removed before they turn into cancer. Be sure to ask your doctor how often you need these tests and what kinds of tests are best for you. Regular screening tests are essential because studies show that from the time the first abnormal cells start to grow, it takes about 10 to 15 years for them to develop into colorectal cancer. Screenings are vital to early detection and prevention.

It's also critical to know your risk factors. While there is no know singular cause for colorectal cancer, risk factors can help your doctor determine what screening tests are appropriate for you. According to the ACS, you have a higher risk for colon cancer if you have colorectal polyps, cancer elsewhere in the body, a family history of colon cancer, ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease or a personal history of breast cancer.

There is promising news on the horizon in the fight against colorectal cancer. The work of celebrities like Katie Couric, Diane Keaton and Morgan Freeman has helped bring greater awareness to the issue. And, as more cases are found early and treatments improve, the number of deaths due to colorectal cancer has declined. The ACS reports that the death rate for colon cancer has dropped in the last 15 years. Yet, there is more work to be done.

America's pharmaceutical research companies are doing their part to help treat many forms of cancer, including colorectal. A new PhRMA report shows that there are 646 medicines in development today to treat patients with cancer. One such medicine is a monoclonal antibody that targets the epidermal growth factor receptor, which mediates growth signals upon which cancer cells can become dependent. By blocking the receptor, this medicine may eradicate existing cancer cells and stop future cancer cell growth.

It's important that everyone who needs these innovative medicines be able to access them. That's why America's pharmaceutical companies sponsor a national clearinghouse of patient assistance programs called the Partnership for Prescription Assistance (PPA). Since April of last year, the PPA has helped connect nearly 3.5 million patients in need to programs that provide either free or nearly free medicines. For more information, patients can call 1-888-4PPA-NOW or visit www.pparx.org.

Colon cancer doesn't have to be a death sentence if caught early enough. Shed some light on this important issue today by asking your doctor if you're getting the colorectal health screening tests you need.

Larry Lucas is the vice president for Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA).

IN THE SPIRIT**Divine Healing in these Stressful Times**

Dr. Aaron E. Harold
Data Columnist

Friends, it will almost be two years this August, since Hurricane Katrina. Today it is as true as it was yesterday that many of us are still facing some difficult challenges and going through changes in our lives. Everyday when we get up and start our day, there are decisions that we have to make. Some of us have gone on with rebuilding our lives and that's great, but on the other hand, some of us are struggling just to make from it day to day. Many of us are experiencing stress and anxiety after Katrina and Rita and some of us feel that there is no hope. As many people's lives have changed drastically since those tragic days where our city was under siege from mother nature and man's negligence; in its after affects it has caused New Orleanians from all walks of life to experience feelings of anxiety and depression. Today as many of our citizens try to put the pieces of the puzzle that is their lives back together many are suffering from "Post-Traumatic Stress" disorder. This type of stress comes after a person has experienced a series of devastating events. This type of stress can be triggered after an earthquake, military combat, rape, airplane crashes, and for many of us, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The question now is, "How do we deal with these problems?" Anxiety and stress are part of everyone's life. Who will experience these problems? Well, everyone will from time to time for stress and anxiety does not exclude anyone. Some lives are afflicted by these conditions far more overwhelmingly and painfully than others. Researchers estimate that almost 20 percent of the

population meets the criteria for some form of depression at any given time. Depression is the second most costly disease in this country. The costs in terms of direct treatment, medical care, lost productivity, and shortened life span it is estimated at 44 billion dollars a year. Ranking second only to cancer in terms of its economic impact; couple with the fact that depression also leads to many suicide deaths each year. There is no question that major depression is a serious illness. If you have it, most likely you have real trouble getting through your daily routine, and also make communicating with people very difficult. Depression is a condition that for those who are afflicted by it is a serious challenge which does not go away on its own. However, there is good news for all of our sicknesses and diseases. The answer to all of our problems is in the word of God. In Matthew Chapter 4 verse 23, says that Jesus healed all kinds of sicknesses and diseases amongst the people. In Exodus Chapter 15 verses 26, God himself tells Moses to tell the people, "I am the Lord that heal you." Take the time to put yourself in the presence of God, because in God's presence you will experience the fullness of his joy. King David went through much difficulty with the lost of some of his children and other personal issues, but he found joy in God. In Psalms Chapter 16 verse 11, Jesus and his disciples many times got away from time to time from ministry work to go fishing, and to enjoy each other. Learn to get with people that are positive and that will encourage you. Take more time to meditate on the goodness of God, and not what you lost. God cares for you and me (John 3:16 & 1 Peter 5:7). My brothers and sisters, if you are suffering from these conditions, seek a professional, but don't hesitate to get some spiritual help and counseling. And as always put God first and you will always be blessed, stay strong; keep the faith and may you have a healthy recovery.

Dr. Aaron E. Harold is the pastor of New Millennium Breakthrough Ministries. To contact him with your comments or suggested topics he can be reached at rhrold1@cox.net or (504) 813-5767

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ADVERTISE

SPORTS

The University of Texas "UT" Mastermind Hooper from New Orleans is called "D.J."



Chris Fontenot
Data Columnist

Sir D.J. Augustin, Mr. Primetime, the Golden Child, Mr. Magic and all of that good stuff are not big enough accolades to label "D.J." Augustine. D.J. stands 5-11 inches, and about 175 pounds wet. This kid can defend, dribble, shoot, pass, orchestrate, lead, and win. He plays along side and often in the shadow of Kevin Durant, who is having a stellar freshman year, and who, like D.J., was a McDonald All American and is a future NBA player. During D.J.'s three (3) years at Brother Martin High School, he led the team to three straight runs at the state championship game. Only Hurricane Katrina could stop the fourth year that Mr. Basketball of N.O. would steer his team to the final game. He spent his last year at Fort Bend Hightower in Texas. This young star played in the McDonald's All Star game during the summer prior to attending the University of Texas. Then his freshman season began at UT. In the end, D.J. would be named All Big 12, 2nd team, and to the Big 12 All-Rookie Team. He has played more minutes than anyone on the team. He averaged 14.5 points, ranks fourth in the nation with his 6.8 assist per game, he grabbed 2.8 rebounds per game, and made about two (2) steals every outing. He has shot 50% from the field (82-163); 51% from the three (3) point line (25-49); 69-87 (79% free throws). The highlights of D.J.'s freshman season include a 13 assist night against both Tennessee and Kansas; and 25 point games against Villanova, Texas A&M, and LSU. He also canned 31 points against Iowa State University "wow. He made 5 of 6

three (3) point field goals against Villanova. His team enters the NCAA tournament at 24-9, 12-4 in the Big 12 conference. To watch D.J. play against Baylor in the Big 12 tournament match-up with the poise of a senior was truly remarkable. He spear-headed a Texas come back from about 20 points down with minutes left in the game. With under a minute remaining and the score 70 to 69, D.J. dribbled the ball up the court with little or no resistance. The defender obviously intimidated by the savvy play of the freshman guard from the Big Easy as he allowed D.J. to lay the ball in with 18.5 seconds to extend the longhorn lead to 72-69. D.J. scored 15 point and had six (6) assists. D.J. played extremely well again against the University of Kansas, the number two (2) team in the country, in the Big 12 conference championship game. He had six (6) assist and played 41 minutes in that contest. D.J. has emerged, going into the NCAA tournament as the floor leader for a team with America's best freshman Kevin Durant, a 6'9" forward, and others who make up the most productive freshman class of this season nationwide. D.J. understands "the secret" and is applying it in his basketball games. From all indications, this superstar will continue to grow and be successful, and could eventually go to the professional league barring injuries or a decision not to play. His future looks bright at this point to join the likes of Avery Johnson, Rick Roby, Donald Newman, Bobby Bissant and many others from N.O. natives who have gone to the NBA. But, at this point in their careers, none had had the continued success evidenced by D.J. The best thing about watching his freshman year display of craftsmanship is realizing that there will be more this year and into the future for Sir D.J. He is truly a complete basketball player. I cannot wait to see what future seasons bring and eventually the pro level. I'm sure this New Orleans native will be at the big game and meet the challenges as he has done so well throughout his young career.

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