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New Orleans

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**Kourtney
has Heart!**

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Racial Tension Heating Up



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America's Racial Temperature Rising, Experts Say Agitators Must Speak Peace



This man's sign reads Right Wing Extremist. A mere two year ago, signs and actions such as these would have been kept hidden, but today, is now more commonplace and in the open as racial tensions have grown since the campaign and election of President Obama.

By Hazel Trice Edney
NNPA Editor-in-Chief

U. S. Rep. John Lewis was headed for the Capitol to vote on President Obama's health care bill in March when he was pelted with racial epithets when passing near a group of conservative Tea Party protesters.

Days later, reports of attacks on Democrats around the country included bricks smashing through win-

dows, a potentially lethal gas pipe cutting at a home thought to be owned by Virginia Democratic Congressman Tom Perriello. According to reports, the FBI announced the agency would investigate Tea Partiers and a race hate group as potential suspects.

The madness continued into the spring as former Alaska governor, Sarah Palin, and others accuse the Obama administration of trying to kill the elderly with

death panels in the health care bill. He is also called a Marxist, a Socialist and a Nazi by Tea partiers and associated radical conservatives.

Meanwhile, also, in March, Virginia's Republican Gov. Bob McDonnell is roundly criticized by the state's NAACP after he declares a Confederate History Month while neglecting to mention the cruelty and inhumanity of slavery – a deed for which he apologized.

Among more recent racial flare ups, Arizona passes legislation that appears to unleash racial profiling on Latinos or anyone who police might perceive as an illegal immigrant; then the state of Texas passes a law to distribute history books with a conservative bent that presents slave-owning confederates as heroes.

Finally, the Obamas' oldest daughter, 11-year-old Malia, becomes the target of mocking by a conservative talk show host after the president quotes her as asking if he had "plugged the hole" in the BP oil crisis. The mocker, Fox News' Glenn Beck, ultimately apologizes.

But are apologies enough to calm the apparent smoldering atmosphere of racism that has intensified since the election of President Barack Obama? Both Black and White authorities on racial hatred say what's really needed is a voice of reason within the Republican Party.

"The reality is that the people who could really tamp this down are not doing so," says Mark Potok, spokesman for the Birmingham-based Southern Poverty Law Center, a foremost authority on race hate inci-

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dents around the country. "There are large numbers of Republican officials, so-called responsible leaders of the party, who are doing absolutely nothing to tamp down the outright falsehoods, the defamatory propaganda that's being pumped out into the political mainstream."

Potok, Jack Levin, director of the Brudnick Center on Violence and Conflict at Northeastern University in Boston, Mass., and civil rights icon Rev. Joseph Lowery all agreed on mainly two things in interviews with the NNPA News Service. One – that racial tension in America has grown since the election of President Obama. And two – that it could be quelled by a voice of reason rising from the Republican Party.

"Most White people who are on the adverse side of this question would not admit it, but absolutely, much of this is due to the fact that they simply can not accept the fact that we have a Black leader in this country," says Lowery. "Without the Black president, we wouldn't have all this heavy tension and lightening rod activity that's driving us further and further apart."

A civil rights stalwart who co-founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Lowery knows what it takes to quiet the currently smoldering atmosphere that he says he has not seen since the 1960s. He says it takes a person who is respected by the aggressors to rise up and call for peace.

Potok agrees, but says at this point, it will be difficult to quell the political, race and anti-government tensions.

"This genie may be very difficult to get back into the bottle. It would have been a hell of a lot better if some of the more ostensibly main stream figures in our society had said something about this long ago. Now we're actually seeing people driving airplanes into IRS buildings and murdering Pentagon police officers and leaving coffins on the lawns of congressmen."

Levin of the Brudnick Center, agrees with Lowery that the reason the racial temperature is out of control and will likely continue to surge is simple:

"It is the Obama factor. It is a big

factor. Having an African-American as president has brought out the worse in some White Americans and it's brought out the best in others ... There are many Whites who voted for Obama, who continue to praise him, who think he's a great president, but then there's the other side of the coin. The problem is that it is a small but growing number of extremists who are concerned about foreign influence and they see Obama as a Marxist, a Socialist: they question whether he was born in the United States. They see him as attempting to destroy our country. And these are the same folks who are likely to join some White supremacist group or civilian militia organization. They are so concerned about what they see as an erosion of American culture and the American economy and they blame the Black guy who holds the most powerful office in the world."

Potok says most of the political angst is really not coming from organized militias.

"I don't think these are organized hate groups. These are by in large more or less every day

citizens who are very fearful of the way the world is changing around them and who have been whipped up in a kind of white hot anger," he describes. "Rather than seeing the changes in the world around us, the kind of globalization of the economy, the increasing diversity of our society and other societies as something that is simply occurring in the course of history, they are demonizing certain groups and saying they are responsible for these things. So that is the problem. It is the identifying of phantom enemies and whipping up the broad masses into a fury about it."

The name-calling and labeling of President Obama as Marxist, Socialist, etc., have been among the worse offenses, says Potok.

"These things are all utter falsehoods and yet the people in responsible positions of the party have done almost nothing to play this down and in fact have played it up," he says.

The current frenzy has roots in 9-11, Levin points out.

"The war on terror is part of it. Certainly 9-11 made lots of Americans of any race feel uncom-

fortable or more insecure about their personal safety. But that's a small part of the whole thing," Levin says. "Immigrants of color come into this country from Latin American countries and other parts of the world as well. And whenever the economy goes sour, the immigrants get blamed. That's part of it."

In America's history of racial strife, there have rarely been instances in which White leaders actually take the responsibility to speak against wrongs unless pressed to do so. Such was the case with President Lyndon B. Johnson as he called for the passage of the Voting Rights Act, declaring "We shall overcome" after the 1965 "Bloody Sunday" attacks on civil rights protesters in Selma.

But, Johnson was considered to be a friend of racial equality. It is even rarer when a foe rises up and speaks with a changed heart.

Levin concludes, "It would be wonderful if someone who has a reputation for extremism or racism would take the other side and would come out for tolerance and respect."



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Shoot Ya Best Shot!

Kourtney Heart

The Heart of New Orleans



Dionne Character, Author
Entertainment Editor & Columnist

By: Dionne Character

It's not too often that we meet or hear about young ladies making a difference in the community, so I was very impressed when I had the opportunity to interview young, Ms. Kourtney Heart, who is the girl next

door with dreams of a "princess."

While most people don't decide on a career or discover their life path until they are in their early twenties, New Orleans singer/songwriter Kourtney Heart found at the age of three that performing was what she had come to do. Her interest in watching legends like The Temptations on Motown specials, as well as seeing her father perform in "real" life greatly influenced the toddler. Like many artists, she discovered the thrill of performing singing at church, but for Kourtney, there was no turning back.

She has opened for a variety of performers including platinum-selling artists such as Kelly Price, Trey Songz and Chrisette Michelle. She has dominated numerous talent shows and open mic nights as

well as performed at Essence Music Festival youth programs and fashion industry events. Managed by DJ RAJ SMOOVE, the collaboration has proven to be a success.

Striving to maintain balance with her career, academic achievement and community involvement, Kourtney is extremely active in philanthropic endeavors which promote positive messages. Through churches and youth advocacy groups, she uses her talent to inspire, empower and raise awareness about issues that face her generation. The Edna Karr Magnet High School junior has a captivating personality that makes connecting with others seem effortless.

Kourtney Heart will be releasing her debut album, *EYE DEE KAY*, in late spring 2010. For more information, visit www.kourtneyheart.com



Parties at Prime Example

Friday and Saturday night were HOT at Prime Example as Ed Perkins entertained his friends during his party on Friday night and Kim Robinson celebrated her birthday on Saturday night.



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City of N.O. acquires land for development of Lafitte Greenway

The City of New Orleans has acquired a 16.5 acre parcel of land along the Lafitte Corridor in Mid-City, formerly the site of the Louisiana Institute of Film Technology (LIFT) Studio. The City sought to recapture the land for use in conjunction with the development of the future Lafitte Greenway, a 3.1-mile linear park extending from Armstrong Park near the French Quarter to Canal Boulevard near City Park. The purchase marks the last land acquisition required for the Lafitte Greenway project.

"This is an important step toward the realization of the Lafitte Greenway project," said Mayor Mitch Landrieu. "I'm committed to making this visionary project a reality. We're taking an abandoned railroad corridor and creating green space that our entire community can enjoy."

The Lafitte Greenway will establish a corridor of connecting parks, bike trails, and open public spaces for the neighborhoods through which it winds. While



Members of the Friends of Lafitte, walk the new site of the Lafitte Greenway. The Lafitte Greenway will establish a corridor of connecting parks, bike trails, and open public spaces for the neighborhoods through which it winds

the linear park is trail-like for most of its 3.1 miles, the LIFT property is the largest contiguous piece of

property in the project, which will allow for active recreational facilities. The \$3.8 million purchase

of the property was funded from a Community Development Block Grant.

"This is a critical project that will serve as a visible symbol of post-Katrina New Orleans' commitment to sustainable development and public health as well as provide a much-needed recreation space for City residents," said Council President Arnie Fielkow. "Furthermore, it will spur economic development, such as the proposed Building Block Center in Mid City that will provide office, retail, manufacturing and warehouse space."

Upon completion, the Lafitte Greenway will offer a continuous public open space for non-motorized transportation and recreation, joining together key segments of the City's emerging pedestrian and bikeway network. The Greenway will also serve as a link between new and existing parks, playgrounds, recreational facilities and community centers, encouraging active living and promoting public health.

Rod West Promoted to Chief Administrative Officer at Entergy

Rod West, currently president and CEO, Entergy New Orleans, Inc., has been promoted to chief administrative officer for Entergy. Reporting to West will be Robert Sloan, Entergy's executive vice president and general counsel; Terry Seamons, Entergy's senior vice president, human resources and administration; and Entergy's executive vice president, external affairs to be named at a later date.

In the first major reorganization in more than 11 years, Entergy Corporation announced details of the restructuring. The reor-



Rod West

ganization's goal is to enhance organizational effectiveness and

performance by strengthening local regulatory presence in the Northeast and consolidating commercial and risk functions for Entergy's wholesale commodity business associated with non-utility generation. Internal restructuring was identified as a critical near-term action following the April 5 announcement of the decision to unwind the business infrastructure associated with the proposed spin-off. Entergy says this plan will create a more focused corporate structure, while also providing further development of proven leaders.

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- Certificates of Deposit (CDs)
- Money Market Accounts

To pre-apply online, visit the State Of Louisiana's Department of Social Services website at <https://dsnaps.dss.state.la.us/CustomerPortal/CPLogon.jsp>



Support the Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong Summer Jazz Camp

Jackie Harris
Executive Director

Dear Jazz Lovers:

I write in these extraordinary times to request your support in maintaining 16 years of low-cost jazz education programming to young people of all socio-economic backgrounds. As you are aware, the Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong Summer Jazz Camp has evolved from a one week program to an all day, three week program which hosts over 100 New Orleans, along with a number of out-of-town children each summer for free or nominal cost, depending on individual need. The program addresses a critical need to supplement the relatively meager arts education experiences available to most students during the regular academic year with more rigorous training during the summer. The program has been in existence since 1995 and will celebrate its sixteenth anniversary this year.

Unfortunately, the Summer Jazz Camp represents a significant expense that is particularly difficult in this trying economic climate. Despite support from a range of individuals, foundations, and government agencies, the Jazz Camp projects a shortfall, which without new support will place an enormous strain on the organization's ability to provide programming this year. We have already cancelled our annual student cookout. I hope that you will consider



making a gift or point us in the direction of someone who can help ensure the future of quality jazz education in the city, which created the art form.

The Armstrong Summer Jazz Camp is open to children ages 10 - 21 years old. All applicants go through an interview and audition to determine commitment and level of ability prior to acceptance. The audition is not a competitive process. It allows teachers to determine the level of skill thus placing students where they can best improve and excel. It is a mission of the Jazz Camp that students from all economic backgrounds be recruited and accepted. Since

its inception, more than 1500 students have participated in the program.

The 2010 Summer Jazz Camp takes place July 6 - 23, weekdays 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. This year Jazz Camp will move to the campus of Loyola University New Orleans.

We are committed to the proposition of developing the whole child through music, giving our youngsters a positive, creative outlet and developing their self-confidence and self-discipline through this artistic endeavor.

The Armstrong Summer Jazz Camp must secure significant new funding to continue offering this level of programming at



nominal cost. Please join us by supporting this vibrant, community outreach program to New Orleans' youth. I also invite you to visit our website at www.louisarmstrong-jazzcamp.com. Also included is the program's 2010 calendar of events and a one page fact sheet.

Thank you so much for your consideration of this important music education program for New Orleans.

Sincerely,
Jackie Harris, Executive Director

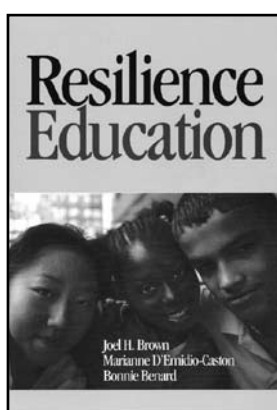
Resilience Drug Education program offers hope against N.O. Youth Drug Abuse

By Katrina Rogers

According to the most recent Louisiana Caring Communities Youth Survey results for DHH Region one (New Orleans) report that More than 25% of 12th graders and almost 16% of 10th graders admit to binge drinking within the past 2 weeks.

This past April, New Orleans youth workers met to discuss the need to change the dynamics of drug prevention programs. Statistics suggest that the "Just say no" approach to drug prevention is ineffective and can actually cause an increase in youth drug usage.

One program, Resilience Drug Education, focuses on arming young people with the self-esteem and encouragement to make better decisions. Developing resilience at school improves academic performance and strengthens students' abilities to overcome obstacles in all aspects of life.



Executive Director, Dr. Joel H. Brown, M.S.W., runs the program, developed by California-based Center for Educational Research + Development (CERD).

Dr. Brown noted CERD's long-term investment in New Orleans.

"The city has experienced a substantial increase of substance abuse since Hurricane Katrina. We want a long-standing relationship with the city, which is why we gave this workshop for free."

The two-day workshop was held at the Sojourner Truth Neighborhood Center,

a community center under the Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans. Carolyn Carter, the Executive Director of Catholic Charities says the Resilience Drug Education program was effective because "it's not a quick fix, Band-Aid approach. This is more of a change in perspective, attitude and environment. It's long-term and sustainable."

The Resilience Drug Education model differs from most drug resistance programs because it focuses on self-reflection instead of simply telling people what is wrong and what is right. Carter says, "Once we change perspective we can see our community in a different way. I believe everyone has the power to help implement change, this program gives people the tools to make it happen."

Caring relationships, opportunities for participation and high expectations are the

three keys that make the program successful, Dr. Brown argues. "Many people talk about resilience, but we are offering support by creating long-term healthy development in the community. It is important that people realize that there is a difference between preventing a problem and promoting development."

Brown and Carter both hope to see an increase of people's attachment to their communities, one way of doing this is by spreading the message of the resilience model by getting more educators, community leaders and social service workers involved.

For more information, contact Dr. Joel H. Brown at jhb@cerd.org or visit www.cerd.org.

Katrina Rogers is a contributing writer with The New Orleans Agen



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To report impacted wildlife: (866) 557-1401

To make spill-related claims: (800) 440-0858

www.louisianagulfresponse.com

