Democracy on the Line as Election Draws Near
Election 2006
Rebuild Hope and the Right to Vote

By: Edwin Buggage
Photos By: Larry Panna

The importance of the April twenty-second election has brought out groups from all over the nation, in what pundits and political junkies are calling an election of historic proportions and a true test of democracy at work. This is truly one for the record books, it is an event that is unprecedented in that it is a local election where the pool of potential voters are scattered throughout the country. As the clock ticks down to the final days, the candidates are vying for elected offices ranging from Mayor, City Council, Criminal Sheriff, Assessor and several other important offices. In this election some have found themselves in unfamiliar territory traveling throughout this nation in an attempt to convince the voters that they possess the qualities to lead New Orleans in these fragile times. And that they in fact have what it takes to bring back our wounded, yet marvelous, magical, historical city.

Activist groups, elected officials, businesses and media organizations have been working together around the clock to create awareness for displaced voters. On April 1, 2006 a historic march took place led by Rev. Jesse Jackson where several thousand people marched across the Greater New Orleans Mississippi River Bridge (Crescent City Connection) for the right to return to the city and also to participate in the upcoming election. Saturday April 15, 2006 Data News Weekly along with the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation, New Orleans Agenda Publisher Vincent Sylvain and a host of others went to Baton Rouge Louisiana to promote the right to vote. Melanie Campbell, CEO of The National Coalition of Black Civic Participation sums up the importance of voting when she says, “The great equalizer in this country are two things it’s the vote and economic opportunity, and the people who decides who gets economic opportunities are elected officials so voters need to make sure their voices are heard.”

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The Elm Grove Village in Baton Rouge and the Renaissance Village in neighboring Baker Louisiana have been the places many survivors of Hurricane Katrina have called home for the past several months. The coalition descended upon these locations disseminating literature regarding voting. Also the NAACP provided free bus rides to the polls for those who were interested in early voting. Kwame Asante, State Director of the NAACP

is a grandmother and life long resident of New Orleans and a Hurricane Katrina survivor who now calls Renaissance Village her home, as she rides on the bus on the way to vote she reminisces about how her life has changed so dramatically in the past few months. “I know Baker Louisiana is less than one hundred miles away from New Orleans but it feels like a million,” she continues her thoughts ending it echoing the words of Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz except in her journey there hasn’t been any yellow brick roads paved in gold, just unpaved streets, dirt roads, and a FEMA trailer. She responds to those who say there may be expanded opportunities elsewhere, “You can go somewhere and maybe make more money, but our city is unique and there’s no place like home.” As we continue riding the bus she talks about why she thinks its important to vote, “I’ve always voted, and it’s my right as a citizen, and I think it is very important because otherwise people are placed in office who shouldn’t be there or isn’t that concerned about our issues, so I say to those who think voting is not important get to the polls and cast your vote.”

Although this is a local election it is unlike any other as it has garnered interest on the local, national and international levels, “This election is important not just for the city, but the country,” says State Representative Michael Jackson of Baton Rouge, who serves as the Vice Chairman of the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus. He continues, “These elections are historic for the city of New Orleans, and what comes out of these elections will likely dictate the future of New Orleans as well as the entire state and perhaps the country.”

If early voting patterns are any indication of the interest in this election then we can expect a higher than usual turnout, as thousands have already went to the polls to cast their votes at the designated satellite voting locations throughout the state or requested absentee ballots. New Orleans Urban League President Edith Jones voted prior to arriving at one of the mayoral forums held by the Rebuild Hope Coalition recounted her experience at the poll, “I went to vote and it took thirty minutes, it seems people are interested in this election and that’s encouraging.”

So as we reach the final days before the election the candidates are fervently engaged in trying to get their various messages out to the voters. But as citizens whether you are displaced or not, it is your civic responsibility and duty to raise your voice and make a choice. The future of New Orleans being just another American City or reigning again as one of the countries and the world’s greatest and most interesting fascinating cities is in your hands. So educate yourself about the candidates and decide who is best suited to lead our city in the days to come, and we at Data News Weekly and our various partners in the Rebuild Hope Coalition ask please get out and vote on April 22, 2006.

Experience ♦ Courage ♦ Conviction ♦ Vision ♦ Leadership

Experience:
René knows how, who to talk to, and where to go to solve the many problems our city faces. She knows the first responsibility of government is to its citizens and she has met with leaders in Washington and Baton Rouge to make sure that our city gets its fair share of federal and state funds and to ensure that our levees are constructed properly and in a timely manner.

Courage:
When others were fleeing New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina, René stayed in the city, putting herself at risk to try to help others. René knew that once the storm had passed the human suffering and the damage to life and property would have to be dealt with, and she was ready to meet the challenge.

Conviction:
René believes she can succeed where others have failed because of her positive attitude, her strong work ethic, her belief in the goodness of people and her faith in God.

Vision:
René knows the importance of safe and reliable evacuation routes, but is also aware that everyone does not have a car or the price of an airline ticket. That is why René met with Amtrak, the Army and the National Guard to ensure that we can move our sick, our elderly and our poor citizens at the same time that we demand that others evacuate.

Leadership:
René’s average workday lasts 12 to 13 hours, sometimes 6 or 7 days a week. With uniriting energy, René possesses the unique ability to multi-task and convince others to see things her way.

On Saturday, April 22nd, we need to re-elect René Gill Pratt, Councilmember District B.

VOTE #94 Saturday, April 22, 2006
By: Edwin Buggage

EB: Why should the voters of New Orleans elect Mitch Landrieu as mayor?

ML: Because I'm the guy who can get the job done. We need someone in office who knows how government works, and can navigate their way through its different levels and has a relationship with leaders not only on the local, level, but the state and national as well. The next mayor has to be someone who can make things happen, and I've been very good at that, and I think I am the person the city needs right now in this recovery effort to rebuild New Orleans.

EB: How do you plan to repopulate New Orleans, and what are your top priorities?

ML: Safety is my primary and most immediate concern; if anyone is to come home we need to secure the levees to protect them. Also when the citizens get back we have to deal with additional police to make sure our residents are safe. And most importantly to get people back we need to deal with the issue of adequate housing, because that is the one thing that's slowed down the return of our residents.

EB: What are your feelings about the recommendations of the Bring Back New Orleans Commission?

ML: I think the recommendations in the areas of education are good because we need to provide quality education for all children. Also I had something to do with constructing the Cultural Economy piece with Wynton Marsalis. We did an extensive report on it, and I thought the product we produced was good. It is in the area of housing where I have some problems; I thought that part was weak. Because in it you have viable areas that are planned as green space, for example, Broadmoor where my parents live is a middle class area of mostly home owners and it's planned as green space. This I disagree with, I believe all neighborhoods should come back, because it was the levee failure, not the storm that caused the damage to the city of New Orleans.

EB: How would you grade the present local administration reaction before and after the storm?

ML: Before and during the storm I think everybody could have done a better job. But after the storm I would give this administration a 'D' I think we're way behind on debris removal, having working street lights, garbage pick-up, and we haven't even started the neighborhood planning process. I think the problem with the present administration is that it's had so many personnel changes that there isn't any continuity. So when you're not necessarily in a crisis, but responding to one you're unable to pull things together and that can become a real problem, and I think some of them were definitely avoidable.

EB: In this election race has become a prominent and divisive issue, as mayor how would you deal with race?

ML: New Orleans like many cities has its racial problems, but we are a very diverse city and that's our strength. And now with Hurricane Katrina we have new residents coming in from Spanish speaking countries, as well as a growing Asian population. We need a leader who can bring people together across racial lines, and I am the only candidate in this election with equal support in both the Black and White communities.

Fighting for your right to return and rebuild... NOW!

We All Agree

U.S. Congressman William Jefferson
State Senator (Ret.) Sammy Nunez
State Senator Ann Duplessis
State Senator Edwin Murray
State Representative Charmane Marchand
State Representative Cedric Richmond
State Representative Ken Odinet
State Representative Austin Badon
Councilman-at-Large Eddie Sapir
Councilman Oliver Thomas

VOTE #116
Saturday, April 22

Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis

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**NEWMAKER**

**Virginia Boulet**

By: Edwin Buggage

**EB:** What qualities and/or experience in your opinion do you possess that your opponents do not?

**VB:** I deal with Washington bureaucrats and American Capital Market on a daily basis. We need a mayor who can tell our story and give people outside the city the confidence to invest in New Orleans. And of all the candidates I think I’m the only one who has this type of experience, and I feel I can get the job done in leading the city into the future.

**EB:** As mayor what would the plans be for the city under your administration?

**VB:** I want everybody to come back, but I want them to come back to a better New Orleans. First I want to build new homes where people who were previously renters can own their own homes. My goal is that we should have one hundred percent home ownership. I also would have a city where people can receive universal healthcare, because this is an issue that affects our families, and upon return if we can do that then that would be one less thing our families would have to worry about as they rebuild their lives.

**EB:** Race has become a hot button issue during this election, what are your feelings about racism, and how would you as mayor deal with the racial divide in New Orleans?

**VB:** Race has been a hot button issue, but it’s been that way for hundreds of years. It’s been a problem and an impediment for some people getting ahead for a long time, and incidentally so has sexism. I believe that there are people who have prejudiced ingrained in their hearts, and that is sad, but my problem is when prejudice gets in the way of people getting ahead in life. When it gets in the way of people having healthcare, a good job, or owning a home, these are the things that all Americans want and deserve. And it is my opinion that if we improve our economy and give people more opportunities to succeed in life, I think you will see less problems regarding race.

**EB:** What’s your economic plan for the city?

**VB:** Diversifying the economy is my goal. I think that’s where I would shine as mayor. I’m on the board of two New York Stock Exchange companies. We need to bring jobs outside of tourism and increase the stock of or economy. We need to attract companies that will provide more well paying jobs to our city. Here we have the Mississippi River which is the largest river in North America and what we need to do is exploit our position and show how important we can be economically to the nation and to the world. And if we were to do that then we wouldn’t see the type of negligence that took place with the levees, and we would get the respect we deserve.

**EB:** If you had to envision New Orleans replicating any other city which one would it be?

**VB:** Unfortunately, my opponents see New Orleans as Las Vegas, Orlando, or Charlestown, but I see it more like Boston. It would have vibrant and distinct neighborhoods, and universities would be integrated into neighborhoods. I would love to see the University of New Orleans move downtown. I see more live music venues, I see New Orleans as a world class city. Thriving like Boston but without losing the uniqueness of who and what we are in New Orleans.

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NEWSMAKER

Tom Watson

By: Edwin Buggage

EB: How is your campaign different from the other candidates and why should New Orleanians vote for Tom Watson?

TW: My campaign is totally different in that I'm the only pastor in the race. I'm a spiritual leader as well as a community leader. None of the other candidates have that kind of connection both naturally and divinely. Over the years our city hasn't had a religious leader to stand up boldly. As I've stated before my leadership skills are varied and I am the only candidate with such diverse leadership credentials, I'm a pastor, military leader, an education, and business leader.

EB: In these tough times how important is spirituality, and if we are to have a pastor in the mayor's seat, do you think he or she would be more compassionate?

TW: Absolutely, and not just compassion for the poor but compassion for everyone. And it is my spiritual convictions that I live by, and ultimately I believe that's the key to the reconciliation that's needed in New Orleans.

EB: The racial divide has come up quite a bit during this campaign, how would you deal with racial intolerance as mayor?

TW: I would have a commission that would be proactive in nature consisting of Blacks, Whites, Asians, and Hispanics, and discuss race in an unapologetic way so we can begin the healing of our city. In addition to the workshops on race issues I would have an Office of Racial Justice so we can at the local level deal with some of the racial problems that affects the city. Also I would challenge Whites to come out and talk about race and take a stand against injustice, then I believe that we can begin to resolve some of the city's racial problems.

EB: People from the city are scattered throughout the country and desire to come back to New Orleans as mayor what's your plan to repopulate the city?

TW: I think we first have to send a strong signal we want them to come back. On the campaign trail I have found people feel disrespected and disconnected. What I would do is set up City Hall annexes so people would feel reconnected to the city. Also in neighborhoods when people come back I would have welcome home centers, where people can receive information about health, schools for their children, building permits etc.

EB: If you could tell the people of New Orleans who are all over the country one thing, what would you tell them?

TW: I am the candidate that has the passion, and I am the candidate that's concerned with their holistic welfare. I am the candidate that is concerned with the well being of the whole person. I am the people's candidate. I have been serving the people of New Orleans for 25 years dealing with the issues that plague our city. And I want you to come back to New Orleans and help in the rebuilding, because without you I feel we have lost the vital soul and heartbeat of our community.
Grassroots Groups Gear Up for Saturday’s Vote in New Orleans

By Hazel Trice Edney
WashingtoN (NNPA) –

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – After weeks of candidate debates, a march for voting rights, several voting rights lawsuits and a week of pre-election voting, grassroots groups are stepping up their outreach to displaced New Orleans voters leading up to this Saturday’s election.

“I think the turnout is going to be a surprise. You take a look at what has happened in early vote as well as absentee ballots that have been sent in, they seem to be above what election officials had anticipated,” says displaced New Orleans community activist, Vincent Sylvain, New Orleans’ coordinator of the Rebuild Hope Now Campaign of the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation.

At the beginning of this week, more than 10,500 voters had cast early ballots in 10 Louisiana communities. In addition, 15,000 voters had requested absentee ballots; about 3,000 have been returned.

Sylvain explains, “There seems to be genuine interest and a great interest from those who are invested in the community – property owners, those who were employed working in New Orleans, as well as residents of public housing who feel that some injustice has taken place in the fact that the Housing Authority of New Orleans has not opened. This is going to be the first time that the citizens of New Orleans are going to have an opportunity to express their outrage and maybe, in some cases, their support of the elected officials who are in place. We’ll know the outcome of that on the 22nd.”

Although people, displaced by Katrina, are spread across the nation, concentrated mostly in other parts of Louisiana, Atlanta, Ga. and Texas, Sylvain says he doesn’t believe distance or stratification will stop determined voters.

“It makes it challenging and it makes it difficult and it makes it different, but what you’ll probably have working this time is more self-motivation perhaps. Or a greater reason for the voters to feel that they need to be a part of the political process,” says Sylvain.

“We are as hopeful as many of the candidates that that in itself will be enough to encourage voters who would otherwise would not vote in a normal election.”

There had been widespread concern that African-Americans – who made up 60 percent of the New Orleans electorate – might lose political clout because of displacement. However, if the trend for early voting and absentee ballots holds, Blacks will vote in the same proportion that they did prior to Hurricane Katrina, election officials predict.

Still, Melanie Campbell, president and CEO of the NCBCP, remains concerned.

“You’re talking about upwards of a hundred thousand who are displaced, as far as voters,” Campbell says. “So that’s a lot of people, and the numbers so far that have come in show there’s a large hurdle to get to a high turnout in this election. I don’t expect one. But, I’m an optimist. We’re goin’ to do everything we can.”

She wishes the state officials had done everything within their power before now, such as establish satellite voting outlets around the country.

“They should have been allowed to vote where ever they are like we did for the Iraqi people and the government paid for it with our tax dollars,” Campbell said.

“This is one situation in which I would not hazard to guess. I wouldn’t have a clue,” says Ron Walters, University of Maryland political scientist, who is usually brimming with predictions and analysis. However Walters did say that the intricate problems of former New Orleans residents will play a major role in whether they will participate.

“I would imagine that a lot of them are trying to deal with survival issues, which complicates any judgment about how many will get on a bus and come to New Orleans, even for one day to vote,” says Walters.

Issues that have angered New Orleans residents include officials’ failure to provide transportation for the poor out of the city before Katrina hit Aug. 29, the failure to provide basic food and shelter for those who were trapped, and the amount of time it has taken from many to be able to turn into homes that are inhabitable.

“We’re talking about communities where they have not even turned on the lights, communities where they have not even picked up the trash,” says Sylvain.

“Now those are physical things that it does not take the rock scientist to figure out. But, somehow those tasks have not been accomplished.”

Katrina has created an unusual predicament for New Orleans voters who have seen their homes and polling places destroyed.

The Louisiana Secretary of States office has organized what is being called “Super Precincts,” the consolidation of a number of former polling places into one. In order to clarify questions of voters showing up at their old precincts, he says a person has been stationed at each former precinct in order to give correct information. Workers at Super Precincts will also watch for elderly, pregnant or otherwise disadvantaged people who are standing in line.

Meanwhile, venturing into the areas where pockets of voters may need information has been the greatest challenge, says Latosha Brown, executive director of, who is heading up the Hope efforts in Atlanta.

“We’ve been sending out street teams to get information to the Barber shops, the beauty shops, the corner stores, the grocery stores, K-Mart, Wal-Mart, where a large number of our people are. We’ve also identified apartment complexes where evacuees are sprinkled throughout and we’ve been just door to door canvassing in those sites,” says Brown.

Special voter education continued on page 15.

Leading a Revolution
Against Politics as Usual

James Carter

James Carter
COUNCIL DISTRICT C

An inspiring young leader with a discipline in philosophy, a law degree from Howard University, and deep roots in our community. A graduate of McDonogh 35 High School and NOCCA, who has lived on both sides of the river, James Carter is determined to make a difference. He is the only candidate with crime-fighting experience, having served as Program Director of the New Orleans Weed & Seed Program, a law enforcement and crime prevention outreach effort sponsored by the U. S. Department of Justice. His work helped create safe havens and critical after-school programs for children. Today, James Carter leads his own law firm specializing in consumer protection. Married, with a three-year-old son, he realizes that what is at stake is the future of New Orleans. James Carter has the courage to bring change and the credentials to make it happen.
DISPLACED VOTER INFORMATION

Election Day is Saturday, April 22

If you are a registered voter of Orleans Parish who has been displaced as a result of Hurricane Katrina or Rita, you are still eligible to vote in your home parish if you have not registered to vote in another parish or state.

For more information on how to check your current registration status or where vote, please contact the Louisiana Secretary of State Elections Division by email at elections@sos.louisiana.gov or call: 1-800-883-2805

You may also contact your the Orleans Parish Registrar of Voters at (504-565-7133) at City Hall, 1300 Perdido Street, #1W23, New Orleans, LA 70112. The complete list of polling places is located in this issue of Data News Weekly on pages 18 through 22.

ABSENTEE VOTING

Absentee Ballot Request

In an effort to curb any confusion regarding the rules and regulations on absentee voting, below is listed the statutes for Absentee voting in this election.

ABSENTEE VOTING IN PERSON (R.S. 18:1309)

According to Louisiana R.S. 18:1309, “A.(1) The periods for conducting absentee application and voting in person shall be from twelve days to six days prior to any scheduled election. (2) During the period of absentee voting in person, the registrar shall maintain regular office hours, remaining open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, and from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon on Saturday; however, if a Saturday or any holiday provided by law or proclaimed by the governor for state departments falls during the period for absentee voting, the office of the registrar shall remain open until 4:30 p.m. on such Saturday and on the last day of the period for absentee voting and the registrar shall post a notice to that effect at the entrance to the office of the registrar. Absentee voting in person on the last day of voting will terminate when all persons who were in line to vote at the close of the regular office hours of the registrar’s office, as provided herein, have been allowed to vote. If the office space of the registrar is insufficient or inconvenient to accommodate absentee voting, the registrar may provide for an alternate location to conduct absentee voting, which location shall be in the courthouse or in a public building in the immediate vicinity thereof, and in such case, adequate notice shall be posted at the registrar’s office informing the public of the location where absentee voting is being conducted. “

ABSENTEE VOTING BY MAIL (R.S. 18:1303 & 1307)

To request absentee ballots by mail, you must complete and return a Request for Absentee Ballot by Mail PDF form indicating the reason you are not able to vote in person absentee or in person on election day. The form must be received at the Registrar of Voters Office no later than 96 hours before the polls close for the scheduled election. Military personnel should check with their commanding officers who will provide the forms to request absentee ballots.

U.S. citizens residing overseas should send a request in writing to the registrar of voters office in the parish where they are registered to vote. All instructions on how to fill out the ballots and the requirements for mailing it back will be sent to overseas voters with the absentee ballots. The ballots requested are mailed at the Registrar of Voters expense. The return postage is paid by the voter.

The deadlines for returning your ballots to the Registrar of Voters office for an election are as follows:
• For military personnel Election Day - - Election Day
• For U.S. citizens residing outside the United States - - Election Day
• For all others - - Day before Election Day

Please note that you may use the Voter Address link on the Secretary of State’s website to get your ward/ precinct/district information, polling place and ballot for your New Orleans address, or for your convenience, a complete list of polling places is located on pages 18 through 22 in this issue of the Data News Weekly.

ACTION PLAN FOR HOUSING...

We can jump-start renovation of historic properties and preparation of new sites for 50,000 homes, apartments, and small businesses right away. Let's provide working people with attractive financing packages and put property in the hands of families, instead of developers.

ACTION PLAN FOR HEALTH INSURANCE...

Let’s be a pioneer city and reachannel public health care funds into a program that provides health insurance for every New Orleans resident. We can turn the Katrina tragedy into an opportunity for better public health than we have ever had before.

ACTION PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT...

Let’s build a far more diverse and inclusive economy. We can put higher expectations on our school system and create an environment in which every person has the opportunity to get a higher-paying job.

For more info on these and Virginia’s other action plans, visit: www.VirginiaBouletForMayor.com

Virginia Boulet is not an incubment politician. With impeccable credentials, unmatched enthusiasm and solid action plans, Virginia Boulet can lead New Orleans forward.
Helping Those Who Need Help: Rainbow PUSH and United Health Foundation Convene Experts for Medicare Drug Forum

May 15 deadline for choosing a plan is fast approaching

CHICAGO - (April 12, 2006) – “The new Medicare drug benefit can be very confusing – but if you do it right, you can benefit.”

That's how Rev. Jesse L. Jackson Sr., founder and president of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, regards the situation facing many elderly, poor and disabled people who are confused by the new Medicare prescription drug options. As the May 15th enrollment deadline nears, Rainbow PUSH is partnering with the United Health Foundation to offer educational sessions for caregivers, ministers, family members, and others who are called on to help Medicare beneficiaries understand the new prescription drug benefit.

The first educational forum will be held on Saturday, April 15 in Chicago. Rev. Jackson will be joined by Dr. Reed Tuckson, MD, vice president of the United Health Foundation; Michele Goodwin, professor of law and medicine at DePaul University in Chicago; and other leading healthcare experts. The luncheon forum will begin at 11:30 a.m., immediately following the internationally-televised Saturday Morning Forum at the Rainbow PUSH headquarters, located at 900 E. 50th Street, in Chicago. During the 10 a.m. Saturday Morning Forum, Rev. Jackson and healthcare experts will discuss the new Medicare drug benefit.

This discussion will continue during the educational forum where panelists will address various aspects of the new Medicare drug benefit, with individualized help available during the session. Participation is expected from churches, rehabilitation and assisted-living facilities, local pharmacists, advocacy groups and community-based organizations.

Rev. Jackson noted that there are components of the new Medicare drug program that are not working as well as expected, and more needs to be done for the new drug benefit to be considered a success.

“There are individuals, including those coming into the Medicare drug program from Medicaid, for whom we need to do more to guarantee uninterrupted access to the prescription drugs they need. However, we realize that people can benefit from the new drug options and we are committed to doing all that we can to help.”

“The May 15 Medicare drug benefit enrollment deadline is fast approaching,” said Fannie Smith, Midwest regional coordinator for the Rainbow PUSH 1000 Churches Connected program. “Even if people are not now taking a lot of prescription medications,” Smith explained, “it’s a good idea to get enrolled should your drug needs change in the future.”

Dr. Tuckson said, “The United Health Foundation applauds the Rainbow PUSH Coalition for its leadership in educating individuals about how the new Medicare prescription drug benefit can help Medicare beneficiaries, including those with low income, get affordable access to the prescription drugs they need. We hope that Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers will take the time to listen to the information that Rainbow PUSH is presenting. I look forward to joining Rev. Jackson and the Rainbow PUSH Coalition in Chicago and participating in this important nationwide effort.” In addition to Chicago, the Rainbow PUSH Coalition plans to convene Medicare events in New York, NY; Cleveland, OH; and Los Angeles, CA.
Many around the city know him simply as ‘Hollywood’ the cool laid back poet, singer, and emcee of various spoken word venues around town. But what many do not know is that he is an activist and humanitarian with a heart of gold and a benevolent spirit who gives of himself to social causes around the city.

He has used his gift as a wordsmith to inspire young people, “I work with young people at Sophie B. Wright, and also at O. Perry Walker. What we do are workshops with kids and attempt to give them a new attitude about reading and writing.” His partner in this project is Mayoral candidate the political wunderkind and fellow poet Shedrick White, “We have worked together for years helping young people, and I feel honored to be part of his campaign.” “I’ve designed his website and have done everything I can to help in his campaign because I feel it is important that a new breed of leadership is necessary in facing the challenges that lie ahead for New Orleans.”

He is adamant and determined in making a difference as an artist and as a person, “I feel as an artist I have a responsibility to the kids and to influence the next generation, to be a voice of change.” He thinks that more young people should be leading the charge and be more involved in the decisions that are being made about the future of New Orleans. “I think it is a problem when the majority of the people making decisions about the ‘new’ New Orleans are forty-five and up, and I feel there should be more input from the youth because they are the ones who will have to live with the effects of these choices.”

Frederick ‘Hollywood’ Delahoussaye has a love affair with his fair city - ‘504ever’ is the way he describes his relationship with the city, and was disheartened, and saddened by what he had to see and experience as the waters and winds of Katrina destroyed the city that served as his artistic muse. During the storm he sat for days holed up inside the Hilton Hotel in Downtown New Orleans helping save the lives of many of the elderly who were inside, “I had to carry quite a few people down flights of stairs to safety, but in one instance I carried an elderly lady down twenty-seven flights of stairs.” Although his and others efforts were heroic and selfless, chaos soon consumed much of the city and a survival of the fittest mentality became evident as Frederick went to check on his uptown home, residents desperate to survive brandished shotguns, high jacked vehicles and commandeered boats, food and other necessities in a struggle to survive. Determined to stay in the city he loves, he thought he could persevere but soon became distraught and distressed at what he was witnessing, so he along with his sixty-four year old father decided they would leave town. Frederick like so many other New Orleans residents found himself in Baton Rouge Louisiana, then in Houston Texas, pondering what the next chapter in his life would entail in the midst of the destruction that changed so many people’s lives forever.

As he returned armed with even more determination to make a difference. He arrived in the crescent city beginning a new but familiar journey; helping young people and giving them hope. Also he is continuing to entertain people with his gift of words, touching their souls. Frederick ‘Hollywood’ Delahoussaye is a many of many words and talents, he is a spoken word artist, singer-songwriter, activist, and a humanitarian. He is spreading awareness and understanding; through education he is inspiring future generations. He is courageous and caring, and is this month’s Data News Weekly Trailblazer.
RE-ELECT
Our Mayor Ray Nagin

“Now is not the time to change leadership.
I ask the citizens of New Orleans to let me continue this important job of rebuilding our city. We have the plan and the means to do it. I believe that my first term in office shows I have the credibility and experience to get the job done right.”

Mayor Ray Nagin

INTEGRITY
For the last four years, our mayor, Ray Nagin has achieved many accomplishments. But, perhaps, the most important and long-lasting change is that he has restored integrity to City Hall. He promised to put an end to patronage politics which benefitted only a handful of favorites and allowed corruption to flourish. Instead, our mayor created a modern and efficient city government in which all our citizens have a chance to participate and achieve economic success.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS
- Under Mayor Nagin’s leadership, 37,000 people were able to get off the poverty rolls.
- Construction soared with $3.2 billion in projects underway:
  - Hollywood was recruited to make movies here and it did so, in record numbers. New Orleans became known as Hollywood South.
  - The cruise industry prospered and the tourist industry had record back to back years - more than 10 million visitors came to the city.
  - Real estate values reached record highs. Just before Hurricane Katrina, a deal was made to build a Trump Tower here.

KATRINA IS SINGLE LARGEST U.S. DISASTER
- Our mayor led the most successful evacuation of a major American city in history. Over 90% of our citizens left New Orleans due to the Mayor’s urging and found safety for their families.
- Ray Nagin stayed in the city throughout the catastrophe of Katrina leading the way in helping those who stayed behind. He did everything possible to get New Orleans the help it needed to rescue our remaining citizens.
- He overcame Washington’s reluctance to help New Orleans and has won billions of dollars to rebuild our city.

BRINGING NEW ORLEANS BACK PLAN
Within 30 days after the hurricane, our mayor created the Bring New Orleans Back Commission, utilizing some of the best and brightest people available to create the plan to restore New Orleans. The plan is currently underway. Much of the city’s infrastructure is working again. We are bringing our citizens home. We have guarantees of federal funding for rebuilding homes that were destroyed. Our levee system is being rebuilt to protect our city in time for this hurricane season.

1-888-VOTE RAY  www.reelectmayornagin.com

Paid for by the Nagin Campaign Committee.
DATA ZONE

Baton Rouge Voter Empowerment

Photos By:
Larry Panna

RE-ELECT
Erroll Williams
Assessor

#28
Saturday, April 22, 2006

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Offer expires June 30, 2006. Available to residential customers in Cox New Orleans area. $19.99/mo. for Preferred Cox High Speed Internet and $19.99/mo. for Cox Digital Telephone Connection 60 package for three months; regular pricing applies thereafter. Cable modem purchase required for Cox High Speed Internet. Cox cannot guarantee uninterrupted or error-free service or the speed of your service. Actual speeds vary. Additional installation charges apply. Connection-60 unused monthly long-distance minutes have no cash value, expire at the end of each billing cycle, and additional minutes are billed at 7 cents per minute under the US Savings Plan. The $3.95 Savings Plan monthly fee is waived for Connection-60 customers. Other restrictions apply. Telephone service provided by Cox Louisiana Telcom, L.L.C. ©2006 Cox Communications, all rights reserved.
Ron Forman's track record of success shows that he has what it takes to rebuild New Orleans.

His father was a welder at the Port, his mom a bookkeeper. From them he learned the values of hard work and excellence. A proud graduate of New Orleans public schools, he attended Kingsley House and Wilson, McMan, Fortier High, and L.S.U. He served in the Army and became a proud parent. A successful business executive, his leadership united the community in an unprecedented effort that turned a zoo that had been called an “animal ghetto” from a national disgrace into a national treasure, and built the Aquarium of the Americas when people said it couldn't be done.

A University of New Orleans study concluded that these achievements created 6500 new jobs and a $350 million annual impact on our economy.

The Audubon Zoo and the Aquarium of the Americas are ranked among the top five in the nation.

As Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce he helped create jobs. His leadership has benefited the United Negro College Fund, the LSU Health Sciences Center Foundation, and the LSU Medical Center Foundation. Gambit named him “New Orleanian of the Year”, New Orleans Magazine honored him as “Man of the Decade”.

Ron Forman has proven he knows how to turn big ideas and bold visions into reality.

Imagine what he could do for us as Mayor.

Contact: (504) 525-4777

Read Ron’s Plan to Rebuild New Orleans at www.formanformayor.com

Endorsed by:
Forum for Equality
Regular Democratic Organization

Paid for by Ron Forman for Mayor
Leaving Race Out of the Race

For years black New Orleanians have voted for the candidate that we have felt would represent us the best. With our last white mayor having been “Moon” Landrieu in the ‘70’s, I think we have made our point. African-Americans have practically ruled New Orleans city government since then. It seems, however, that different times and circumstances call for a different paradigm. Black New Orleanians would be well-served to investigate ALL of the candidates and figure out which candidates have the best resumes and platforms.

At one time it was necessary for black folks to make one big statement across the country, from city to city. This is what brought about the renaissance in black leadership that led to the mayoral victories of such pioneers as: “Dutch” Morial, David Dinkins, Harold Washington, Tom Bradley, Emmanuel Cleaver, Norm Rice, Marion Barry and others. African-Americans had to flex political muscle on the heels of a history, in America, that has often denied black folks substantial leadership opportunities. So I say again, that we have made our point.

What’s the point? The point is that we have what it takes to put leaders in elected seats. This is important to understand because black leaders have won the confidence of the populace, not just their black constituents. We had come to a point in history where citizens started to look at African-American leaders as leaders. Now it is different. Where African-American leaders have shown the capacity to thrive in the court of public opinion, they have also shown the capacity to be as fallible and as negligent as anyone else.

I am not suggesting, at all, that this should be the end of black leadership or we should slack up on our voting power. Don’t be silly. It should be the end of irresponsible leadership whether that leader is black, white, Hispanic or otherwise. Therefore, to elect someone just because he or she is black, knowing that this person may...
not be the most qualified to lead, is simply irresponsible on the voter’s part.

New Orleans is a different kind of place and that makes things interesting. See, New Orleans was built on a caste mentality. Therefore, there exists a very clear separation between the “have’s” and “have not’s”. What African-Americans have watched are some of our own black leaders give in to the temptations of power, prestige, cash and those precious opportunities to rub elbows with the “have’s”. To localize it more, too many of these folks have chosen the comfort and convenience of “the clique” over the needs of the people. At the same time, let’s recognize that there is still much work to do in Black America. We are still without a black governor and a black President.

In New Orleans it is our responsibility to step outside of our comfort zone and investigate which candidate gives the entire city a chance for future success at an extremely crucial point in our history. If that is a black candidate, fine. If not, fine. That doesn’t mean that black folks cannot exercise effective leadership as a constituency. So when we choose, we have to be honest with each other and, most importantly, ourselves.

We’ve Got “Real Proof” Against Mayoral Candidate:

Kimberly Williamson Butler:

The “Right Plan” is only as good as the “Right Leader” with “Real” City Hall Experience……
Kimberly is that leader and she has never lied or broken her promises to us……..

Citizens For A Better New Orleans

12 Reasons “Why” 71,717 Voted for and Trust Kimberly:

✓ Chief Administrative Officer- in charge for the Mayor’s best year in office
✓ Real Hurricane Management Experience - Managed Isidore and Lily as CAO
✓ Committed to Level 5 hurricane protection and costal restoration
✓ Track record of rooting out corruption and standing up against bad “City Politics.”
✓ Relentless Leader with a Real Plan to rebuild all neighborhoods and businesses
✓ The ONLY candidate with 20 years of city redevelopment experience
✓ Elected by the PEOPLE – Winning in EVERY Ward to become our Clerk of Court
✓ True commitment to citizen assisted planning of schools and accessible healthcare
✓ Kept promises at the Downtown Development District. Made downtown GREAT
✓ History of fighting for the SAFETY of our children, seniors and neighborhoods
✓ Restored integrity and order to deplorable conditions of the Criminal Court Property and Evidence rooms her first year in office resulting in better evidence for trials
✓ For Local and Small Business mandatory participation in redevelopment contracts

THE END OF POLITICS AS USUAL…..

WWW.ELECTKIMBERLY.COM JOIN THE TEAM 877 221 7338

Speech continued from page 15.

State & Local News, continued from page 7.

Efforts have also been made through the media, including the National Newspaper Publishers Association as well as Greater St. Stephen Full Gospel Baptist Church, the congregation of Bishop Paul Morton, whose 4,000-member congregation are largely displaced people from New Orleans.

Meanwhile, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund has launched a “Pass it On” campaign urging everyone to pass on information about its special booklet to help displaced residents.

“We need to work quickly because deadlines are rapidly approaching,” says LDF Assistant Counsel Alaina Beverly. “We know that the ‘Pass it On’ system works so we are borrowing from the lessons of the past to protect our future.”

Copies of the brochure can be obtained by calling 1-866-OUR VOTE or going to www.katrinavote.org

Earlier efforts led by Jesse Jackson and his Rainbow/PUSH Coalition to delay the election because of violations of the Voting Rights Act were thwarted by U.S. District Judge Ivan Lemelle, himself a displaced African-American voter, who said the election is fair.

Therefore, the coalition of organizations, spearheaded by the NCBCP, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under the Law have had to mobilize buses from around the nation in order to get people to New Orleans to vote. The NAACP alone is sending 5 busloads.

People needing a free ride to the polls or other information may call 1-866-OUR-VOTE.

John Musser IV, president of the New Orleans Board of Election Supervisors, which counts the absentee ballots on Election Day, says the city has hired about 0 additional people and trained them to help count the ballots. The five-member board has four African-Americans.

Also, to assure that the counting goes smoothly and fairly, Musser says the counting will begin around noon on Election Day instead of 6 P.M., the time it normally starts.

“We take very seriously our desire to have the absentee count available at the same time as the machine count so everybody knows right away,” Musser says.

Meanwhile, political observers are watching. Says Walters: “The barriers to a fair vote right now are so formidable that however it turns out, as far as I’m concerned, it’s atrocious.”
As the time grows closer to the end of the strangest election of the century, it is mind boggling, to realize first that this is happening, and second that it all has to happen again in a few weeks for the run-offs, which will probably be just as crazy with multiple candidates in mostly every race.

What is to be admired is the unprecedented turn-out. Planes, trains and automobiles from everywhere throughout the country, brought New Orleanians to polls throughout Louisiana, showing strongly that we love our town, and we will fight to control our destiny.

Data News Weekly, has been at the forefront of bringing the information needed to our readers to make informed decisions. We were a co-sponsor of the Rebuild Hope Now Voter Empowerment campaign, which toured in the cities of Houston, Atlanta, New Orleans and last weekend, Baton Rouge, holding voter empowerment town hall forums and candidate debates. We sincerely hope that it helped you to make the right decision that you feel is best for the future of our city. It was our honor to serve you our readers and citizens of New Orleans during this critical time. We see it as our mission, that we have held now for 40 years.

We at Data News, decided not to endorse in the Mayor’s election. But if you have not voted as of yet, remember that there are only five major candidates, Ray Nagin, Mitch Landrieu, Ron Forman, Tom Watson, and Virginia Boulet. Even though the other candidates ran a valid campaign, we advise you to take your vote seriously, because this is way too important to our future. But we do have recommendations for other races:

In the Assessor’s races, we recommend all incumbents but we personally endorse the following candidates:
• Erroll Williams for Assessor
• Betty Jefferson for Assessor
• Paul Valteau for Civil Sheriff
• Dale Adkins for Clerk of Civil District Court
• Marlin Gusman for Criminal Sheriff

For City Council we endorse
• Renee Gill Pratt for District B
• Louella Givens for District D
• Cynthia Willard Lewis for District E
• Oliver Thomas for Council at Large
• Jackie Clarkson for Council at Large

As I mentioned earlier, it was an outstanding effort by New Orleanians to get here from wherever you are to the polls, but it is extremely important that we remember that there is one more challenge before us, Saturday, most certainly will not be the end of this election. So stay focused let’s not get distracted. If you have to come back and do it again, move hell and high waters and do it! This is our city, and we have the right to choose who runs it.
These are the polling locations for Election Day in Orleans Parish on April 22, 2006 and May 20, 2006.

To find your new polling location, look for your old polling location, in alphabetical order, in the left hand column. Your new polling location will be in the right hand column. For example, if your old polling location was “A.P. Tureaud School”, your new polling location is “McDonough #35 High School.”

For more information on how to check your current registration status, register to vote, or vote, please contact your home parish Registrar of Voters office or the Louisiana Secretary of State Elections Division by email at elections@sos.louisiana.gov or at 1-800-883-2805.

Paid for by the Louisiana Secretary of State’s Office.
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Paid for by the Louisiana Secretary of State’s Office.
| Polling Location | Name | Address | Orleans Parish | City | Parish | Location
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</tbody>
</table>

**Paid for by the Louisiana Secretary of State’s Office.**
His leadership was evident before and after the storm. Oliver Thomas is, and has always been, productive and accessible citywide. He serves on more than 40 boards and multiple organizations dealing with subjects from Golf for Kids to Companions for Aging Seniors.

He is well rounded, well versed and well prepared in the areas now so crucial to our recovery—healthcare, family and youth services, public and private housing, job training, water, historic preservation and tourism.

Oliver Thomas was also a basketball star, a leading actor, attended the Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government and the Aspen Institute.

It seems appropriate that, in 1999, the 377th Support Command awarded Oliver Thomas the Can Do Anything Anywhere Award.
Tough, competent and capable of making the hard choices.

That is what New Orleans needs in our next mayor. My record and experience mean I can hit the ground running.

I have three immediate priorities.

First, our city must be safe, our levees strong and our coast protected, so that we never have to go through this again.

Second, the crime in our city must go.....once and for all. We’ll rebuild a world-class city....a tourism destination ....a new economy...but first, we’ll let the criminals know they’ll never stake their claim here again.

Third, New Orleans is a city of neighborhoods....each one special and unique. That’s how we rebuild....with the voices of neighborhoods guiding the way.

The city we all love will come back.....better than before.

I’ll work every hour.....every day.....with all my energy ...until we get this job done.

“Because we only have one chance and our margin for error is zero.”