

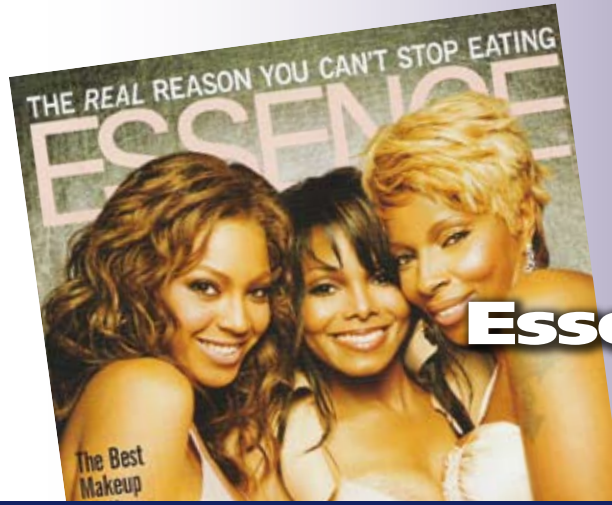
Lighting The Road To Freedom

New Orleans

Data

News Weekly

"The People's Paper"



Data Zone

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**Essence Music to
Return Home**

November 4, 2006

40th Year

Volume 36

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The Soul of New Orleans

Decision '06

Who will lead the 2nd District

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97th District Race
gets Hotter

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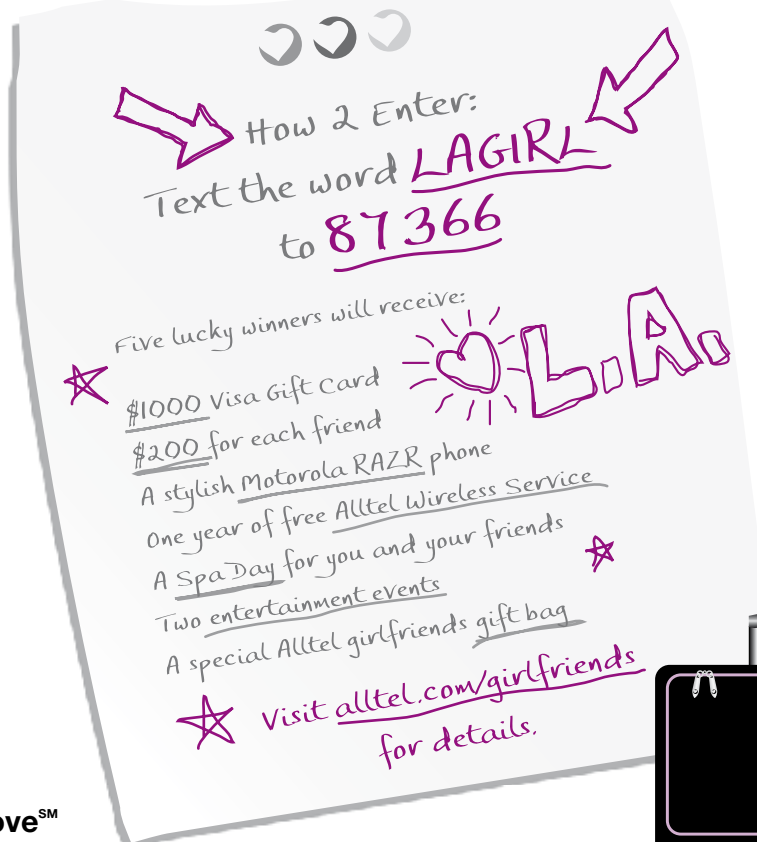
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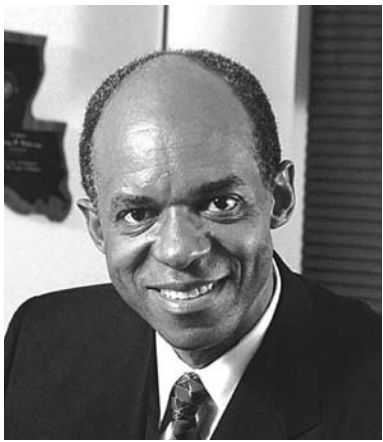


COVER STORY

Incumbent William Jefferson Faces Formidable Challengers in Re-election Bid

Interviews by Edwin Buggage

Congressman William Jefferson faces his toughest challenge yet as a slew of candidates vie for the right to represent **Louisiana Congressional District 2** a seat that's presently held by the incumbent William Jefferson. In a Data News Weekly exclusive we have interviewed all the major candidates, so that you the voters can get a clearer picture of each of the candidates who were forthright and candid with their thoughts as they fight for the right to represent the citizens of Louisiana Congressional District 2.



**Congressman
William Jefferson**

EB: What is it that separates you from your opponents?

WJ: Experience, the capacity to get the job done and an established record of getting the job done.

EB: What kind of things are you working on presently in Congress for the people of District 2?

WJ: Well, we're working on getting more resources from the federal government in addition to what we've gotten, which is a considerable amount with room for improvement. But the other things that we're working on

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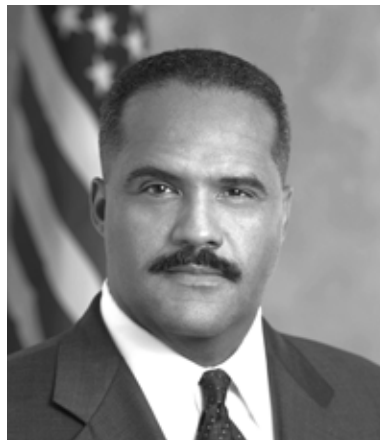


**Karen
Carter**

EB: Tell me a little bit about your campaign, and why you now have decided to make a run for the U.S. Congress?

KC: I thought there was a need for leadership at this critical time after Katrina; we have been crippled and we need to stand up ourselves. We need effective leadership and there was a void there. I thought I had a record of solid leadership when there was a time of need and I would lend my services. I felt we needed to restore credibility and respect to public service. My ethics

Continued page 6..



**Troy
Carter**

EB: What is it that prompted you to make a run for the U.S. Congress?

TC: You know there is a huge need now in this community for strong, effective concentrated leadership that has the integrity and credibility to go to Washington D.C. and I've served for sixteen years in public office without a single controversy. I've served in the state legislature, and on the New Orleans City Council. I'm a successful businessman, husband and father; I think I bring a very unique dynamic to

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**Derrick
Shepherd**

EB: What made you decide to make a run for the U.S. Congress?

DS: Because the community needs the leadership Orleans and Jefferson Parish has not been served on the federal level, resources have been lacking and we need someone that will be more hands on in getting what the district needs.

EB: What is it about your campaign that separates you from the other candidates?

Continued next page.



**Regina
Bartholomew**

EB: Why should the citizens of Congressional District 2 vote for you versus some of the other candidates?

RB: I believe I should be elected because I'm different from the other candidates. I am the only one with an extensive platform that touches on every issue that affects the people of the Second Congressional District. I have a very people minded platform. I'm the only candidate who is not affiliated with any political organization or politics of the past and I think we need a change right

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COVER STORY

William Jefferson, Continued from page 3

beyond just getting additional resources for homeownership and affordable housing is a bill that would allow citizens and business to sue the Army Corps of Engineers. They have had immunity for eighty-four years and it's never admitted before that its negligence caused a major disaster that drowned a major city and then it walks away from it. We don't think that's right, so I submitted a bill to change that and remove the immunity in cases of major disaster, like ours, that was caused by the Corps negligence. We have gotten the support of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chair, Mr. Don Young, of Alaska, so we may have hearings perhaps in January. The next thing is our insurance laws which presently are completely in the hands of insurance companies with the ability to collude and unite to make decisions about whether its wind, water or flood. We want to remove that flexibility from them and make them face up to their responsibilities. We also want to broaden support for disasters and not just make it support in the

case of flood insurance but also to remove any distinction between flood and anything else. It's just going to be disaster insurance. So whatever type of disaster occurs, whether it's a tornado in the mid-west or an earthquake in the west or a hurricane our way, it's covered completely without the insurance company making a distinction between what events actually caused the damage. Those are the immediate things on the horizon that I am working on.

EB: In your opinion, what's the biggest problem facing District 2 in this recovery?

WJ: Housing is a major issue; affordable housing, that's for homeowners as well, because connected with that are the rapidly growing insurance rates and price gouging of landlords toward tenants is a horrible problem. The repopulation of our low income housing stock here is key, because so many of our people were not only renters but low income residents. For them, we also have to find a way to get them back home. Without

housing, we can't put people back to work, or to school; we can't do any of that. But other than that, the healthcare system that's still down and, of course, people don't want to come back to a town that doesn't have hospitals, doctors and clinics. Of course, there is a infrastructure; Sewerage and Water Board power infrastructure and all those things aren't fully restored across town. So our biggest challenge is repopulating the city. We can't do it without housing, without our healthcare system, and without our schools in place.

EB: The issue of race has made it to the forefront as of late and has played a part in the outcome of several recent elections and has been talked about in terms of the recovery as well. How much do you think race is an issue in this election although all the major candidates are African-American?

WJ: Well we know the folks who were most disproportionately affected by the storm were poor and African-American. And we know a lot of people wanted to say

look the place didn't flood on the high ground, that little sliver of high property was mostly white and well off and that we should build along that edge but not in any other areas. If you don't build in those other areas people don't come home, New Orleans East, Broadmoor, Pontchartrain Park, the upper and lower ninth ward which are almost exclusively African-American. So you have to read between the lines when people say they want to make those areas green space out of concern about risk is not really telling us the whole truth because we all know that the risk would not had been there if the levees would have held. With new levees and coastal barriers, we could live anywhere we want to in our city and build it all back, but there are forces out there that want New Orleans to stay small and majority white. That's a real challenge for us to see through and to make sure we fight to get all our people back home not only to share in the recovery, but at the end of day, be the beneficiaries of the recovery with better schools, housing and health facilities. We don't just want to bring people back to the same old place. We want to make it better than before with more opportunities.

EB: Forgive me, but some of your critics are saying because of some of the things you're facing would impede your ability to be an effective Congressman, what do you say to them?

WJ: I say look at the results. These are things my opponents have to say because they can't criticize my performance. When they look at having gotten the 11 billion dollars for housing for our people to return home, 6 billion dollars to fix our levees, 8 billion dollars in Go Zone legislation, 70 million dollars for affordable housing, and monies for school reestablishment, it's pretty hard for them to criticize that record. That's just part of it, and so they have to talk about distractions, but if I was so distracted, how could I be so productive.

EB: I would like to follow up on that because all of your opponents I've spoken with talked about bringing credibility and integrity back to government as to suggest that it's something that's lacking right now. What do you say to that?

WJ: All I can say to that is that I haven't been charged with a crime. I maintain that I am innocent of any crime for which I could be

charged and I'm due like any other American, the presumption of innocence unless in a court of law that it's proven otherwise. So I say to them, don't get ahead of yourselves, just wait and see what happens here because when I went to congress many years ago, there were two African-American members of congress that were under indictment and one was on trial, Harold Ford, Sr., He was tried, had a hung jury, had a retrial and won his case. The other was a very wonderful man named Floyd Flake out of New York who was indicted by Rudy Guliani but also won his case and the people stood beside him and behind him and they were re-elected year after year and themselves cleared, so they continued their work.

EB: How would you grade yourself as a congressman and what would you say is your greatest accomplishment as a legislator to date?

WJ: I think it probably came after the storm with the Go-Zone legislation, prior to that, I would probably say some of the things I've done have been for economic development with our ports, keeping the maritime industry strong which creates so many jobs for our economy and projects with respect to tourism. But I think our most recent challenges have been the most difficult to face therefore I think I'm most proud of what has happened since the storm. And as far as grading my performance as a legislator I would give myself an A minus because there is always room for improvement.

EB: If you could say one thing to the people who are back in the city as well as those who have not yet returned to the city what would you tell them?

WJ: I would tell them to keep supporting us. We're going to need a sustaining commitment, not just from our delegation and our state but from people all over the country. We are an extraordinarily vital asset to the nation. We refine 30% of the oil our country uses, our ports move 70% of water born cargo, and we are an extraordinary place of culture, original music, and cuisine unlike any other place in the world. This is a place worth saving and being proud of. It's just an extraordinary place. But there some things we have to end like the correlation of race with poverty and right now, we need to get after it and make sure that when the next storm

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NEWSMAKER

District Ninety-Seven Candidates Face Off In Heated Battle

Interviews by Edwin Buggage

The race for State Representative of District 97 has turned into a bitter slugfest where Brian Egana, Legislative Aide to city councilman Oliver Thomas is engaged in a run-off with J.P. Morrell, the son of city councilperson Cynthia Hedge Morrell and Arthur Morrell who served as representative of District 97 for the past two decades. Recently he resigned from his post to serve in his new position as Clerk of Criminal District Court. This race has transcended the issues and the candidates have bitterly exchanged barbs that have gotten personal. This race as have many of our recent elections have become a test of our city will to forge ahead; they are a testament and symbol of what the future of the of the city's leadership and what type of leaders will captain our city as we rebuild. In a Data News Weekly exclusive we talked to both of the candidates to get their views about their visions for District Ninety-Seven

Brian Egana

By Edwin Buggage

EB: What is it that you feel you would bring to the residents of District 97 that your opponent doesn't?



BE: Well we're talking about the legislative branch of government. For the last nine years I've had the pleasure to work for New Orleans City Councilman Oliver Thomas as his legislative aide. I have the hands on experience, also for the past nine years I been involved with several communities of

this city. I think because of my experience I'm the best qualified.

EB: Your opponent says that since you've recently moved into district 97 and he has been part of this community throughout his life and his roots run deeper in the community, he feels he is better qualified to serve as their representative. How do you feel about that?

BE: Well let me tell you a little bit about who is Brian Egana as a young man I grew up in the lower ninth ward. I'm twenty-eight years old, and four years ago I was fortunate enough to purchase my first piece of property and I bought the property in the Gentilly community, I didn't know

Continued page 9.

J.P. Morrell

By Edwin Buggage

EB: Why do feel you are the best person to represent the citizens of District 97?

JPM: I've got the education, the hands on experience, I'm the only candidate left in this race that has spent his entire life growing up in this neighborhood. I've been in this community all twenty-eight years of my life except

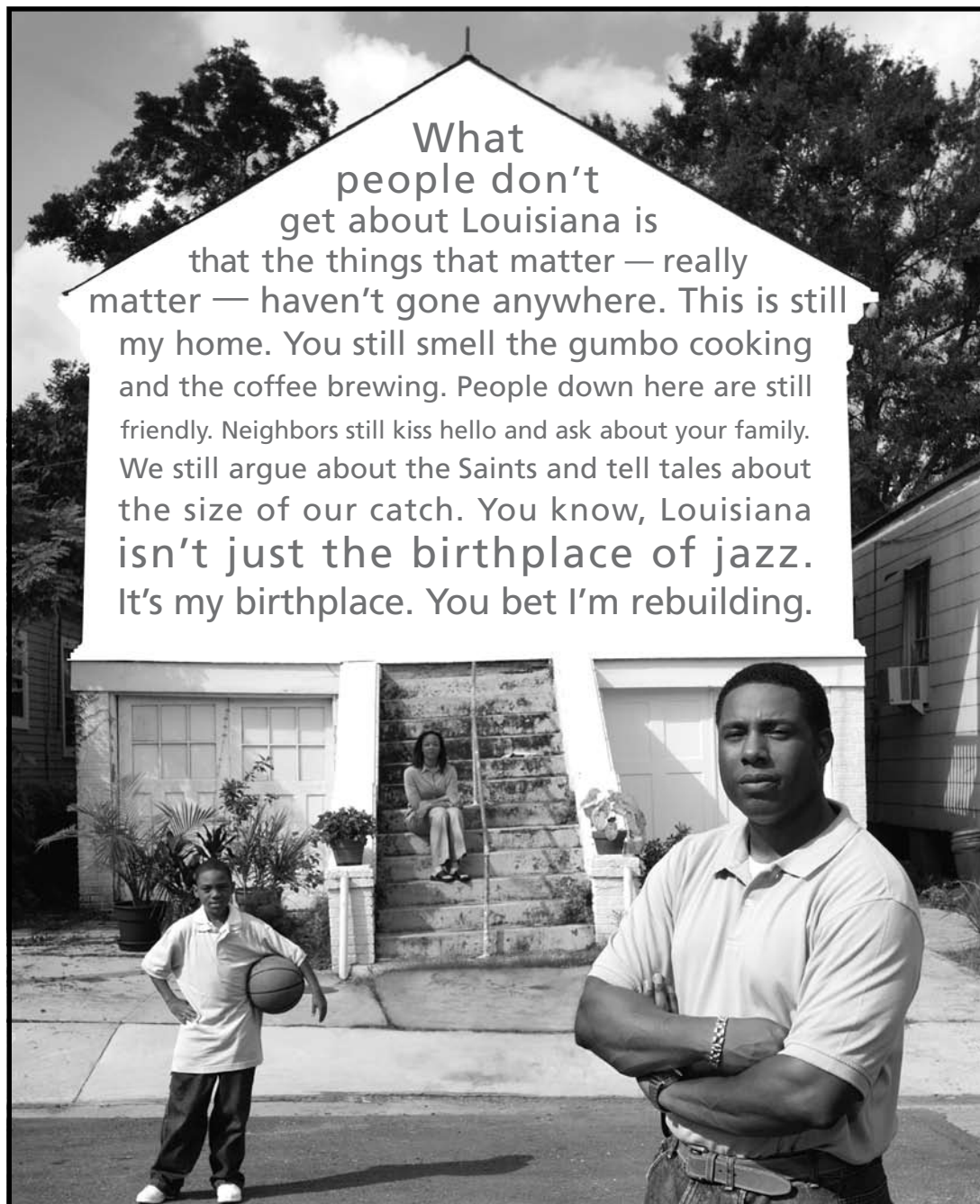


the four years I went to college. And I'm not someone who just moved in this community two and one-half years ago. These neighborhoods are so different and unique they all have different needs. It's not one size fit all for any of the problems of this area and for someone to go through and learn each individual area and what they need that's going to slow down the process from being effective.

EB: Tell us a little bit about your platform, what is your agenda?

JPM: The three major things I'm working on for District 97 the first issue is crime. Right now we're dealing with a crime issue, in the past year and a half we've had four

Continued page 9.



What people don't get about Louisiana is that the things that matter — really matter — haven't gone anywhere. This is still my home. You still smell the gumbo cooking and the coffee brewing. People down here are still friendly. Neighbors still kiss hello and ask about your family. We still argue about the Saints and tell tales about the size of our catch. You know, Louisiana isn't just the birthplace of jazz. It's my birthplace. You bet I'm rebuilding.

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COVER STORY

Karen Carter, Continued from page 3

and integrity have never been questioned and I believe it would be a great opportunity to serve people at a time when they needed it most. In Washington D.C., we need to clean up the culture of corruption and we need people who know how to build bi-partisan relationships and coalitions in order to get things done; that's why I offered my services.

EB: What are some of the issues you plan to address, what is your platform?

KC: My platform is extensive; while the rest of the country gets to talk about social security and the War in Iraq or immigration we also have to talk about building from the ground up. We have infrastructure needs and a need for federal resources in order to do that. The Sewerage and Water Board is over a billion dollar problem, Entergy have gotten some monies recently, but clearly are going to need a lot more help in rebuilding. Another issue is affordable housing not only for low income residents but for people in the middle class as well. We need to rebuild the healthcare community and there is great news today for the healthcare community that has been embraced by all and that's very important. Of course, we need to stand up our school system. We've had tremendous problems prior to Katrina; we had a failing system where we didn't give the children what they needed to succeed. Now that the Recovery District is in charge of the New Orleans School Board, you have a bifurcated system but we knew that the status quo was not good and we had to do something differently. For years and years we watched the system crumble, and now we have to hold the State Recovery District responsible for what its doing but change is never easy. Its very difficult but I know in the end, things will only be better and children will get the tools that they need.

EB: What's Karen Carter's greatest accomplishment to date?

KC: I would probably have to say, taking on tough challenges and being courageous to take on tough challenges that have a significant impact on people's lives like Public Education, Levee Board Reform and holding insurance companies accountable if I had to name a few.

EB: Earlier you talked about credibility and ethics and that

is important. Now this is just hypothetical, but do you think that if Congressman William Jefferson wasn't in his present situation would you have still decided to run?

KC: I can't say that, but we have this cloud of suspicion that exist and the circumstances being what they are, we're not dealing with a hypothetical situation. We're dealing with a situation when we are in October of 2006 and we are facing tremendous challenges. We are in need of federal resources and things that need to be done requiring us to have respected representation in Washington. The person that serves in that office needs to have the ability to go to their colleagues and have their trust and respect from states across the country. Because when you ask them to forgo some of the projects that they have in their area, whether it be a bridge or an after school program, in order to replace the recovery on the top of the agenda, then we're asking them to have confidence that we are going to do right by the federal government and that is to make sure those dollars are being spent effectively and for the purposes that we say. There's a level of trust that's required in relationships and when your own party has stripped you of a position of influence and power; then not because of you or I, but because of the circumstances, you can no longer be effective for this community and there is a distraction in your life. The congressman and his family are going through tough times. The Justice Department will figure out innocence or guilt. That's not for me or anyone else to determine and this race is not about an individual it's about what the district needs at a time when it's crippled. What I saw was a void of leadership, effectiveness and an inability to be effectively move forward. When you look at the national news media, recently they have been focusing on the culture of corruption in Congress, and unfortunately we have a black eye associated with that, and I don't think it's fair to the citizens of the 2nd Congressional District to have to endure that.

EB: There have been political ads that have been running on local radio about you that suggest that you don't have the desire for some of the people of our community to return. What's your feelings about these ads?

KC: It's absurd, a blatant

lie and unfortunate that the traditional political tactics are being consistently used again for personal gain. I guess desperate times call for desperate measures, and this is the only way the opponent thinks he can win. I'm not going to get into gutter with him over smear issues. I'm not going to do it. We have circumstances that exist not because of me or you, there's only oneperson under federal investigation and there are two associates of his that have pled guilty and are in route to jail right now as a result of them pleading guilty to bribing him. I didn't do that; Karen Carter did not do that and I think the people of the district deserve better. This race is about recovery and what we need moving forward and we deserve credible and effective leadership and that's why I'm running.

EB: It's a fact that at the national level relationships are very important in Congress and over the years Congressman Jefferson has been able to build relationships. Do you think the state would suffer as a result of sending someone else there?

KC: No I think our district would suffer if we don't send someone there who is credible, and has integrity and without clouds of suspicion. We're at a point in this recovery where we can't afford not to have respected and honest leadership in Washington. So, I submit to you that credibility, honesty and integrity are number one issues with number two being the fact that relationships guide policy in Washington and I agree with you on that front. But the way to build any relationship whether it is with your wife, your children, your friends, or in the workplace, is based on trust. Relationships are always based on trust and when your own party strips you of a position of influence and power notwithstanding the circumstances in your district, knowing what the needs are I don't think there is any major problem. I don't think they wanted to hurt New Orleans at a time when we needed it most absolutely not. There's something there when a party who believes in the principles I believe in would do this to one of their own members. It's significant and unprecedented and we need to pay attention to what that message is and what the people in Washington are saying about our representative.

EB: There are people all over this country that long to come

back to New Orleans. If you could say something to them that could provide them aid and comfort, what would you tell them?

KC: I would tell them to remain steadfast because help is on the way and if they want to be proud again of their public servants, they should have confidence that Karen Carter will offer something different. Not change for the sake of change, but change for the sake of progress and if they give me the opportunity to serve them, I won't let them down and I will deliver.

*Troy Carter,
Continued from page 3*

go into Washington and serve in the U.S. Congress. I bring the legislative experience, the ability to understand local and state government intimately and the maturity to go to Washington and articulate the needs of this region and bring back the resources.

EB: What is it that separates you from your opponents?

TC: As I've stated in the previous answer no one in this race can say they have state legislative experience and local government experience and is a successful businessman. I'm the only one in this race that enjoys those three distinctions and the unique one that is very important is my total independence. I'm not part of a political organization; I don't belong to a BOLD or Progressive Democrat. Bill Jefferson has his Progressive Democrat and Karen Carter has the BOLD Organization and two of them have historically fought for the right to own the seat in the Second Congressional District with the seats uptown. These are not inheritable seats. They do not belong to anyone they belong to the people and Troy Carter is and has always been independent and free of any political machine. Troy Carter has always been someone who has worked directly for the people and you never had to go through political organizations before you could get to me. That's a clear distinction the political bosses in Washington will not pull my strings and tell me how to vote. I have the ability to work with Republicans and Democrats and I'm a proud Democrat. One that makes no apologies for that, but I am not one that will follow

you down the dark road and vote any way the Democrats ask me to vote. I am going to vote for what's best for the people of the Second Congressional District.

EB: Race was a factor in some of the recent elections in New Orleans; what's your feeling about the state of race and class relations in the city and how do you feel that you can help facilitate healing some of the wounds that have taken place that perhaps are holding up some of the resources to getting into the hand of the citizens of New Orleans?

TC: I think anyone who thinks, says or suggests that race is not a major issue in this community is fooling themselves and they have their heads stuck in the sand. The reality is that race is a major problem in this community, There's a lot of racial divisiveness, there are a lot of racial issues that divide us, but I will tell you that each race I've run, whether it was the city council or the state legislature, I enjoyed tremendous crossover vote from both Black and White, Republican and Democrat. I consider myself someone who is a coalition builder, someone who can bring those factions together to recognize that it's not about being Black or White or Republican or Democrat. We're Americans and if its one thing that Katrina showed us, all the wind and the water that came and flooded and destroyed our homes; it didn't recognize race, wealth or party affiliation and we need to take advantage of that oneness as we rebuild the city.

EB: In an earlier answer you mentioned integrity and credibility, the incumbent is going through a situation right now. Do you think with his present situation that he can effectively represent the citizens of Congressional District 2?

TC: I do not think with the cloud of uncertainty and legal battles Congressman Jefferson has to face that he can give us the level of leadership and effectiveness we desperately need right now; that's been demonstrated. Congressman Jefferson has a horrific battle to face; he's got significant allegations of criminal activity that he's going to have to deal with. I don't know if he's innocent or guilty nor do I pretend to, but I do know that is going to be determined by a court of law,

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News Orleans Data News Weekly

TRAIL BLAZERS

Artist Giselle Nakhid Changes The Village one Child at a Time

By Renetta Burrell Perry
Photos By Jamie Jones

These days the African Proverb "it takes a village to raise a child," is loosely thrown around and rarely acted upon. But for Artist/Educator Giselle Nakhid, it resonates as a sobering fact of life. Young, petite, socially conscious and intensely passionate, Nakhid is reminiscent of an older, much wiser spirit. And in her position as a dance instructor to children from at-risk and severely impoverished neighborhoods, she has concluded that the art of teaching dance is only part of the job.

Raised in a two-parent home and educated at Dillard University, Nakhid admits that the lives of her students bear few similarities to that of hers growing up. In her work at Fisher Elementary where she mainly teaches African and Hip-Hop dance to students in lower grades, she has been bombarded by the societal ills that affect impoverished children all over our city. But through dance, she offers an escape. "With the kids it relaxes me to experience something that I teach, to bring my talent or my gift to teach them. The kids that I teach everyday live in areas where they don't have that," she explains. Expectedly, as with most kids, her students grapple with common issues like the dislike of homework, but the unfortunate difference here goes far deeper than mere dislike for the work. Recently they were given the assignment to write about their community. When Nakhid read the passages written by her students, laden with references to shootings, drugs and the like, she knew she had her work cut out for her. "I didn't grow up like that so I bring to them a sense of reality that they can surpass that element. I show them that I have a college degree and that they can have that too." Ironically, much of the time Nakhid spends with her students is not spent dancing, but mentoring and reinforcing. "I give

quizzes everyday on spelling. The art is good, but I would much rather they learn to read than anything. I tell them that they have a wonderful opportunity to be educated. Don't let go of that opportunity."

Post-K Dance Therapy

Through Young Audiences, the non-profit organization which employs Nakhid and many other artists from different genres to penetrate area schools to service our youth, art is disbursed with the intent of widening the curricula for students. Nakhid assesses that in Post Katrina New Orleans, this service is a necessity rather than an accessory. Upon her Post-K return to the school system which she has taught in for over four years, she learned that some students had missed the entire grade year, many were behind and needed to catch up, and others suffered from the same depression that had attacked many adults. "After the storm kids need an outlet to be themselves. Ultimately I want to focus on them and give them [positive] reinforcement," says Nakhid adding that the arts offer that reinforcement. She jokes that the kids in her dance class like the traditional African dance that she teaches because it offers something different, but they really enjoy the Hip-Hop class where they get to implement dance from the street. She laughs as she explains that sometimes the kids teach her their moves. "Whatever you put Lean with it Rock with It to, they get it." And according to Nakhid, they also get the fact that what she and others working for Young Audiences are giving to them is lots of love. She beams as she tells the story of her 7th grader who fights on almost a daily basis. "She's a rough little girl, but we love her to death. She just needs love." And when she sees



success stories, it makes it all worthwhile. "One student came in with a D or an F in reading. I told him that was unacceptable and we worked with him," she says. To her delight, weeks later that student ran up to her to show her a B in reading. She consequently gave him what she says was a much needed and deserved reward, something she practices with all of the students who perform well.

Future Steps

While Nakhid is certainly an accomplished dancer who dances with some of the city's most renowned companies: Kumbuuku Traditional Dance Company, Kulu Traditional African Dance Company, Bamboula 2000, she originally studied community health education at Dillard and holds a Bachelor's degree in Public Health. In her studies, she focused on STDs in our community and is now outraged that AIDS is still a number one killer of black youth in urban communities. "AIDS should not be coming up, but going down. I want to own my own clinic focusing on women and children and diseases," she asserts

adding that through her studies, she'd like to find a link between dance and health. And when asked what African-Americans can best do to achieve a healthier lifestyle she firmly replies, "read!" She continues, "People assume that I'm an artist so I'm not educated. I'm educated and I want my students to surpass me." With this goal in mind, Nakhid continues to educate and to mentor. She settles for no less than the best from her students. She remembers a time when dance was a part recreation and part education. Her dance teachers, she says, would drill her over and over again insisting upon perfection. She attributes much of her success to that persistent training. "I'm good at dancing because of this." It is that same persistence that drives Nakhid to exist as a force in the community. Outside of her work at Fisher, she also works at Hart Elementary School and with Ashe' Cultural Center teaching dance and yoga & reflexology, African, Tap and Hip-Hop classes and volunteers with several other organizations. As for her kids, she says, "The hard part about it is you can't reach all of them." We applaud her efforts in reaching all those that she can.

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New Orleans
DATA
News Weekly

NEWSMAKER

J.P. Morrell, Continued from page 5

four years ago I was going to run for office. While he mentions I didn't live in this community he fails to mention that he was living at home I think only recently he purchased a home on Music Street. But to even go further than that he claims he lived in the community when he was a student at Tulane University but he lived outside the district in an apartment located in downtown New Orleans, so when he says he's lived in this community his whole life that is not entirely true.

EB: This contest for some people have turned into a race that more about personalities than the issues do you think that it's problematic that the issues haven't been discussed and it's been more a campaign centering around personal attacks?

BE: I'm not engaged in personal attacks if my opponent has to put out negativity that's for him to do that is not for me. I just go to church and try not to participate in that and continue what I'm doing, and that's being out in the community working. And I'm committed and in this run-off the work is twice as hard and I'm out knocking on doors talking to people one on one speaking to people finding out what the issues are. I'm not that concerned about the attacks because the bottom line is that I'm out there working everyday morning to night.

EB: Since you've been talking to the people what are some of the things the citizens are most concerned about?

BE: I first started canvassing this district three or four months ago and talking to people one of the things their most concerned about is housing. Insurance and how it relates to housing is another issue, healthcare, workforce development, and as always education and crime, but the number one issue is housing. The LRA Road Home Program comes up because people need their money so they can get back home and move on with their lives.

EB: What is the one thing or a series of things that separates you from your opponent?

BE: Some people talk about what they have been doing after the storm, but I have nine years of dedication to this city, as I mentioned I grew up in the Lower Ninth Ward and my family moved to the Bywater area, and I purchased a piece of property in the Gentilly area. And also another thing he went to Country Day, I wasn't fortunate enough to go to Country Day, my parents weren't elected officials, and my mom and dad were just hard workers, clerks at the grocery store just

trying to make ends meet at the end of the day. Sometimes you hear people talking about education and what we need to do with our system, but yet he hasn't spent much time in the system. I went to public school: Thomas Edison Elementary School, Lawless High School and Douglass High School. How can education be part of his platform, how does he know what to do with our kids when that's not part of his experience; he doesn't know what our kids are going through.

EB: I mean no disrespect, but your opponent said that you released a flier where you admitted

Continued page 16.

J.P. Morrell, Continued from page 5

murders, before this past year and a half we haven't had a murder in nearly a decade. Gentilly was a pretty safe area, but all the drug related crime has come to this area and has really hampered rebuilding because we have a very large elderly population, and people are looking at do they want to move their grandparents or parents back to Gentilly when crime is an issue. Second problem education, we don't have one public school open in the entire District 97 area. Right now I am working even pre-legislator to try to get Gentilly Terrace open because it suffered minimal

damage during Hurricane Katrina and it can serve as a focal point for all the closed elementary schools in the area. The third major issue is the Louisiana Road Home Program and rebuilding; a lot of people despite how much information is available have no idea how it works and a lot of them have been disenchanted about the whole process and so a lot of them haven't even applied to the program. What I've been doing is encourage them to apply and facilitate getting information about the Louisiana Road Home Program and get a catalog of theory complaints and bring it

back to the state and work on how we can improve the program and make it more available to people.

EB: What do you feel is your opponent biggest weakness that would impair him from getting the resources people need in District 97?

JPM: The biggest problem he has is that he is an admitted drug dealer. He has admitted that he was a former drug dealer on a mail out he sent to the community. He admitted that when he was in high school he sold drugs to help his mother pay the bills. Now everybody in New Orleans

Continued page 16.



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DATA ZONE

Poet's Corner

Her Answer
Frederick 'Hollywood' Delahoussaye



Sent her away with notions of return
separation meets devastation hard lessons forced to learn
wore her love like armor but still it couldn't protect me from the
water
from the slaughter
from 2000 souls now turned to martyrs
fathers separated from daughters sons and love ones while
outcome
remains unclear
fear finds freedom and flesh becomes weak
no words to speak no arms to reach
no notions of peace or shadow of light in darkness of night
just silence then sirens then shots
search for sanity between helicopter drops
white flags on rooftops and nightmares on street corners
the day the bowl finally filled with water
yet knowing she's somewhere safe
helps me plot my escape
from the only place I call home
only life I knew as my own
the only love that kept me strong but now is gone
and no poem or song or SBA loan could weather this storm
or bring her back home
and even though the love remains
so does the pain so does the strain
down came the rain on my city and my soul
soul mate left out in the cold freedom put on hold
from national guard & national neglect
and you cant replace her life with some FEMA check
I still dream about the nape of her neck and how the water rose
past it how her body went flaccid how I reached out for her
hand but couldn't grab it
a country's habit to embark on the tragic now seems all too
classic
so we reflect on whets next in this 40 year pattern
old fashioned ethnic cleansing and we keep letting it happen
but she didn't deserve the weather the worry or the waste
love caught in displaced disgrace a breach of levees and of faith
a life changing mistake
one that I never chose to make



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DATA ZONE

Essence Music Festival returning to New Orleans for 3 years



NEW ORLEANS AGENDA – Governor Kathleen Blanco, Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu, and Mayor C. Ray Nagin joined with Michelle Ebanks, President Essence Communications and Susan L. Taylor, Editorial Director, Essence, and Angela Burt Murray, Editor-in-Chief, Essence Host Committee in announcing that the Essence Music Festival will return to New Orleans for three years.

The State Office of Tourism under the leadership of Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu has worked out a deal in which additional marketing dollars will be provided from the state to help publicize the annual event which had been held in New Orleans until Hurricane Katrina forced the festival to Houston last year. Landrieu, who led the negotiations, said Louisiana has worked since a few weeks after Hurricane Katrina to make sure the state didn't lose the festival, which was started in New Orleans in 1995 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Essence magazine.

Michelle Ebanks, says New Orleans is the, quote, "obvious choice." She says it's important for "the festival to participate in the rebirth of this city."

The festival known as "the party with a purpose" will serve as a plus for New Orleans as it rebuilds its community and tourism base. It features hip-hop, rhythm and blues and soul performances at the Louisiana Superdome by night and inspirational "empowerment seminars" by day.

Next year's Essence Music Festival will be held July 5, 6 and 7 with events at both the Louisiana Superdome and the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center.

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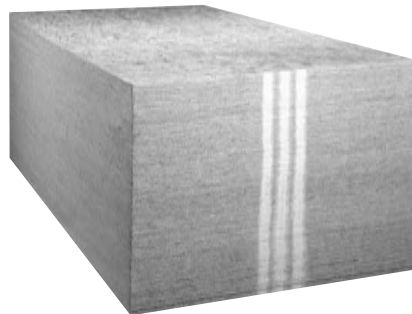
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NEWS

Activists Gear Up for Expected Problems at the Polls on Election Day

By. Hazel Trice Edney
NNPA Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – Six years after the 2000 election fiasco that disenfranchised more than a million African-Americans, voting advocates and election officials are

taking steps to avert any serious problems during Tuesday's high stakes election.

"We truly have concerns, which is why we've been pushing for preparation. It's because we do believe there's going to be a lot of chaos at the polls," says Melanie Campbell, president and chief executive officer of the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation. "Folks who want to disenfranchise are going to be working overtime to intimidate and suppress Black voters, Hispanic voters, women, seniors, the most vulnerable at the polls."

Short-staffing at polls because of budget crunches, confusion over new voting machines and other election procedures on Nov. 7, will likely be exacerbated by very close races as Democrats and Republicans



Melanie Campbell

compete for control over the House and Senate.

"It's a very highly contested election. That's for sure," says Campbell. "There's nothing to make us believe that there are not going to be problems at the polls. A key is giving people what they need in order to do everything they can so that if they've got problems, they'll know it before Election Day."

Continued on page 14

Oprah Helps Raise Thousands for Bennett College

By. Melde Rutledge
Special to the NNPA from the
Carolina Peacemaker

GREENSBORO, N.C. (NNPA) – After months of buildup, media icon Oprah Winfrey accomplished what many people believed she would do on Oct. 20—help raise thousands of dollars for Bennett College for Women.

Winfrey, best recognized for her Emmy Award-winning television show, as well as being a leading book critic, an Academy Award-nominated actress and magazine publisher, was the focal point of the benefit gala that evening at the Grandover Resort.

The event was designed to raise funds for the academic institution's Revitalizing Bennett Campaign that plans to raise \$50 million by 2007.

"This is a joy," said Bennett President Johnnetta Cole.

Friday's event, according to Bennett's executive assistant to the vice president for institutional advancement, Wanda Mobley, raised approximately \$500,000 from ticket sales and sponsorships.

"Your presence here tonight ensures that we will indeed be able to hold Bennett's doors open for many, many, many years to come," Dr. Arthur Affleck, Bennett's vice president for institutional advancement, told the audience of approximately 830 people, who paid \$250, \$500 and \$1,000 per seat.

Sofar, the school has raised approximately \$31 million for their campaign. Affleck pointed out that Cole, who is scheduled to leave Bennett in June 2007, will not leave the institution until the school completes its multi-million dollar endeavor.

Originally, Winfrey said that she wanted to visit Bennett to speak with just the students of the private historically black women's institution. But after she heard that the gala was a fundraiser for Bennett, Winfrey explained that she was compelled to lend a hand to the Bennett Belles.

"I only do that when I think it really matters," she said about giving speeches, due to her hectic schedule. "And I think Bennett really matters."

Winfrey did visit Bennett's campus that day to speak with students prior to the gala that evening.

"We had very interesting talks about music and our culture, and what the music and our culture is saying to young women," she said about the discussion that day, which focused on the power of words in music and television.

"And when you allow yourself to be called a bitch and a whore, and dance to the beat of it, consciously and unconsciously it says to you that you are less than."

Winfrey explained how she learned the strength of words from her close friend, esteemed poet, author and educator, Dr. Maya Angelou.



Oprah Winfrey arrives at the J.P. Morgan Library and Museum in New York in this May 11, 2006, file photo. Winfrey headlined a fundraiser at Bennett College, a private college for black women in Greensboro, N.C., on Friday, Oct. 20, 2006. AP Photo/Stephen Chernin, File

Winfrey's comments centered on encouraging people who have succeeded in life to give back to those in need.

"You cannot continue to move forward in your life unless you're willing to give back what you have been given," she said. "It is a responsibility. It is our charge. It is our calling."

"So you being here tonight, paying to be here tonight, paying a significant amount to be here tonight, means that you care about giving back some of what you've been given," she told the audience.

One of the most rewarding accomplishments Winfrey says she has done pertains to the construction of a multi-million dollar all-girls academy in Johannesburg, South Africa—suitably named the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls.

Winfrey says the school will be the finest of its kind on the continent of Africa—sitting on 52 acres of land and consisting of 28 buildings, which includes a gym, library, wellness center, six dormitories, and an auditorium for grades seven through 12.

When the all-female school is completed in 2007, it will provide accommodations for up to 450 students.

As a child who lived with a single mother on welfare, to become the world's first black female billionaire, Winfrey explained how she relates to poor, underprivileged girls in Africa, whom she says many may see as being insignificant to society.

"They said to me from the very beginning, when I started working with their architects, 'These girls come from huts. They come from nothing. Why do you need to do all of this?'" Winfrey explained about some people in South Africa who questioned her rationale for building the school.

She replied to those critics by saying, "I do all of this because I am these girls."

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Continued from page 12

Campbell says prospective voters should be clear in advance that they are indeed registered to vote and where they must vote.

Unity '06, a campaign that has been led by a coalition of major Black organizations convened by the NCBCP for every national election since 2000 provides a national hotline that is available this week and on Election Day to give this information to any voter who calls.

The federal Help America Vote Act has required each state to establish a Voter Registration Database, which Unity '06 has made easily accessible by a toll-free number, 1-866-My-Vote1 (1-866-698-6831) or at www.mypollingplace.com. The number can also be used for a person to make a complaint about anything that has occurred at a voting poll or if a voter needs legal council.

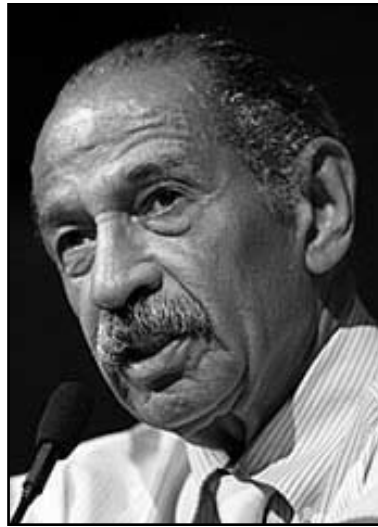
In some states where races are especially contentious, lawyers, poll monitors and additional volunteers will be at precincts to assist voters in an "Election Protection" program led by the People For the American Way Foundation, the NAACP, and the Lawyers' Committee For Civil Rights Under Law, all also accessible through 1-866-My-Vote1.

Unity has released a list of "Seven Things You Need to Know Before Election Day to Protect Your Vote." In addition to whether a person is registered to vote and where to vote, the other five are whether you will be in town on Election Day; whether there are identification requirements for voting in your state; advance knowledge of individual Election Day rights; where to file a complaint if necessary and know that if you arrive at the polls before they close, you still have the right to vote - even with a long line.

Answers to some of the seven items can be researched state by state on www.CanIvote.org, a website compiled by the National Association of Secretaries of State.

Gracia M. Hillman, chair of the bi-partisan U.S. Election Assistance Commission, established by Congress four years ago to oversee the distribution of \$3 billion to states for election improvements and the creation of new standards for voting machines, says voters will need all the help they can get.

"Voters may feel overwhelmed. It's one thing that you'll have to study what the candidates'



Veteran Congressman John Conyers (D-Mich.) could become the Chairman of House Judiciary Committee if the Democrats take over control of the House of Representatives

positions are. And if there's referenda on the ballot; then you've got to be knowledgeable about the referenda. And on top of all of that, there are new voting procedures," says Hillman. "It's a lot."

And a lot is at stake.

Currently, Republicans dominate both the House and the Senate. Democrats are striving to win at least 15 seats in the House and at least six in the Senate in order to gain control of Congress. For Blacks, a

Democratic majority in the House could mean important committee chairmanships for four members of the Congressional Black Caucus, veteran Congressmen John Conyers (D-Mich.) of the House Judiciary Committee, Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.), of the House Ways and Means Committee, Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.) of the Homeland Security Committee; and Juanita Millender-McDonald (D-Calif.) of the Administration Committee.

All states maintain the right to choose their own voting systems and election procedures, but new voting machines in most states are variations of two systems, says Hillman. One is the optical scan system, in which a voter marks a paper ballot and places it into a scanner that tabulates it. The other is the electronic touch screen, a computerized system requiring only the touch of a voter making selections. Officials are hoping for smooth processes, but there is evidence of pending trouble.

A report by Electionline.org, a non-partisan, non-advocacy Web site that provides news and analysis on election reform, says that 10 states are at particular risk for problems:

Arizona, where a 2004 court ruling requires proof of citizenship at the polls;

Colorado, where new consolidated voting centers called "voting centers" have replaced neighborhood precincts;

Connecticut, where antiquated lever voting machines still exist - out of compliance with a federal requirement for updated voting technology by Jan. 1, 2006;

Florida, which recently experienced problems auditing totals from new optical scanners and has also changed its voter identification requirement from allowing voters without state or federal identification to sign an affidavit to allowing voters without government-issued I.D.'s to only submit a provisional ballot;

Indiana, which has the most stringent voter identification law in the nation, requiring all voters to present state or federally-issued photo identification at the polls with no other options;

Maryland, where short-staffing and inadequate training is blamed for the mistaken omission of voter access cards from voter packages that resulted in chaos at several precincts during recent primaries;

New York, which failed to meet the federal deadline for creating a statewide voter registration database and for establishing

accessible voting machines for the disabled;

Ohio, which faces an election in which Secretary of State J. Kenneth Blackwell recently issued an advisory that said voter identification cards must have their current addresses, a requirement that was contrary to state law. He sought to clarify, but some confusion is still perceived.

Pennsylvania, where activists have filed yet unresolved lawsuits complaining that the paperless voting procedures in some counties caused confusion at the polls in 2004 as people were unable to see clearly how they voted;

Washington state, where King County, the most populous jurisdiction in the state, has moved to touch screen machines for the first time while the remainder of the state operates a vote-by-mail system following a tumultuous gubernatorial race in 2004.

"This doesn't necessarily mean there's going to be problems. And it doesn't necessarily mean there are states not on the list where there might be a problem," says Sean Greene, research director for the report, "Election Review 2006, What's Changed, What Hasn't and Why".

Greene adds, "Almost all of these states on our 10 states to watch have close races as well. And that is usually the recipe for some sort of post-election problem."

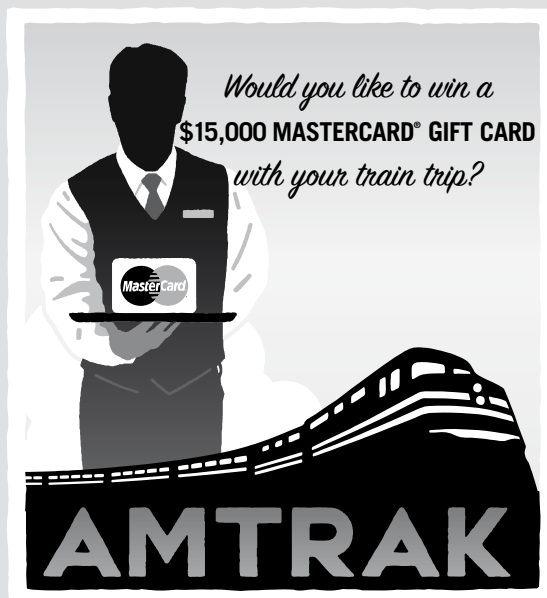
In most instances, when there is a dispute, provisional ballots can be cast and verified later by voter registrars. But Campbell warns that provisional ballots should not be accepted by voters who are simply confused and need help.

"Know you have a right to request and receive help from poll-workers," Campbell says. "What tended to happen in 2004, when there were a lot of long lines and poll workers were overwhelmed, they tended to give people provisional ballots. But, in most places, if you're in the polling places, you can vote provisionally all you want, your vote doesn't count. So, if you're in the wrong polling place, they need to stop long enough to find out where you need to be so you can go to the right precinct."

Hillman says it normally takes three to 10 days to determine - from a provisional ballot - whether a voter had a right to vote at a particular precinct.

Though even the government expects an imperfect Election Day, Hillman says she is hoping for mutual respect at the polls.

"Voters need to appreciate the fact that the people who run elections across this country are professional people. This is their



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OPINION

Focus N.O.R.D. As A Long Term Solution



The Love Dr.
Data Columnist

Over the years I've come to understand what Malcolm really foretold when he declared that the "chickens come home to roost". He foretold what we now in retrospect have to acknowledge: that every male child that we have allowed to grow up without feeling loved and cared for is now our worst nightmare. Most of us should be beginning to understand that unloved boys become dangerous and irresponsible men, men who have no sense of propriety because they never benefited from any sense of propriety in the adults in their lives.

Any survey of the prison population will identify two facts. One, that hardly any men in prison had caring men in their lives, and that hardly any men in prison are really literate (not reading well enough to enjoy it or obtain useful information). Yet it seems that we continue to believe that crime can be solved without creatively engaging boys in such a way that they are cared for by responsible adults and encouraged, bribed or led to reading as a way to make themselves more self sufficient and independent.

These two basic skills, the ability to love and be loved with the ability to learn are the essential ingredients that allow a boy become a man who knows how and wants to build instead of destroy. Who would you be without those that loved you or those who made sure you learned (even when you didn't want to sometimes). Most of us cannot even imagine the desperate lives of young men who raised and often fed and clothed themselves in spite of absent and/or drug addicted parents, whom we jailed like criminals instead of treating like the really sick people they really were.

Paul Beaulieu, my co-host on the Between The Lines television talk show gives me a hard time because I sometimes have an attitude about some of the people who call our show. I call them television noise makers because the only thing they do is call to complain from the comfort of their couch. I guess we can call them social "couch potatoes", like football's Monday morning quarterbacks.

I am begging everyone I can reach to accept the challenge of "fixing" our urban problems, to once and for all refuse to invest in quick fixes or short cuts that always result in things being worse because the problem doesn't stop growing while we experiment around based on this theory or another. I think most of us, black, white, liberal or conservative will agree that the prisons are filled with un-mentored and illiterate black men. And if that is the case, then we have to agree that the real solutions have to involve exposure to productive caring adults and enticing youngsters to read. I would prefer not to reinvent the wheel.

New Orleans Recreation Department, with good volunteer involvement can be our vehicle. We have facilities and a structure that has had tremendous impact in many young people's lives. N.O.R.D simply needs resources and marching orders and a leader that is credible, focused, hard to bully and imaginative enough to find and or develop best practices for engaging community in programs that both entertain and uplift children, particularly black boys.

Of course it would take a planned and sequenced approach. In the beginning the priority for resources would be engaging an army of long term volunteers and repairing facilities. Then we would have to invite the youngsters, even if it has to be individually.

Schools can cooperate by allowing N.O.R.D. recruiters on campus.

Yes, N.O.R.D. recruiters! The new N.O.R.D. will not be passive, and children need an invitation in their lives, some adult bugging them to come be with us, and if they don't come figuring out why and trying a different approach. Isn't being "wanted" one of those basic human needs? That's what I'm talking about, crafting every aspect of operations to have primary, secondary and residual benefits for our children, and provide a future of lower crime and higher prosperity as these children learn how to deal nurture children from the nurturing people who dealt with them.

I was recently approached to run for public office. It was extremely flattering, but I'm not really interested. You see, I have no doubt that I would win, but I have neither the temperament nor the patience to engage in the art of compromise that is touted as the nature of politics. That's kind of what got me on this N.O.R.D. thing, because that is something I could pull off, just because I'm the "love doctor" and everyone knows I really don't care about anyone's politics, except to the extent of how it does or doesn't serve the community.

But you know what, if there were an election in which you could run for Chief of New Orleans Recreation, I would run and I would win for the same reasons given above. But alas, that is not the case, and self made people like me don't even get a look when people are looking for administrators... and perhaps that's the problem. When the community is an essential part of a solution, they must trust the leader. Otherwise government has to do it all by itself, and we just don't have that much money!

For more from the "Love Doctor" of New Orleans, visit LLOYDDENNIS.COM

Candidates, it's time that you learn a lesson



Eddie Francis
Data Columnist

Thanks to Andre Perry and Donald Jackson I am now interested in the Congressional race. The other night I received a phone message from Dr. Perry saying, "Eddie, please call me tonight. I want to tell you about a very important challenge that we have issued to the Congressional candidates." He and Jackson, the principal of John McDonough High School, have come up with something rather innovative.

They have challenged the candidates to volunteer to teach a portion of John Mac's tenth grade Civics class. The theme of the class is "How your local Congressperson can improve New Orleans public schools." Afterwards all participating candidates will be charged with the task of producing "a list of deliverables for improving learning conditions in public schools."

Here's the best part. On the condition that multiple candidates participate, one will be endorsed based on teaching evaluations which will be completed by the students. At the time that I started working on this commentary, five of the thirteen candidates had confirmed that they would participate.

My popcorn is in the microwave and as Sherlock Holmes would say, "The game is afoot."

With all due respect to the candidates, no one in my mind stands out in any exceptional way thus far. What I am waiting for is someone to show me solid evidence that he or she is truly interested in leading District 2 to bigger and better things. This opportunity could give the public the information that it needs.

Having spoken to over a quarter of a million high school

students in 26 states for almost seven years, I have learned that teens give it to you raw. Therefore, the candidates better keep it simple and teach these students what they know. While they are teaching it will also help us all if they listen to the students.

We responsible, intelligent adults can say what we want but Pop Culture, as ignorant as it is, does not preclude this generation of teens from challenging us on our morals and ethics. The mainstream media may report as if schools such as John McDonough are full of animals but the participating candidates will find out just how insightful these troubled youth are. If my instincts serve me correctly, the way these students evaluate these candidates will give us interesting clues about their potential worth to us.

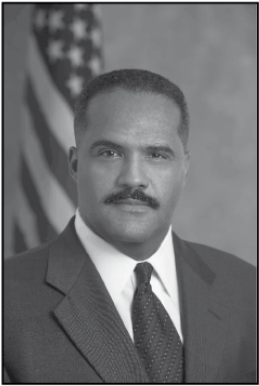
If any of these people think that they will be able to give John Mac students a "Keep Hope Alive" speech they have another thing coming. If they think that they will be able to get away with laying out a list of promises, that won't help. And to the candidates, please don't bore those students with lectures! Now is the time for all good men and women to come correct. Listen to them as you teach them.

Our teens are no different than we are. They are sick and tired of being sick and tired. There is a difference between them and us, however. When they make bad decisions we are obligated to correct them. When we make bad decisions they suffer but too many of us reject their feedback about our mistakes.

So let this serve as a warning to our Congressional candidates. They should pay close attention to this project at John Mac. Those students most likely will say things that we adults are too unmotivated to say.

NEWSMAKER

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#9



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Brian Egana, Continued from page 9

doing your teenage years you were engaged in an illicit activity do you want to address that?

BE: It's not a new story I mentioned it in 2004 in Data News when I was awarded Trailblazer of the month. When I gave myself to run for this office I'm representing the public and I want the people to know who is Brian Egana. In politics sometimes people take slight negative things and make it worse than it actually is, I was fourteen years old when I was involved with drugs and it lasted about two weeks. This was around the time my dad died in 1994 and I'm not making any excuses for it; it's something I was involved in. I've never been arrested, never been to jail and never used drugs. And ever since the age of seventeen I've coached fourteen year olds because I was that age at one time and I know some of those kids feel sometimes they don't have any way out. But fortunately for me when I was seventeen Councilman Oliver Thomas gave me an opportunity and I've never looked back, so when they mention that it's not a new story. In 2001 Edmund Lewis wrote a story on me in the Louisiana Weekly and there's a photo of me and a student from Tommy Lafon Elementary School in the C.J. Peete (Magnolia) Housing Project where I was mentoring at the time. It was something I did, it was something I went through

and today I think in leadership we need some folks that's faced all kinds of adversity in their lives and not people where everything has been given to them all their lives. Everything I have I worked hard and I earned it, the only thing that was given to me is an opportunity, and what I would like to do is give back to another youth looking for an opportunity or seeking another chance and that's what I represent and bring to the table.

EB: From your life experience as well as work experience, what do you feel you can bring to the constituents of District 97 as a legislator?

BE: I think there is a big disconnect with the city and the state, I have an excellent rapport with the people at City Hall, and I've been there nine years I know the system in and out. I have built relationships and I can be that legislator to bring everyone at the table together, that hasn't happened thus far and that's disheartening to me. I know I'm going to be a rookie up there if elected but I'm committed to working hard and if I go down on votes fighting for my community that's what I'm committed to doing. And I propose that we should have quarterly meetings with the elected officials within district 97 which if elected would be myself the city council person, and the state senator. I'm tired of

elected officials who go to these meetings and nothing comes out of them. Where pretty pictures are taken and talks of unity and five minutes later things are the way they were before. I want these meetings to be ongoing because we need to be in one accord as elected officials as we rebuild.

EB: If there was one thing you could say directly to the voters of District 97 what would you tell them?

BE: Research the candidates, compare what each of us has done for this community. My opponent hasn't done half the things I've done for this community and city. And it's up to you the voters on November 7th and I'm committed to touching everybody in the district.

EB: If you could tell the people who are all over the country who are from New Orleans who have the desire to return one thing what would you tell them?

BE: I'm not telling anyone to rush home, I'm in this boat also my house was damaged and I'm in the process of rebuilding. In this face of this devastation I've learned the word process means a lot; it's not going to happen overnight, just be patient and have hope and once I elected I'm committed to fight to bring people home.

J.P. Morrell, Continued from page 9

especially those with any political savvy whatsoever knows this fact that Baton Rouge is a very adversarial process it's frequently the metro New Orleans area versus the rest of the state. If you send a legislator to Baton Rouge who is an admitted criminal, with that type of baggage we can't afford send him Baton Rouge, I don't think he would be an effective legislator. I believe he would be ineffective and legislators around the state would treat this guy like kryptonite.

EB: There are critics that have said your family is trying to build a political dynasty and we need new blood versus having the same political families holding elected offices. How do you respond to that?

JP: I will respond to this in two

ways my opponent is not new blood Councilman Oliver Thomas is his protégé and relative and he is a member of the BOLD Political Organization we both have political ties that run very deep. What I tell people is look at our credentials, look at our visions for this area, look at our education and our experience and pick the better candidate. I feel my opponent is trying to muddy the waters away from the real issues. If he thought he was the best candidate for this office he would run on his platform versus don't vote for the Morrell's their trying to build a political dynasty.

EB: If you could tell the people who are scattered about the country who are from New Orleans one thing what would you tell them?

JPM: I understand what it's like not being able to be home. That we have to work towards creating an environment where people who are trying to get back to New Orleans feel like their not wasting their time, and it seems like the state has done nothing but throw more obstacles in the way as opposed to helping people get back in their house to rebuild it. And we're going to need someone to cut through all the red-tape to fight to get their LRA money to rebuild I know from walking through my own neighborhood and my own relatives this is the biggest obstacle to rebuilding is getting those funds in people hand where they could rebuild.




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NEWS

Gretna Sheriff Harry Lee Stirs the Kettle Again

Suburban Gretna Sheriff Henry Lee draws ire again from Black leaders, this time in suggesting his deputies would stop, search and run background checks on young black males congregating in high-crime areas. And although Lee ordered the plan later abandoned, he did not apologize for his statements or his sentiment.

In a joint news conference with Dannatus King, president of the local NAACP branch, Lee commented "I would prefer to prevent murder rather than solve a murder. But apparently not everyone feels that way."

King responded to Lee, "There are no other people in this community more worried about solving crime and preventing murder than the black community. But not by stopping black people and harassing them for doing nothing," King said.

Lee has on several occasions commented that the rise in the



Gretna Sheriff, Harry Lee is again surrounded in racial controversy

crime rate in his west bank community post Katrina can be attributed to displaced residents of New Orleans bringing crime into his community.

Despite their inability to reach an agreement on the subject, Lee pledged to work with the NAACP to reduce crime and fund youth programs with tax dollars.



Liberty Bank's Ann Marie Adams celebrates her 50th birthday with Data News Weekly Advertising & Marketing VP Glenn Jones and Publisher Terry B. Jones.

30,000 Ballots Cast in Early Voting

Large numbers could be the spoilers in close ground battles - Baton Rouge - Almost 30,000 Louisiana voters have already cast early ballots for the upcoming November 7 general election in which representatives for US Congress and 8 amendments to the state constitution are slated for decision. Early voting which concludes on October 31, 2006, allows a voter to cast a ballot without a stated reason at the local registrars of voters' office. Elections Commissioner Angie LaPlace said that registrars expected a heavy turnout on the last day. A total of 38,808 voters casting early ballots for the September 30 primary elections was recorded. LaPlace also said that when absentee ballots from displaced voters, military and others were added in, the pre-election voting total rose to 42,433, which is also possible for this general election.

Immigrants helping rebuild New Orleans say they're making less

By JENALIA MORENO

Above the din of hammers, drills and mortar mixers, some immigrant construction workers are grumbling that wages have dropped and a lull in work has developed in the last few months.

"It was better in the beginning," said Honduran Marcos Antonio Enamorado, who lived in Houston

for six years before moving to New Orleans last year.

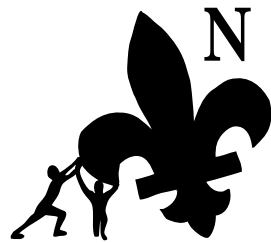
The prospect of a plethora of high-paying jobs is drawing workers like Enamorado to the area. But some immigrants, especially those on the ground looking for work, say there aren't as many projects under way and wages are falling.

Enamorado may be right about it being better in the beginning.

According to an April estimate by the Washington-based Advancement Project, 30,000 to 100,000 migrant workers moved to Gulf Coast areas after Hurricane Katrina.

And according to a June study by Tulane University and University

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COMMUNITY SUPPORT ORGANIZATION MEETINGS: Keep up on the planning process.

New Orleans is your home. As the city rebuilds it's important to stay involved every step of the way—for instance, by attending the Community Support Organization (CSO) meetings at the New Orleans City Council Chamber.

The CSO is the committee responsible for overseeing the progress of the Unified New Orleans Plan (UNOP), the city's unified rebuilding effort. Comprised of representatives from the Mayor's office, City Council, the City Planning Commission, the Greater New Orleans Foundation and a resident from each of the city's five voting districts, the CSO is in place to keep you informed as the planning process continues.



CSO MEETING THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2006 FROM 5:30 PM TO 7:30 PM
NEW ORLEANS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER

- AGENDA FOR 11/9 MEETING:**
- I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS – 5 MIN.
 - II. REPORT ON ACTIONS RESULTING FROM OCTOBER 26 CSO MEETING – 15 MIN.
 - III. PRESENTATIONS BY PLANNING TEAMS – 20 MIN.
 - IV. CITY-WIDE TEAM FINANCIAL OVERVIEW PRESENTATION – 10 MIN.
 - V. REPORT ON FIRST CITY-WIDE COMMUNITY CONGRESS – 5 MIN.
 - VI. PUBLIC COMMENT



The Unified
New Orleans Plan

For more information about UNOP, please visit

www.unifiedneworleansplan.org or call **Louisiana Rebuilds** toll-free at **877-527-3284**.

The Unified New Orleans Plan is funded by grants from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Greater New Orleans Foundation and the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund.

COVER STORY

Derrick Shepherd, Continued from page 3

DS: I'm a man of the people, I stay in the streets and I work and talk to the people; I engage them. I don't just rely on television and radio to get my message to the people.

EB: How much if at all did the recent troubles of Congressman William Jefferson play a part in you deciding to run?

DS: In part I decided to run because of his trouble and also what I feel is the lack of service he's providing for the community.

EB: If you were elected what would be some of the issues you would immediately address?

DS: I would implement my one-hundred day plan; I would open up offices one on the Westbank and one in New Orleans and then I would send out a newsletter inviting all military veterans within the district to come to a veterans summit and ask those veterans to provide mentoring for our young people particularly African-American males and White males as well. I would also file legislation to change the Stafford Act to give the Mayor of

New Orleans, Gretna, Westwego and Kenner complete authority during a national declared disaster to rebuild their city in a way they see fit.

EB: In you opinion what are the biggest problems facing District 2 are facing presently?

DS: It's different depending on what area you're talking about, on the Westbank we have infrastructure and crime problems, and on the Eastbank we have education, crime, levees, and housing issues.

EB: What is it that you have specifically done as a State Representative that has had an effect on the people of your district?

DS: I passed the legislation for the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. I've also passed legislation to give every baby born in the state free immunization, and I brought home five million dollars worth of projects to the district. As a state senator I passed a voting rights bill that allowed all New Orleanians to vote in the mayoral election and other local elections who were

displaced, and I passed legislation in honor of the Marrero fire victims to make sure that every mattress sold in the state is fire resistant.

EB: What skills and attributes have you acquired in your military career that has shaped the way you live you life and how you govern as a legislator?

DS: The military has taught me the leadership values that I bring to the table everyday. It's taught me how to get up early and go to be late, to complete a task no matter what the obstacles are and to have the courage to step to the plate and lead when nobody else would.

EB: There are people who are back in the city and those who are still displaced if Derrick Shepherd could tell them one thing what would he tell them?

vDS: Stay positive, enjoy where you are and learn from those different experiences so that when you bring a taste of that home New Orleans to you can make it a better place.

Regina Bartholemew, Continued from page 3


now, not only in this office but in our political leadership. There's no question about my integrity and I've prepared through my legal career and more recently as general counsel for the New Orleans Parish; it has prepared me for political challenges because it is one of the most political embattled boards in the state of Louisiana. I believe I have the knowledge and the experience necessary to work across party lines and work with all types of people and to bring about a change in the most critical areas that are vital to the Second Congressional District; the main one being education.

EB: This has been coming up quite a bit interestingly enough with each of the candidates I've interviewed that are running for this office. "Integrity", how important do you think integrity is in this election? And if Congressman Jefferson was not facing this present legal battle would you have considered running?

RB: No, of course not, because it would have been a disservice to the citizens of the Second Congressional District. We need someone on the Ways and Means Committee in order to do critical things for us and it would have been quite selfish I think for any of us to be in this race if he still had his post on the Ways and Means Committee and if he still had credibility in Washington D.C.; so, no I wouldn't have run. But because he has been stripped of his position, and also he lacks credibility at this point, I think its time for a change not just change from one politician to another; it is time for a total change so that the people who have been suffering for the last sixteen years under various political leadership can finally get the relief and the representation that they need.




EB: Again let me ask you about that because it was a two part question what are you feelings about integrity and its importance in this race?







#8





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Former New Orleans City Councilman Jim Singleton • State Senator Walter Boasso
State Senator Ann Duplessis • State Senator Butch Gautreaux • State Senator Ben Nevers • State Representative Troy Hebert
State Representative Austin Badon • State Representative Jack Smith • State Representative Carla Dartez
State Representative Cheryl Gray • Former State Representative Tom Thornhill • Former Attorney General Richard Ieyoub
Constable Lambert Boissiere Jr. • New Orleans Assessor Darren Mire • Former Orleans Parish District Attorney Harry Connick
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RB: When I think of integrity I use the word and you can use it in many different aspects of life but in the political world integrity in my mind means that you are not using your political office or your political position to benefit anybody other than the people you represent in your elected district. Let me give you a pointed example of what I'm talking about; not boasting in one breath about having rebuilt a Dryades YMCA after it burned to the ground and then in the next breath, the second highest ranking person in the BOLD Organization is executive director; how does that benefit the community as a whole? I have no idea how much money he makes but he is a high ranking official in your political organization. I'm also talking about Doug Evans and Karen Carter. The second thing I'm talking about is not getting on television like State Representative Derrick Shepherd and boasting about how you're doing all these wonderful things for these burn victims due to those mattresses catching fire when they suffered a great loss then charging them attorneys fees for his services; that's not integrity. I believe if you want to boast about using your office to do things, then do community service, public service things and don't look for the media to come and give you praise and honor when you know you have charged attorneys fees to those same suffering people. I don't think that they should use their office to do things that are questionable, in my mind, in terms of integrity and then turn around and point the finger at other people and say they don't have integrity. I don't believe any officeholder should use their office for personal gain. You are a public servant and what that means to me is that you are there to serve the public and no other interest groups, not BOLD, Progressive Democrats, SOUL, COUP or LIFE organizations, not your family members or to line your own personal pockets. While some are pointing the finger at one particular candidate; when I talk about integrity I'm talking about our political leadership; to not use their office to benefit themselves, but to use their office to benefit the greater good of everybody.

EB: If you were elected what in your opinion are the areas that are of greatest concern to the city presently, and how would you deal with them?

RB: Education, because if we don't fix the problem we're going to continue to have high crime, and problems with economic development, so education has to be at the forefront. Then you have

to deal with the housing situation, and obviously category five levee protection and preservation and restoration of our ecological system. In the area of housing we have a lot of renters who are displaced, and you have people who own homes who are now renting, everybody thinks that the rental population was those who did not own property. My sister lost everything and is a renter right now because she chose to not live in a FEMA trailer with her two children and husband. It would have been just too cramped and she is paying three times her mortgage and that's just unacceptable. What should have happened was a 24 month rent control following this natural disaster at the same time you give the landlords tax breaks, incentives or subsidies to make up for the rent they wanted to charge post Katrina so it would be a win-win situation for the renter and the landlord. With regards to education there have been numerous studies that by the time our children reach kindergarten they're already three years behind, so why not start them earlier. We need to pass mandates that that they must start school at the age of three. What it does is give our kids a level playing field by the time they reach kindergarten and at the same time to relieve the burden of parents who have to pay for child care. I also feel our children should learn a second language beginning in pre-k or kindergarten because we are a global society and our children need to be global and holistic children. We need to invest in world class schools, better paid teachers and programs like no child left behind fully funded.

EB: Race has come to the forefront as a key issue in this rebuilding, and many of the people who are still displaced are African-American what would you do as a U.S. Congressperson to expedite the process for those who desire to return?

RB: Like I said before I would push for rent control. My father is one of thirteen children and at the time the hurricane hit he had ten siblings that resided in the New Orleans area and none of them were home owners except one and one of his sisters was in a nursing home and she died after being transported out of the city. But the rest of them are all displaced so it's a personal issue to me. They all want to come home but they can't because they can't afford to, if they could afford the rent they would be back here. I would push for rent control for 24 months; after that, we move them into mixed income community

developments and I want to see my aunts and uncles become homeowners.

EB: Some New Orleaninas are back while many are still trying to find their way home. If you could tell them one thing what would you tell them?

RB: I would tell them that if they want to come home, this city still wants them to come home, southeast Louisiana still cares about them, and is not looking to green space any part of this city and the people want them back. I want them back, they are what made up our city. Every person that is displaced is part of the culture of New Orleans and Jefferson Parish they are wanted and if I'm elected, I will do everything in my power to make sure that the welcome mat is still out for them and it's out beyond just words. It will be out in terms of opportunities for them to come home and its affordable.

*Troy Carter,
Continued from page 6.*

that's going to be something he has to deal with and we pray for him. But the reality is that we cannot afford to wait, we must continue moving. We cannot afford to be laughed at, to be distracted, we cannot have our recovery and rebuilding delayed. I can go to Washington as an experience legislator and hit the ground running and to fight to bring the resources we desperately need with a one-hundred percent focus on rebuilding our integrity, our community, and our state.

EB: Let's say hypothetically you were elected, what would be your top priorities?

TC: Initially, I would go to Washington and compel the members of congress to expedite the process of getting the money that's been promised through the logjam and the bureaucracy and get it in the hands of the people that need it. It has been more than a year and there have been promises of relief coming but very few people have seen it. Insurance companies that have made lots of money off premiums where there have been no claims are fighting homeowners and people who have legitimate claims to get paid. I would look immediately to write legislation to create significant insurance reform that would disallow the type of punishment if you will that homeowners have had to endure with insurance companies who don't want to pay or threaten to cancel your policy

or not re-write you because you are quote-unquote a "high risk". But these are people who have paid their premiums. They are entitled to be paid if a catastrophe happens, but people are being treated as criminals. Additionally, I would fight for restoration of community policing funds. Community policing proved to be a significant deterrent in crime; it gave us the additional resources of overtime for police officers, gave additional resources so the federal prosecutors, and the district attorneys could go to court and adequately prosecute criminals. Police had better training and resources and the direct effect was that we saw crime decrease. Those funds have been cut, and I will go to Washington to fight vigorously for those funds. Also I would fight for us to have category 5 levee protection and restoration of our costal land.

EB: Finally, if you could tell the people of New Orleans those who are back in the city as well as those who are scattered about the country?

TC: Help is on the way, there is a plan and that Troy Carter, the same Troy Carter that you know and have supported and voted for in the past is fully engaged and is in this race to find the resources and help to give them the opportunity to come home. And not to an empty promise of home, but home where there are places to live, home where there are schools to educate your children, home where there are hospitals to take care of the sick, home where there are places where you can have meaningful jobs better than minimum wage. Help is on the way.

*William Jefferson, Continued
from page 4.*

comes, the world will not look at us and ask how come you forgot about so many people why haven't we taken care of them. We need to take this opportunity to fight for them.

EB: Do you have any final thoughts or something you would like to say to the people of the Second Congressional District that we haven't discussed?

WJ: People have been extremely helpful to me, they have embraced my family and I in what has been a difficult time for us. They really are the reason why we stay steadfast in our circumstance and moving forward, they have been the most important reason why we continue to move forward and I just want to thank them for what they've already done for us, and will do for us in the next few weeks.

*Immigrants, Continued from
page 17.*

of California, Berkeley, a fourth of the construction workers in New Orleans are undocumented.

Another indicator of the massive influx: remittances, the money sent to family out of the country.

So many immigrants have settled in the area, at least temporarily, that remittances from Louisiana will soar nearly 250 percent to \$208 million this year from \$61 million in 2004, according to a recent report released by the Washington-based Inter-American Development Bank's Multilateral Investment Fund.

The Mexican government estimates that 30,000 Mexicans are living in New Orleans and the surrounding area, up from 5,000 before the hurricane.

"They are contributing in an important way to the reconstruction of the city," Juan Bosco Marti, general director for North America for the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said during a recent visit to New Orleans.

That demographic shift has persuaded the government, which has been operating a mobile consular office out of Houston since 2002, to reopen a New Orleans consulate next year.

"There's a lot of competition in Houston," said Yanez, who moved to Baytown from El Salvador eight years ago. "You make an estimate, and someone else gives it lower."

Many construction workers agree that although wages and work have dipped lately, there's still more opportunity in New Orleans.

Entire neighborhoods remain damaged and abandoned, and many businesses are still shuttered, promising more work to come.

"Many people predict there will be jobs here for the next 10 years,"

said Phuong Pham, an associate professor at Tulane University and one of the authors of the June study Rebuilding After Katrina.

That's why many immigrant workers said they plan to stay in the area at least a few more years because they earn more in the Crescent City than they do in the Bayou City.

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