What a Year!

2006, the year in review

The Soul of New Orleans

Goodbye Godfather

Data Zone

Celebrating the New Year New Orleans Style
2006, What a Year!

Cheryl Mainor
Managing Editor

As history will determine, 2006 may go down as one of the most bizarre, and scandalous in the short period that these United States have been recognized as a nation.

Throughout the entire year, mainstream daily news was dominated by the ongoing War in Iraq as Americans began to change their perspective on the conflict and support for President Bush and his administration dropped to almost single digits. The “Battle for Hearts and Minds” and “The War on Terror” has become a bloody “Civil War” in which there is no clear way for the conflict to end.

Scandal in the US Congress, threatened to destroy our democracy, and in retaliation, US voters voiced their disgust in mass, and overturned the status quo, opting instead for change. The Republican majority fell to new Democrats, many of them completely new to the national political scene. The House and Senate were cleaned, and many new faces will hold the seats in both Houses of Congress. Demanding change the people spoke, the outcomes remain to be seen.

But in New Orleans, news centered around the rebuilding process following the aftermath of the great and horrible storm, Katrina and the failing of the levees. Programs which promised relief and results, which were implemented by various federal, state and local agencies, all have been mired in problems, which have yielded little in the way of relief, resulting in the majority of the former population still unable to return home. Infrastructure is slow moving, schools are not adequate, basic services are still elusive for much of the 9th Ward.

But bright spots have come as well. Historically, the Mayoral election had more New Orleanians participate than any other election in history, the right to vote, galvanized the people, from across the

Continued next page.
country and the collective voice of New Orleans was heard. Two incumbent candidates whose political futures seemed almost destined to be cast to the graveyard, rose up against the odds and gathered their supporters and turned out their vote, resulting in victory for Mayor C. Ray Nagin, and Congressman William Jefferson. The 2006 Bayou Classic, The New Orleans Saints and the Hornets have all returned home, and Essence Magazine announced that in 2007 the Essence Music Festival will return as well, bringing back much needed revenue and a piece of normal life to this place. Data News Weekly, celebrated it’s 40th year of publishing, which was no small feat, in light of the circumstances. Mardi Gras was held, in-spite of low resources and a smaller turnout.

Yes, 2006 will go down for us, as possibly the most challenging year in our history. Full of worry, and heartbreak, but also full of hope. And through it all, we have found that what we always suspected is true: that The spirit of New Orleans cannot be broken. 2006 showed the world that the “Spirit of New Orleans” lives on, for New Orleans, is not just one thing, it is bigger than a flood. It is the people, who live and who have lived here, the fragrance of their spirits permeates the land. New Orleans has survived, battered but not broken. Tattered but not torn. New Orleans is still here, and New Orleans always will be.

To read the following stories, visit our website www.ladatanews.com, and click on issues, then archives. The stories below can be downloaded in their entirety.
PUBLISHER’S PAGE

Calvin Mackie coming to Data in 2007

Data News Weekly is proud to announce that Dr. Calvin Mackie will be a contributing columnist exclusively in 2007. Dr. Mackie is devoting his space to discussions on mentoring our children during these trying and challenging days. Many will agree that our children need and will prosper from mentoring. However, we have to understand exactly what mentoring is and isn’t. Mentoring is a process of building a mutually beneficial partnership between an experienced person (mentor) and a less experienced person (protégé) to help develop the skills, behaviors and insights to reach the partnership’s goals. Mentoring goes to the heart of what drives an organization or a relationship: its people and its culture. Mentor and Protégé must develop mentoring parameters, goals and objectives together. Dr. Calvin Mackie will seek to address the process of mentoring in a series of columns on the subject.

CALVIN MACKIE, Ph.D.
Professor, Speaker, Author and Inventor. Dr. Mackie is an internationally renowned speaker, Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Tulane University and a graduate of McDonough #35 High School. A member of the Phi Beta Kappa and the 100 Black Men of Metro New Orleans, President Bush honored Dr. Mackie with the 2003 Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring, and appointed to the LRA by Governor Blanco. He has won numerous other awards including the 2003 National Title One Distinguished Graduate for Louisiana, 2002 Black Engineer of the Year Award for College Level Educator, 2002 New Orleans Data News Weekly Trailblazer Award, and the Pi Tau Sigma/ASME Excellence in Teaching Award in Mechanical Engineering for 2000 and 2002. He is the author of the book: “A View from the Roof: Lessons for Life and Business”.

Look for Dr. Mackie’s columns to begin on January 13, 2007.

Talk Back!

Data News Weekly wants to know what you think!

Each week, Data News Weekly brings you the information we think you want to know. In an effort to better reflect the thoughts of the community, we are offering you Talk Back. Take this opportunity to let your community, government officials and our editor know what your opinions are on the subject. Selected submissions will be published in the Data News Weekly Talk Back section and a compilation version will be sent to the candidates for Mayor for the City of New Orleans.

This week’s question:
What has your experience been with the LRA and the LA Road Home Program?

Have you received any compensation yet?

Was it enough to cover your rebuilding costs?

How was your experience working with their representatives?

Is there too much red tape?

Go to www.ladatanews.com and click on Talk Back and let your voice be heard.

Talk Back! It’s your chance!
Entergy New Orleans announced last week that Daniel E. Packer, its president and chief executive officer since 1996, is retiring effective Jan. 1, 2007. Packer will continue to serve as Entergy New Orleans’ chairman until an undetermined date after the company exits bankruptcy.

Roderick K. West, currently ENO’s director of Metro Distribution Operations, will assume Packer’s position as president and CEO.

“Dan has been an extraordinary leader for the city and for Entergy New Orleans over the last 10 years and particularly during the company’s most challenging chapter following Hurricane Katrina,” said J. Wayne Leonard, Entergy Corporation’s chairman and chief executive officer. “He has worked steadfastly in the best interest of customers through a hands-on effort, contributing to the rebirth of the city and the restoration and rebuilding of electric and gas service, laying the groundwork for a financially viable utility critical to meeting the city’s needs and by securing federal funding through state officials to protect customers from large rate increases.”

Leonard said, “Challenges remain but there is no one more capable than New Orleans’ own Rod West to guide Entergy New Orleans into the future. Rod is a proven leader who is as prepared for this position as anyone I have ever seen. I expect we will see great things from Rod, and he always seems to exceed all expectations.”

In addition to his ENO responsibilities, Packer is chairman of the New Orleans Aviation Board that oversees Louis Armstrong International Airport and a member of the Board of Trustees for Loyola University New Orleans. He serves on the board of Louisiana Community and Technical College System, Keystone Energy Board, New Orleans Jazz Orchestra and the Fore!Kids Foundation. He also is a former national chairman of the American Association of Blacks in Energy.

In 2005, Packer was honored as one of the “Most Powerful African American Executives in Corporate America” by Black Enterprise, a leading business and investment publication for the African American community. He was the first African American to hold the position of chairman of the New Orleans Regional Chamber of Commerce in 2001.

Packer’s career with Entergy began in 1982 as Waterford 3 Nuclear Plant training manager. He later served as Waterford’s plant manager, becoming the first African American in the United States to manage a nuclear plant. He was named Entergy New Orleans’ president in 1996 and ENO’s CEO in 1998. Prior to joining Entergy, Packer was a senior engineer with General Physics Corp. and worked as a training coordinator with Connecticut Yankee Atomic Power Company. He served in the U.S. Nuclear Navy Program from 1969 to 1975.

Packer, 59, is a native of Mobile, Ala. He holds a bachelor of arts degree in business studies from Charter Oak College and a master of business administration degree from Tulane University.

West, 38, Packer’s successor as president and CEO, has served as director of Entergy New Orleans’ Metro Distribution Operations since December 2003, and previously served as ENO director of Regulatory Affairs. West’s primary responsibility during the last year was restoring New Orleans’ electric distribution system after the devastation brought by Hurricane Katrina. Prior to joining Entergy Corp. in April 1999 as senior regulatory counsel, West was senior attorney in the New Orleans office of Vial, Hamilton, Koch and Knox, L.L.P., having previously spent five years with the New Orleans-based firm of Jones, Walker, Waechter, Poitevent, Carrere and Denegre, L.L.P.

West has extensive roots in New Orleans and is a dedicated civic leader for the community. He currently serves as chairman of the Louisiana State University System’s Board of Supervisors, vice president of the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center Board of Commissioners, commissioner of the New Orleans Public Belt Railroad and is a past chairman of New Orleans Regional Leadership Institute. He is a board member of the Allstate Sugar Bowl and administration degree from the Tulane University Freeman School of Business. A prep standout at Brother Martin High School in New Orleans, West lettered three years at outside linebacker and tight end for Lou Holtz and the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame, including playing on the 1988 National Championship team.

“I’m committed to building upon the excellent groundwork laid by Dan Packer for successfully guiding the company out of bankruptcy, as well as fortifying the electric and gas distribution systems serving our customers in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina,” said West.

Continued page 11.
Data Around Town

It’s the Holiday season, and all around town, folk can be found celebrating the joy of the season. Here are some highlights.

Photos by Glenn Jones

Party goers at the Broadmoor Improvement Association’s Annual Christmas party

Wayne Wright, Tanzie Jones of Rainbow PUSH Coalition and Paul Sylvester, owner Sweet Lorraine’s

More scenes from the Broadmoor Improvement Association’s Annual Christmas party

Broadmoor Improvement Association Annual Christmas party on Dec. 15 hosted by Latoya and Jason Cantrell
Cleveland and friends at Data News Weekly and Velvet Rope weekly Wednesday night mixer at King Bolden’s.

The Houka entertains party goers at King Bolden’s.

Regina Bartholomew and Robert Pagnet of Eric Hill Nissan at Zea’s on St. Charles.

Party goers of Broadmoor Improvement Association’s Annual Christmas party.


Adonis Expose’ marches in with the Pinstripe Brass Band at his birthday celebration.

Toys are collected by Agenda For Children. Over 200 toys were collected at the Expose’ birthday event.
Water In The Well

George C. Curry

NNPA

Media Honeymoon Ends for Barack Hussein Obama

Continued on page 11.

Had the flu this week. Had to work anyway. (That’s what happens when you work for yourself!) However, in between tasks, I did my best to get in bed and rest. Boo was wonderful. She made sure I ate, had my fluids and then did some of the work that I usually do. Actually, I was thanking God for Boo, a few minutes ago, when her kindness reminded me of a friend’s situation and how he would be a great example for this week’s Love Doctor column.

I know, you single guys think you have it made and many of you are avoiding family life like the plague. At a wedding, recently, the groom couldn’t get any of the single men to line up to catch the garter (you know, like the ladies catch the bouquet). It was disgusting. It seems that many of you are unaware of the fact that you are in the cycle of life and one day your situation will change. You have go from “needing and taking” as a child to what should be “providing for needs” in prime of your adulthood to “needing” again, eventually, in old age.

(Ever wonder why you see more old men sleeping on the street than old women. (Hmmm…) I always wonder how many have no children, or children for whom they’ve done little.)

There’s an old song that goes, “You don’t miss your water, ‘til the well runs dry.” But I have a dear friend whose situation has made me turn those words around (Boy isn’t that poetic)

friend’s support team (which includes the lady’s bouquet). Friend is a Family Man (note the capital letters).

Friend had no way of knowing that in the peak of his years he was about to find himself vulnerable and in a position of temporary “Need” long before the anticipated arrival of old age.

After a nearly fatal auto accident on the night he and his wife celebrated their anniversary. Friend found himself temporarily disabled. Unable to do almost anything for himself, he needed help to do everything. If ever a man found himself suddenly thirsting for human kindness and support, Friend was that man. Fate had thrown him a curve which had turned his life upside down. He would have to go to his well, his family, and depend on what ever he found there. What he found was a well overflowing with the quenching coolness that springs from the Oasis of a family that loved and respected his husband and father.

(Boy isn’t that poetic)

As we acknowledge the goodness of Friend’s support team (which includes his mother in law despite the television stereotypes), let’s consider how different things might have been if Friend had not been a solid Family Man. What if Friend had chosen not to have a family at all? What if he had deserted the wife and kids to enjoy the pleasures of the “free life”?

Somehow, under different circumstances, I don’t really believe that I would be able to have pleasant visits with a guy gaining

life, the only time we start using three names for a person is when they’re an assassin – you know, John Henry – ROGERS: That’s the truth to that.

MATTHEWS: Lee Harvey Oswald. Why did you invoke the middle name of Barack Obama out of nowhere? What are you up to, sir?

ROGERS: Mostly teasing him as a lightweight and somebody that’s just not really… But I hope he runs. I want him to run. There’s more –

Yes, there is more. Matthews, a former Republican staff, pretended that Rogers “made some news” in his absence when it was Matthews who had been the culprit.

According to the monitoring group, “On the November 7 edition of Hardball – three full weeks before Rogers’ comment – Matthews said: ‘You know, it’s interesting that Barack Obama’s middle name is Hussein. I will be interesting down the road, won’t it?’

CNN’s Jeff Greenfield was no better than his conservative counterparts.

Referring to Obama, the journalist said: “ …He may be walking around with a satirical time bomb. Ask yourself: Is there any other major public figure who draws the way he does? Why, yes. It is Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who, unlike most of his predecessors, seem to have skipped through enough copies of GQ to find the jacket-and-no-tie look agreeable. And maybe that’s not the comparison a possible presidential contender really wants to evoke.”

Since when did not wearing a tie with a suit equate to being a terrorist sympathizer?

But Greenfield did not stop there. “Now, it is one thing to have a last name that sounds like Osama and a middle name, Hussein, that is probably less than helpful. But an outfit that reminds people of a charter member of the Axis of Evil? Why, this could leave his presidential hopes hanging by a thread. Or is that threads?”

New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd had written a column saying that Obama “ears stick out.” When Obama saw Dowd, he teased her about her description of him, saying, “You talked about my ears. I just want to put you on notice: I’m very sensitive… I was teased relentlessly when I was a kid about my big ears.”

That joking exchange was blown out of proportion by Rush Limbaugh. He said, “If the guy is sensitive about his big ears, we need to give him a new name, like Dumbo, but that doesn’t quite get it. You know, just calling him – calling him – that just doesn’t–how about Barack Hussein Odumbo?”

Obama was named after his father, who was born in Kenya, not Kennebunkport. To focus on his name, his big ears or whether he wears a tie shows just how small-minded and vicious some opinionated talking heads can be.

George E. Curry is editor-in-chief of the NNPA News Service and BlackPressUSA.com.
Less Than a Cup of Water Can Cause a Gas Outage.

After Hurricane Katrina flooded New Orleans, more than four million gallons of salt water inundated 800 miles of the Entergy New Orleans natural gas pipelines. It took months to pump out and restore gas service to our customers.

Of our post-Hurricane Katrina gas customer base, approximately 98% of Entergy New Orleans gas customers enjoy reliable service. Unfortunately Hurricane Katrina’s damage still lingers. It can take less than a cup of water to cause a gas outage, and small amounts of water remain in the system’s low spots, causing gas service disruptions for some customers.

To address the problem, Entergy New Orleans has increased the number of field workers by shifting employees from the Entergy Gulf States Baton Rouge gas business and by securing specially trained contractors. We are also working seven days a week to restore service and repair the system. We are confident we can address most of our customer outages within 48 hours of the initial call to 1-800-ENTERGY.

The water-related gas system impact from Hurricane Katrina could linger with Entergy New Orleans for some time. But, we will continue to work hard along with the New Orleans City Council to reduce the impact on our customers and provide reliable gas service.

If your home was flooded, please have a licensed plumber inspect your gas heater, appliances and all gas lines to ensure everything is working properly. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to repair the gas system.

For more information on gas safety go to entergy-neworleans.com.

General Safety Rules:

› If you smell gas, leave the building immediately and call 1-800-ENTERGY.
› NEVER use your gas range to heat your home or apartment.
› Follow directions from the manufacturer for using and taking care of gas appliances.
› Have a qualified professional inspect your heater each year.
› Keep papers, gasoline, fluids, paints, curtains and rags away from gas furnaces, water heaters, ranges and dryers.
› Always make sure gas appliances are vented to the outside of the building.
› Before lighting fireplaces, make sure they are properly ventilated, and have flue pipes and chimneys checked to make sure they are not blocked with debris.
› Keep pilot lights lit on your gas range. If you put them out to save energy, a dangerous gas build-up can occur if someone turns on the range.
› Keep a fire extinguisher near gas appliances at all times. Use a CO2 or dry-chemical extinguisher for the kitchen. It’s a good idea to install at least one CO (carbon monoxide) detector in your home. The alarm sounds before dangerous levels of CO can build up. CO has no smell.
› Inspect burner flames on gas appliances. The flame should be a clear blue color. A yellow flame may indicate that the burner is not operating properly.

83,000 voters to be taken off Louisiana’s registration rolls

Voter purge to take place the day after Christmas

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — More than 83,700 voters will be dropped off Louisiana’s voter rolls next week, inactive voters whose addresses can’t be confirmed and who haven’t voted in at least two years, according to Secretary of State Jay Dardenne.

Nearly 3 percent of Louisiana’s 2.9 million registered voters will have their registrations canceled on Dec. 6, as required by state law, Dardenne said in a news release Wednesday.

“The affected individuals have not voted in the past two years and have not responded to canvassing efforts or other attempts to confirm their registration address,” Dardenne said.

Anyone dropped off the voter rolls can reregister with their parish registrar of voters and a valid address.
Marchand ends Capitol campout after meeting with Blanco, others

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — A state lawmaker ended her protest over post-hurricane housing efforts in New Orleans last Wednesday after a three-hour meeting with Gov. Kathleen Blanco and other top officials.

Rep. Charmaine Marchand, D-New Orleans, and Blanco said after a closed-door session that the group made substantial progress toward improving Louisiana’s $7.5 billion Road Home program so she will end her vigil outside the State Capitol.

Marchand pitched a tent last week on the Capitol grounds to protest problems in the housing assistance program, which is designed to help residents whose homes were damaged or destroyed by hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Marchand said she would remain in the tent until problems were worked out with ICF International Inc., the contractor hired by Gov. Kathleen Blanco’s administration to run the program.

Blanco Announces Road Home Changes

BATON ROUGE - Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco announced three policy changes aimed at speeding up and simplifying the Road Home program. Gov. Blanco has continually pressed ICF, the contractor administering the Road Home, to maintain an increasing momentum and improve processes along the way to ensure homeowners get the assistance they need as soon as possible.

“I am pleased to announce these changes in determining awards for homeowners,” Gov. Blanco said. “By accepting pre-storm home appraisals and incorporating the most up-to-date values from Louisiana licensed appraisers and agencies, homeowners can be sure they are getting the most accurate pre-storm value available. I want to thank all legislators who continue to join me to work for solutions to bring our people home, and in particular Sen. Ann Duplessis for her help in crafting these changes. With her background in the banking industry she brings a wealth of information and ideas to the table. The Road Home program is an historic undertaking, and we are always striving to improve the methods used to ensure homeowners can get the help they need to rebuild their lives.”

The Road Home Program will now utilize more tools to determine an accurate pre-storm value of homes. The program has always accepted pre-storm appraisals for determining pre-storm value. These new policies will no longer use the Automated Value Method (AVM) for the City of New Orleans. This nationally-recognized, reliable, computer model system compiles data on home values neighborhood-by-neighborhood. However, this model did not always reflect the most appropriate pre-storm value for all homes in New Orleans. The Road Home will make the following changes to more reliably reflect the specific values in the disaster area.

Talk Back!

Data News Weekly wants to know what you think!

Each week, Data News Weekly brings you the information we think you want to know. In an effort to better reflect the thoughts of the community, we are offering you Talk Back. Take this opportunity to let your community, government officials and our editor know what your opinions are on the subject. Selected submissions will be published in the Data News Weekly Talk Back section and a compilation version will be sent to the candidates for Mayor for the City of New Orleans.

This week’s question:

What has your experience been with the LRA and the LA Road Home Program?

Have you received any compensation yet?

Was it enough to cover your rebuilding costs?

How was your experience working with their representatives?

Is there too much red tape?

Go to www.ladatanews.com and click on Talk Back and let your voice be heard.
Blanco, Continued from page 10.

The Road Home Program will now:

• Accept post-storm appraisals for pre-storm value.
• Incorporate file data from Louisiana licensed appraisers in the storm zone who have the most up-to-date information on home values.
• Obtain appraisals performed in the storm areas from Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, the Federal Housing Administration, and other agencies that have up-to-date home values on file.

“These policy changes are the work of many people coming together over the past few weeks to enhance this program,” Sen. Ann Duplessis said. “The changes make sense when you consider how diverse the New Orleans housing market is. We have an entire team of local professionals dedicated to the real estate and housing industry, and they will now play a vital role in making the Road Home program work better for our people.”

While it is recognized that a limited number of award letters are not accurately valued by AVM, it is expected that the majority of the letters sent out will reflect a fair pre-storm value. As always if a homeowner feels the pre-storm value is not accurate, they can call 1-888-ROAD LA to ask for a review of their appraisal. ICF will continue to perform a broker’s price opinion on every house prior to closing.

Love Doctor, Continued from page 8.

weight from the home cooking prepared by his mother in law, joking his way past the pains caused by the pins in his leg, feeling warm and secure in the knowledge that whenever he is thirsty he can get a drink. It’s nice to have a full well.

Other things come from that well, the pride in children who seek to live up to your expectations, the warmth of father’s day breakfast in bed, the getting older and having someone who doesn’t see your age. A good well fills up with memories of wide eyes seeing things never seen before on the vacations made possible only by well builders. It’s pleasant work building a good solid and deep well and you’ll never know when you might need a drink.
Legendary singer James Brown dies

By: Glenn Gamboa

James Brown, the “Godfather of Soul,” the pioneer of funk and the rhythmic backbone of hip-hop, has been swaddled in his signature bejeweled fur cape for the final time.

Brown, known for his raucous stage shows as much as his bold hits “Sex Machine,” “I Got You (I Feel Good)” and “Papa’s Got a Brand New Bag,” died Monday morning at Emory Crawford Long Hospital in Atlanta, where he had been hospitalized Sunday with pneumonia. He was 73.

“James Brown changed music,” said the Rev. Al Sharpton, who was part of Brown’s tour entourage in the 1970s. “He made soul music a world music. What James Brown was to music in terms of soul and hip-hop, rap, all of that, is what Bach was to classical music. This is a guy who literally changed the music industry. He put everybody on a different beat, a different style of music. He pioneered it.”

Concerts from the self-proclaimed “Hardest working man in show business” are the stuff of legend — from his multiple spins, his swiveling hips and constantly twitching feet to the traditional ending, where Brown swoons from exhaustion, only to bounce back again.

Those performances mirrored his tumultuous life. Born in Barnwell, S.C., in 1925, Brown was only 4 when he was abandoned by his parents. As a teenager, he spent more than three years in reform school for breaking into cars. However, it was at the Toccoa, Ga., school that he met Bobby Byrd, who brought Brown by a group that became known as the Famous Flames.

The band landed a record deal in 1956 with King Records in Cincinnati, and soon after that had a hit with the dramatic rhythm and blues ballad “Please, Please, Please.”

Brown then developed the James Brown Revue — the J.B.’s for short — which created a brand-new style of soul, punctuated with staccato horn blasts and intricate rhythms generated by two drummers.

“To explain the fever pitch that James Brown records set ... it would take using words still not invented,” Public Enemy’s Chuck D wrote in 2002. “Today, hip-hop seems a far distance from the mighty funk the man set upon all of us.”

A growing consciousness However, Brown’s new ideas extended well beyond music. His song “Say It Loud — I’m Black and I’m Proud,” which Brown sang in the racially charged heat of 1968, after the murder of the Rev. Martin Luther King, became an instant anthem.

James Brown single-handedly took a lost and confused musical nation of people and bonded them with a fix of words, music and attitude,” Chuck D. wrote in the liner notes for the reissue of Brown’s “Say It Live and Loud” album. “After a hot summer of baseball camp, summer lunches and barbecues, ‘Say It Loud — I’m Black and I’m Proud’ was the catch phrase that prepared me for the third grade, 1969, and the rest of my life. ‘Black’ now signified where we were at, a new discovery of our bad self.”

Between his grueling tour schedule and a string of RANDB hits, Brown’s influence grew throughout the ’70s and ’80s. He was part of the inaugural class of inductees in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1986, alongside Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry and Little Richard. He won his second Grammy in 1987 for best male RANDB vocal performance for “Living in America” — a best RANDB recording Grammy in 1965 for “Papa’s Got a Brand New Bag” was his first. In 1992, he received a lifetime achievement Grammy.

Brown gained such respect from his fellow artists that it wasn’t unusual for him to get name-checked in songs (Tom Tom Club’s “Genius of Love,” for example) or have his music sampled in a hip-hop song. Hip-hop DJs would simply pick one of Brown’s distinctive drum breaks and loop it, allowing rappers to deliver their rhymes over Brown’s foundation.

“He was an innovator, he was an emancipator, he was an originator,” Little Richard told MSNBC. “Rap music, all that stuff, came from James Brown.”

Even those rebelling against RANDB and hip-hop recognized his influence. In 1992, fans of techno rallied around L.A. Style’s hit “James Brown Is Dead” as a statement that this new brand of electronic-driven dance songs didn’t need his sense of rhythm or soul.

Of course, Brown outlived techno’s heyday.

Personal struggles He also rebounded from a drug-fueled confrontation with police in 1988 that ended in an interstate car chase through Georgia and South Carolina. Brown spent more than two years in prison for aggravated assault and failing to stop for a police officer, but when he was released, he returned to performing with a pay-per-view concert.

“Even though he had his legal difficulties, no one stopped giving him respect,” Sharpton said.

In recent years, he resumed his busy touring schedule. (Brown was set to perform at B.B. King Blues Club in Times Square on New Year’s Eve.) And he also began recording with some of today’s hitmakers, including a collaboration with the Black Eyed Peas last year on “They Don’t Want Music.”

Brown is survived by his wife, Toni Raye Hynie, who was also one of his backup singers, and their son, James Jr. He has four other children, two daughters and sons Daryl and James Brown II, according to his agent, Frank Cipollina of Intrigue Music. Memorial services have not been finalized.

“Even he was dramatic to the end, dying on Christmas Day,” said the Rev. Jesse Jackson, a friend of Brown’s since 1955.