

Lighting The Road To The Future

New Orleans

Data

News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

Data Zone

Data Around Town | Page 8

Clowning Around with J. Anthony Brown

Page 9

FREE COPY


July 5 - July 18, 2008 42nd Year Volume 43 www.ladatanews.com

Soledad O'Brien Explores Race In America

Data News Weekly Exclusive

The Soul of New Orleans

Page 2



Newsmaker


Stan "Pampy" Barre to serve 5 yrs.

Page 4

Data 42nd Anniversary Celebration

Thursday, July 24th
The Fine Arts Center
8:00 pm - 11:pm

See pg 16 for details



Page 6

CNN's Soledad O'Brien Explores Race In America

"Data News Weekly Exclusive"

By Edwin Buggage

America's Race Problem

The preeminent scholar and activist W.E.B. DuBois said that the problem of the 20th century would be that of the color line. And in the 20th century the question of America's racial caste system came to a head during the heated period of the modern Civil Rights Movement. Where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. led marches through the streets becoming a drum major for justice whose words that are now revered resonantly reverberated echoing the sentiments and concerns of a people whose dreams and aspirations had been for centuries stifled by road blocks. Where the ever visible presence of legal segregation in the south and a system in the north where the invisible noose of racism reared its ugly head looming deeply and cutting to the core of man's inhumanity against his fellow man as this historical practice of racial reprisals exposed the hypocrisy of a country founded on the principles of liberty and justice for all.

In the 21st century much has changed, but conversely, much has stayed the same, as this country has at this historical moment an African-American who is a stone throw away from the White House, while simultaneously many African-Americans are still suffering and are falling further behind in the race for equality and the possibility of the American Dream becoming a reality is out of

their reach. And while numerous African-Americans have moved to the upper echelons of American society in various fields of endeavor breaking through the barriers of bigotry; this nation's racial wounds have not yet healed as racial animus, misunderstanding and intolerance still remains as this country has not rid itself of the scourge of racial prejudice both at the individual and institutional levels.

Black In America: The Documentary

When the question of race in America comes up as a topic of discussion it is usually laden with posturing, pontificating and platitudes; where problems are discussed ad nauseam but rarely any tangible solutions come from these conversations. On July 23rd and 24th CNN has produced a groundbreaking documentary that hopes to buck this trend. It deals with not just the ills of the racial divide but posits solutions. Black In America is a four hour documentary that will be presented in two parts, the first part deals with The Black Woman and Family and the second part deals with the Black Man. This program is hosted and reported by CNN's Soledad O'Brien. She feels an honest open ended conversation is needed in regards to race "Some of the reasons race is still a problem because some of the time people have not fully addressed it, some would just rather wish it away and



have colorblind society, and I don't think that should be necessarily be the goal," says O'Brien.

She feels that race should be not ignored and talking honestly and openly about race is essential if this nation is to get past feelings of racial antipathy, "I have been successful in my life and the fact is I am a Black woman and I don't want people not

to see that in me." "It is a part of who I am and how I identify myself and to simply ignore that part of me, I don't think that is progress." Taking about how some want to ignore race she says, "Like for instance when Whites say they don't see you as Black, it is like the 800 pound elephant that is in the room that nobody wants to acknowledge

Continued next page.

INSIDE DATA

Cover Story	2	Health News	10
Newsmaker	4	In The Spirit	10
State & Local News . . .	5	@ Issue	11
Data Zone	8	National News	13

DATA NEWS WEEKLY

616 Barrone Street, Suite 584, New Orleans, LA 70113

Phone: (504) 821-7421 | Fax: (504) 821-7622

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

Terry B. Jones
CEO/Publisher

Glenn Jones

VP Advertising & Marketing

Edwin Buggage

Editor-in-Chief

Cheryl Mainor

Managing Editor

Glenn Jones

Distribution

Contributors

Herb Boyd
Edwin Buggage
Hazel Trice Edney
Dr. Aaron E. Harold
Cheryl Mainor
Cash Michaels
Marc Morial
Sheldon Richman
Dr. Ron Walters
NNPA Newswire
Associated Press

Art Direction & Production
MainorMedia.com

Contributing

Photographers

AP
CNN
Glenn Summers
Vincent Sylvain

Editorial Submissions

datanewseditor@bellsouth.net

Advertising Inquiries

datanewsad@bellsouth.net

Please call (504) 284-3840 for subscription information. Dated material two weeks in advance. Not responsible for publishing or return of unsolicited manuscripts or photos.

but is very real." Continuing her thoughts about how this is an uncomfortable and sometimes controversial subject she says, "I feel a lot of conversations about race have not been forthright and because of that we have not gotten closer to any solutions and hopefully this documentary can start a dialog."

The documentary covers issues regarding Blacks in the areas of family, healthcare, education, the economy and many other issues that affect the African-American community. Throughout it attempts to do something that rarely happens in broadcast television; to portray a more complete balanced picture of the African-American experience because this picture is one that is usually blurred causing perceptions of ones conditions to be ignored are misunderstood across racial lines. "When you look at perception of the issue of race between Blacks and Whites in the people we polled a large number of Whites believe that things are much better for Blacks than Blacks themselves," says O'Brien. She goes on to say, "There are disparities in the area of jobs, access to healthcare and educational opportunities, or where blacks experience different treatment based on race like trying to get a cab, or getting treated differently in public places based on race, these are some of the things we explore and highlight in the documentary."

"And sometimes that can be very challenging being two people."

Senator Barack Obama's Democratic Presidential Nomination has taken the issue of race and put it on the front burner. Making old arguments obsolete for some and making many question how far has this nation come in matters of race. Has Obama's rise shown that individual initiative can trump racial barriers, or does the historical baggage of a racially coded legacy still apply in America? This is a question that still remains unanswered. Soledad O'Brien feels Obama rise is a good thing for the nation in the area of race relations, "Race is something that is very real in this country and I

Plane crash to school shootings in Colorado and Oregon. In her job as a journalist the covering of death, destruction and disaster is something very real in the life of a reporter of O'Brien's caliber and stature in the news business. In the job of a journalist it is one of

to deal with and I felt bad about it." "It was so disheartening, frustrating and depressing to see the lack of response."

But her coverage of the city in its darkest hour whether knowingly or unknowingly she was a journalist/advocate providing in-

of how much that people have lost they are still upbeat, the people of the city of New Orleans are so wonderful and an amazing example of resilience."

Black America: E Pluribus Unum

In the documentary it explores issues of class schisms inside of Black America something that many outside of the African-American community do not see. Where Blacks who have succeeded do not see themselves in the same way as those who have achieved less and vice-versa; this is a topic that O'Brien recalls during the taping that stands out in her mind, "I interviewed an African-American man who feels the way some middle class Blacks feel when he said I feel I have more in common with my white neighbor than the Blacks in the neighborhood I use to live in." While many Blacks have forged ahead there are those who have been left behind who long for the American Dream, it is truly a tale of many Black America's inside of America.

O'Brien addresses this dilemma in Black America saying that it is in many cases not one's lack of ability but access and contact with those who have gained a certain level of success. "There is a problem between those who have moved ahead and those who have been left behind." "And what has happened is that lack of opportunities are available and many of the young people who live in inner cities have never or rarely seen anybody who has gone to college, but if they had more experience where they were exposed to someone who has achieved a level of success maybe they would have somebody to model their behavior after so they could feel that success is within their reach."

In a media that is saturated with one dimensional images of African-Americans and the African-American Experience Soledad O'Brien hopes that Black In America can dispel myths about Blacks and open the floor to a serious conversation about race in America. "There are so many myths about Blacks that they are all poor and criminals, but the truth is most are middle class and go to work everyday and have a great deal in common with Whites." "I hope with this documentary it gives people a more accurate picture what it means to be Black in America and we can make the first step in moving beyond race by confronting it."



Previous page: Forty years after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., CNN anchor and special correspondent Soledad O'Brien reports a landmark six-hour documentary series Black in America. Photo: CNN

Top: An inmate at San Quentin State Prison in California shows CNN anchor and special correspondent Soledad O'Brien his high school diploma in The Black Man. Photo: Justin Larose/CNN

Right: Journalist and social commentator Ellis Cose contributes expert analysis to the issues behind the statistics in Black in America: The Black Man. Photo: Lorenzo Bevilaqua/CNN

Left: Actress and talk show host Whoopi Goldberg discusses issues concerning black women in The Black Woman & Family. Photo: Justin Larose/CNN



The Obama Factor: What Does It Mean To Be Black In America?

The duality the W.E.B. DuBois talked about regarding race that there is a double consciousness among Africa-Americans that you are American yet not American that you see it through a very different lens is something that continues to be a reality in the lives of many African-Americans. Today that still is an issue according to O'Brien, "What you hear from Blacks is that they have to be one way in the office with their white colleagues and another way when they are at home; the real them."

think Senator Obama's speech about race was very thought provoking and nuanced; in it he did a very skillful job at giving a very thoughtful speech and I am optimistic about us having these dialogs about race which for some may be unpleasant, but is necessary for us to get past it as a nation."

Journey Of A Journalist; Soledad's New Orleans

O'Brien has traveled the world and seen many things as a journalist from the tsunami that took the lives of 155,000 people to the Space Shuttle Columbia Disaster, JFK Jr.

an objective observer that reports what happens and not let what goes on around you affect you.

But O'Brien says that after her coverage of Hurricane Katrina she was deeply affected and moved by what she saw during those days when the levees broke, and the lives of so many people of the city of New Orleans and the surrounding areas changed forever. "I didn't realize how much it affected me at first being a journalist; I was just reporting and didn't have the ability to watch the coverage." "But what you discover later is that you have nightmares about things; it is so incredibly sad and so difficult

formation that the people of the city so desperately needed in what was chaotic times where hopelessness, despair and desperation overtook the city. Today O'Brien feels her reporting helped the city when it needed it the most, "I felt good as a journalist that what I did actually helped and coming back nearly three years later and seeing that there has been significant progress, but obviously there is still a long way to go." In her experience meeting people of the Crescent City she is amazed by the people of New Orleans and there optimism, "It is amazing to me coming to the city and in spite

Stan "Pampy" Barre Sentenced in Corruption Case

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Restaurant owner Stan "Pampy" Barre has been sentenced to five years in prison for his role in a conspiracy to skim money from a New Orleans City Hall contract - two years longer than prosecutors had recommended.

Barre was one of two people being sentenced Wednesday in the scheme. The other awaiting sentencing Wednesday was construction company owner Reginald Walker. Both pleaded guilty to fraud charges in January 2007. Barre, 63, and three accomplices - Kerry DeCay, Walker and Terry Songy - admitted to a scheme to skim more than \$1 million from an energy management contract awarded by the city with Johnson



Stan "Pampy" Barre was sentenced on Wednesday, July 9th to 5 years in prison in federal corruption case. Barre received leniency for his cooperation with the government aiding in the conviction of other city officials.

Controls Inc. during former New Orleans Mayor Marc Morial's administration.

Prosecutors say Barre used his connections to Morial to convince a contractor to pay him \$273,000 for help in getting the contracts signed. Former Mayor Morial has not been implicated in any wrongdoing.

Barre's sentence of five years represents just over half of the sentence given to DeCay, who was the director of property management under Morial. The leniency shown reflects Barre's coop-

eration with federal investigators. The two men entered the same plea, guilty of conspiracy, mail fraud and obstruction of justice.

Walker, who helped the government convict Barre and DeCay by pleading guilty to two felonies on the eve of trial, was to 30 months in prison. Walker owned Moss Creek Development Co. Inc., a major subcontractor in the Johnson Controls deal.

Walker assisted the government to close the case against Barre and DeCay. Barre's cooperation with the government helped the government make its bribery case last year against then-City Council President Oliver Thomas, the leading contender for the 2010 mayoral election.

Thomas, who plead guilty, is currently serving a 39-month term in prison for taking a bribe from Barre in exchange for his influence in a French Quarter parking contract.

Barre also alleges a scheme to rig a garbage contract awarded by the School Board. Barre claimed he passed cash bribes from two trash haulers to banker Dave Anderson in exchange for a guarantee that Anderson's wife, a Board Member, would support the contract award.

The Andersons have strongly denied the allegation that they took bribes. Neither one has been charged resulting from his allegations.

Illegal Dumping Task Force Initiated by Councilmember Willard-Lewis



New Orleans, LA - District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis and City officials announced the formation of an Illegal Dumping Task Force that will focus on strengthening code enforcement of illegal dumping in the industrial areas of the City, specifically New Orleans East. The Task Force's mission will also emphasize the review of current local and state legislation and policies regarding illegal dumping and enforcement.

Within 24 hours of the July 8th announcement a physical assessment of the targeted area will begin. The Task Force will concentrate initial efforts by issuing warnings to violators on Old Gentilly Road.

On July 16th, the City Council Recovery Committee will address illegal dumping issues and discuss current legislation regarding enforcement.

"The impact of blatant illegal dumping threatens public health and public safety, and is unsightly and demoralizing to our recovering communities. These actions hinder our efforts to attract new businesses and revitalize the City's recovering economy. We want to send a message that this behavior will not be tolerated," said Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis.

Prior to the storms of 2005, illegal dumping, un-permitted dump sites and piles of unregulated automobile salvage waste had been a growing problem in New Orleans East. Following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, during which the City was inundated with more than 30 millions tons of storm related debris, the challenge of enforcement has been heightened.

"Revitalizing our City requires that we preserve our green space, including parks, playgrounds and all public spaces. We need citizens to assist us by reporting those businesses or individuals who violate our property and threaten the public health and public safety of our community," said Dr. Ed Blakely, Director of the Office of Recovery Development and Administration.

Current Litter and Illegal Dumping Ordinances

New Orleans City Council Ordinance # 22601, authored by Councilmember Willard-Lewis, addresses the City's waste collection and disposal process and increases penalties for violations. The Ordinance also increases penalties for littering and illegal dumping.

The City's current Municipal Code Article V, Section 66-282 (littering, and dumping of specific materials) addresses the various facets of the illegal dumping problems and provides policy directions. The Municipal Code provides a maximum fine after the third offense of \$500 for construction related debris and \$5,000 for solid waste, community service of no less than 20 seven-hour days and imprisonment for no more than 180 days.

Motor vehicles used or intended to be used to transport or in any manner facilitate a violation can be impounded and are subject to forfeiture, with varying degrees of exceptions that weaken the enforcement intent.

Dumping on vacant lots is covered in the Municipal Code in Section 82-410 and the maximum fine is \$500.

The Illegal Dumping Task Force will include the following City Departments:

The New Orleans City Council Sanitation and Environmental Affairs Committee
New Orleans City Council District E
New Orleans Sanitation Department
New Orleans Health Department
New Orleans Police Department (NORD)
Office of Recovery Development and Administration (ORDA)
New Orleans Department of Code Enforcement
Mayor Office of Environmental Affairs
New Orleans Fire Department
Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff's Office
New Orleans Department of Safety and Permit

Citizens can report illegal dumping activities by calling the City Information Hotline at 311 or (504) 658-2299.

Grand Master Eric O'Neal, Sr. Unveils Limited Edition Poster Of The Legend Of Lionman And The Seven Kurodos

Seven-time United States Karate Alliance World Champion and International Karate Hall of Fame Inductee Grand Master Eric O'Neal, Sr. made a special appearance signing limited edition posters of The Legend of LIONMAN and the SEVEN KURODOS from the highly anticipated 28 book series at the 2008 Essence Music Festival.

Created by Grand Master O'Neal, The Legend of LIONMAN and the SEVEN KURODOS features the first league of culturally diverse superheroes that perform heroic and moral deeds, both real and fictional, that will inspire, entertain, and educate millions of children and adults all over the world.

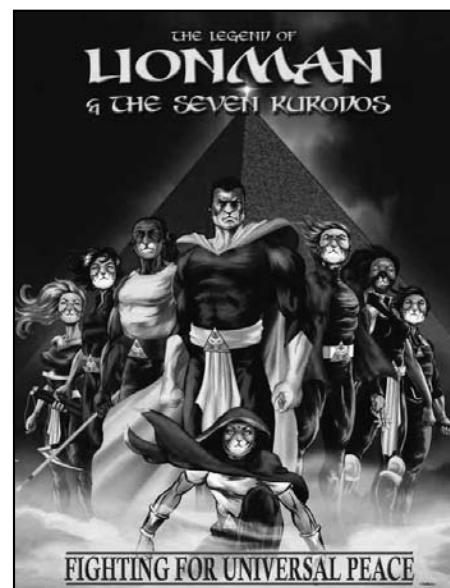
"We all need a Superhero to help us stand strong and make good choices," says Grand Master

O'Neal. "This series will help students strengthen their self-esteem and make appropriate choices in life." In conjunction with the book series, The LIONMAN and the SEVEN KURODOS website will be launched in August 2008 and will feature an online tutorial program. The site will serve as a portal for students where they can receive live help via the website in various school subjects. Students can also receive wise counsel and support with problems that arise in school, at play, at home, or within themselves to help them make good, appropriate choices.

In addition to creating The Legend of LIONMAN series, Grandmaster Eric O'Neal, Sr. is also the founder of The LIONMAN Foundation that was established in 2000 as a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization designed to expand

and broaden services provided by community and educational institutions. The LIONMAN Foundation has developed a variety of programs specifically to provide refuge for at-risk youth from inner-city entrapments. All Foundation activities and programs reinforce that education is a critical foundation for future success, and that self-discipline, self-esteem, and respect for others are key to success in education.

One of the many noteworthy programs that Grand Master O'Neal created through The LIONMAN Foundation is the "1000 Beams of Light" program. "Our focus in the wake of hurricane Katrina is to help the recovery efforts of the New Orleans Public School System," said Master O'Neal. "The goal of the LIONMAN '1000 Beams of Light' program is to



uplift the spirit of the children of New Orleans and empower them through education and in-school and after-school activities. It takes a village to raise a child. We are

working to create that village to keep them off the streets and out of trouble."

The LIONMAN A-1 Drill Team is one of the highly commendable components of the "1000 Beams of Light" program. Members of the drill team will demonstrate the discipline and the stomp routines that they learned from Grand Master O'Neal by performing by The LIONMAN Foundation booth in the Convention Center before Grand Master O'Neal begins autographing The Legend of LIONMAN and the SEVEN KURODOS posters. This will mark the second year the LIONMAN A-1 Drill Team will perform at the Essence Music Festival.



© 2008 AT&T Intellectual Property. All rights reserved. AT&T and the AT&T logo are trademarks of AT&T Intellectual Property.

It's not just good. It's good business.

We're committed to supplier diversity. And for several years running, that commitment has been honored by *DiversityInc*, *DiversityBusiness.com*, the Women's Business Enterprise National Council and others. We're proud of that recognition. And even prouder of the performance of our diverse suppliers. They've made us a better corporate citizen. And a better company.

Capdau Early College High School Students, First To Participate In Urban League College Track Program

NEW ORLEANS - group of 50 Pierre A. Capdau- University of New Orleans Early College High School freshmen were the first New Orleans students to take part in Urban League College Track, an after-school, college preparatory program that helps students from under-resourced communities graduate from high school and succeed in college.

The 4 to 6 year program sets high expectations for student achievement and offers a variety of programs in three core service areas: Academic Affairs, Student Life, and College Affairs.

College Track began working with a small group of students at a high school in East Palo Alto, Calif., in 1997. The organization now serves over 550 high school and

college students through centers in the San Francisco Bay Area and New Orleans.

"We are very pleased that our Early College High School students are in the first New Orleans-based College Track class," said Dr. Andre Perry, Associate Dean of UNO's College of Education and Human Development and CEO of the Capital One- UNO Charter School Network. "College Track adds significant value to the charter network's mission of preparing our students for enrollment in college."

The Urban League, celebrating 70 years in the New Orleans area, is a non-profit, non-partisan, community-based organization dedicated to empowering communities and changing

lives. Through advocacy and direct service, the League serves upwards of 5,000 clients annually in education, childcare, business development and employment and training programs. For more information on the Urban League, visit them online at www.urbanleagueneuorleans.org.

"We recognize and appreci-

ate the involvement of the Urban League of Greater New Orleans in the College Track partnership. This is exactly the type of community participation that will lead to successful schools in New Orleans," Dr. Perry noted.

"We are proud to introduce College Track to New Orleans. The program has a successful track

record of producing successful college graduates in California," said Nolan V. Rollins, President and CEO of the Urban League of Greater New Orleans. "We are confident that College Track will play an important role in helping build a brighter future for our children, families and the entire region."

GMc+Company Advertising Ends 2nd Quarter with a Boom

New Orleans, LA- GMc+Company Advertising has added three new accounts to its roster, representing local, regional and national clients. The company has also been renewed as the agency of record for the multicultural component of the Louisiana Office of Tourism account. New accounts include the New Orleans Multicultural Tourism Network (NOMTN), Nutress Hair Care and the Louisiana Dairy Board.



Glenda McKinley English

"This is an exciting time at the agency," said Glenda McKinley English, agency president and creative director. "Our team works hard to combine research, strategy and cutting edge creative for our clients, and it's paying off."

GMc+Company Advertising will be responsible for working with NOMTN-the city agency responsible for marketing New Orleans as a multicultural destination-on image, awareness and promotional campaigns. "I like the way they think about the work," said Toni Rice, president of NOMTN. "They develop a partnership with you that is inclusive."

Nutress Hair Care, the original creators of protein-based conditioners in the United States, is a national hair care company that has been in business for over 50 years. For the past 20 years, they have specialized in ethnic hair care. GMc+Company Advertising will work with Nutress to evolve its branding and packaging.

"This is our first account in this category, but we feel like specialists," said English, adding with a smile, "We appreciate the importance of ethnic hair care products at a personal level."

The agency's newest account is the Louisiana Dairy Board, based in Baton Rouge. Responsibilities will include strategy development for advertising, promotion and public relations as well as media research and the coordination of promotions.

James Carter Announces Bid for Congress

District C Councilman Touts Reform Agenda for 2nd Congressional District

New Orleans City Councilman James Carter announced today his plans to run for the 2nd Congressional District seat covering parts of Orleans and Jefferson parishes. Councilman Carter was elected in 2006 and currently represents District C, the most culturally diverse district in the region - on the New Orleans City Council, covering Algiers, French Quarter, Bywater, Faubourg Marigny, Tremé, Esplanade Ridge, and parts of the 9th Ward. Carter serves as Chair of the Criminal Justice, Cable and Telecommunications, and Competitive Selection Committees. Carter also serves on the Utility, Governmental Affairs, Youth and Recreation, Women's, Arts and Culture, Housing and Human Needs, and Recovery Committees on the New Orleans City Council. Carter is the co-chair of the Human Relations Committee Task Force.

Councilman Carter is entering the race for Congress to focus on providing effective representation for a congressional district still facing serious recovery issues. "I decided to run for Congress because our community still has pressing needs related to recovery, crime, education, economic development and housing that are critical to securing the future of our children," says Carter. "We need effective representation in Congress to ensure that we continue to have a federal partner in this recovery."

Councilman James Carter has been a unifying voice on the City Council and a leader in the area of criminal justice reform, creating a broad based coalition of business and civic leaders, community activists, and members of the religious community, to build consensus around national "best practices" to help reduce crime and attract investment to the region. Carter was the first director of the nationally recognized Weed and Seed Program, an innovative comprehensive multi-agency approach to community revitalization, law enforcement, and crime prevention sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice. Councilman Carter also has been an effective member of the New Orleans City Council, developing a reform



New Orleans City Councilman James Carter

agenda focused on accountability and transparency in government through legislation supporting the Office of Inspector General, Ethics Review Board, and the Independent Police Monitor of the Inspector General's Office.

James Carter has been encouraged by family, friends, and supporters to consider running for Congress. Carter stated, "I'm touched by the level of support throughout the community for my candidacy, and I look forward to talking with voters around this district about the important issues facing our region, and the country." Carter currently serves both the Eastbank and Westbank of Orleans Parish and is uniquely positioned to address the needs and concerns of the citizens in the 2nd Congressional District.

James Carter, a lifelong resident of New Orleans, graduated from both McDonough 35 High School and the nationally recognized New Orleans Creative Center for the Arts (NOCCA) before securing his B.A. (1991) from Howard University in Washington, DC, and Juris Doctorate (1997) degrees from Howard University School of Law in Washington, DC. A Deacon at Second Good Hope Baptist Church of Algiers, James is married to the former Rene Lewis, daughter of the late Rev. Bob Lewis of Shiloh Baptist Church, and Principal of the newly reconstituted Martin Behrman Elementary School. James and Rene are the proud parents of a five-year-old son, Brice.

"We Will Return!"

Fire can't kill the spirit of Greater St. Stephen



By Cheryl Mainor

A three alarm fire early Monday at a Greater St. Stephens left 7,000 thousand members searching for a new place to worship. Greater St. Stephen Full Gospel Baptist First battled Hurricane Katrina, and now this, but members say that they will rebuild. Members of the church gathered for a moment of prayer, as they stood just outside the charred place of worship.

Firefighters arrived at the church shortly after 2:30 a.m. Some of the church administrators got the call a short time later. "We drove up to a number of fire trucks and ambulances here, a lot of black smoke coming out of the church," Brandon Boutin said, who says he was raised here, and, for him, the situation is overwhelming.

"This church has been an anchor in the community for 70-plus years and, even after the storm, it's been more, just a sign of hope for so many people," Boutin said. He declined to estimate the cost of the damage. But the challenges ahead will be huge for congregation. Many of the church waited outside while their leader, Bishop Paul Morton, toured the building.

Pews inside were destroyed, so is the altar, leaving an uncertain future. Church members have been surveying the damage, and while they don't know what will become of this facility, they say they're confident the church's mission will continue.

Members came by in large numbers, including Congressman William Jefferson, the most well-known member of the church, who stopped by to led his support. "The church has had a significant role in our community and I believe it will continue to have that role and we certainly wish to do those things that are pleasing in God's sight," Gilbert Stampley, a church member, said

Bishop Morton says he's hoping for an easy transition. "Well that's what we're working on right now to make sure that we get a facility that will hold us on Sundays and Thursdays, we have a very large bible study, so those things we're going to make sure that we're taken care of," Morton said.

Many of the congregation have already been through this situation after the church's New Orleans East branch flooded during Hurricane Katrina. This, will be another trying time, but it's one they're willing to accept. "We'll be back, bigger and better," said Debra Morton.

The eastern New Orleans church is still closed; Monday's fire ruined the congregation's only remaining New Orleans home. Although the Marrero site is in use, Paul Morton said it is probably too distant to be of much use to the Central City congregation.

But like Debra Morton, he pledged that the burned church will recover.

St. Bernard Parish To Pay An Additional \$123,771.92 In Settlement Of Blood Relative Rental Ordinance Lawsuit

St. Bernard Parish must pay \$123,771.92 in fees and costs to attorneys representing the Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center (GNOFHAC) and an individual plaintiff pursuant to a court order issued in Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center v. St. Bernard Parish et al, Case No. 06-7185, United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana. The fees and costs are in addition to the \$32,500 previously paid by the Parish as part a Consent Order in settlement of the claim for damages. This brings the total payout by the Parish up to a total of \$152,271.92.

The lawsuit was filed in November 2006 and asked the federal court to enjoin St. Bernard Parish from enforcing an ordinance barring single-family homeowners from renting to anyone except blood relatives without the special permission of the Parish Council. GNOFHAC alleged that the ordinance disproportionately excluded minority families seeking housing, and perpetuated the parish's history as a segregated, predominantly white community.

The Fair Housing Act, as amended (The Act), expressly prohibits discrimination in the rental or sale of a dwelling on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, familial status, disability or national origin. 42 U.S.C. -§ 3604 (a). The Act has been interpreted to prohibit municipalities from using their zoning powers in a manner that excludes housing for a group of people on the basis of one of the enumerated classifications. The Act is violated even when seemingly neutral zoning policies have a discriminatory effect on a particular protected class and cause harm to a community through the perpetuation of segregation. As such, the Ordinance is likely illegal discrimination.

James Perry, GNOFHAC Executive Director comments, "We hope that the result of this lawsuit sends a strong message to local governments that choose to enact discriminatory zoning ordinances. GNOFHAC is dedicated to achieving the mission of ensuring equal housing opportunities for all members of our community. Governmental efforts to exclude protected class members, intentional or not, will be challenged."

Java Copy Zone

616 Baronne Street Suite 100

New Orleans Louisiana 70113

504.301.4934 f: 504.304.0203

javacopyzone@yahoo.com



Data Around Town

New Orleans recently turned out for the 34th National Conference of Black Mayors and The Jackson State University Alumni New Orleans Metro Chapter 's "A Blue & White Affair" Annual Scholarship Gala and Data News Weekly was there.

Photos by Glen Summers & Vincent Sylvain



1. Actress Nicole Ari Parker and husband actor Boris Kodjoe emcee night time gala honoring Black Mayors. 2. Actress and singer Raven Symone walks the red carpet. 3. Data News Weekly Publisher Terry Jones, former Director of Intergovernmental Relations for the City of New Orleans Kenya Smith and Data News Weekly Editor-in-Chief Edwin Buggage. 4. New Orleans Civil District Court Judge Kern Reese, Cook County Commissioner Deborah Simms, Judge Joyce London Ford and husband Tuskegee Mayor and founder of National Conference of Black Mayors Johnny Ford. 5. Seated, Warner Sylvain and friends decked out in blue & white support JSU Scholarship Fund. 6. L - R: Terry Jones, Rachel Jordan, Stephanie Jordan, Keith Hitchens. 7. Warner Sylvain & Vincent Sylvain. 8. L - R: Terry Scott, unknown female, Stephanie Jordan receiving the Walter Peyton Award, C.J. Morgan, unknown male.

J. Anthony Brown

"The Conscious Comic"

By Edwin Buggage

In an age where the comic genius of Redd Foxx, Bill Cosby, Dick Gregory, Richard Pryor and Eddie Murphy at different times single handedly took Black comedy to new heights, and in our recent history Def Comedy Jam spawned a new generation of comics some of which have become household names. Today black comedy is at a crossroads where keeping it real and profanity laced rants have supplanted social satire and has taken lot of the bite and wit out of what black comedy is in America leaving it a bland and predictable paling in comparison to the forerunners who were innovators in the field of black comedy.

Of the many comics presently out on the scene, J. Anthony Brown is a performer who has over the years been consistent giving the best of both schools of thought in the world of comedy. He has the raw grittiness of the new school, but yet like many old school comics he is socially aware in his side splitting routines. "It is great that black performers are getting opportunities to perform like never before, but we must be aware that we honor those who came before us, and that's what I try to do everytime I am on the stage," says Brown.

J. Anthony Brown has done many things in the entertainment industry, hosting BET's Comic View and the WB Sitcom Like Family. He has also been a force behind the scenes writing for television including: Steve Harvey's Big Time, The Parent Hood, and

the Arsenio Hall Show in addition to appearing in films and television.

While Brown has been a fixture on the entertainment scene his claim to fame has been as a fixture on Black America's number one radio program the Tom Joyner Morning Show where for nearly a decade he engages Joyner and his cast mates with heaping helpings of comic relief. He talks about how he got his start, "I met Tom and he talked about how he liked what I did and so I told him I could do it on his show and it kind of evolved into something that has been a big hit." "Also what I like about doing the show is that although we joke around, we talk about serious things that concern the black community."

Besides being known as a comic, he has been known for his fashion sense. He has taken his sartorial sensibility and is marketing The J. Anthony Brown Collection. What many people don't know is that prior to a career in comedy Brown attended college where he studied fashion design and worked as a tailor before becoming a comedian full-time. "I remember I first started doing comedy I entered a gong show because I was going to school for fashion design and was short of tuition money," says Brown. Continuing his thought he says, "I lost the contest, but it was the beginning of something I love which is comedy and I'm glad I've been able to bring another love of mine into the mix which is fashion."

Brown, who is a veteran in the entertainment industry now feels

it is time to give other African-American comics a venue to hone their comedic skills, so he has opened up a club called the J. Spot where established as well as up and coming comics perform. He feels it is important that with his success that he gives back. "In the world of stand-up there are not a lot of venues where black comics can go to work at getting better at their craft, so I felt it was necessary to do something like this because it was needed and we can't continue to ask other people to do things for us, because those of us who are in positions to make those things happen should and that is what I'm trying to provide with the J. Spot."

Brown, a type 2 diabetic has also worked at creating awareness about blacks taking better care of themselves. Through his foundation he provides information and funding for diabetes patients to obtain medication and prosthetic limbs. "In our community we strive sometimes to have a lot of things, but it doesn't mean anything if you don't have your health."

He has given much in the world of comedy, and shown that you can be funny onstage but be serious about business and helping uplift your community. For what he has contributed the greats of comedy are smiling from a stage up in heaven; as J. Anthony Brown is marching on giving the world the gift of his comic talent and a reason to smile and know that black comedy is alive and well.



Comedian and Tom Joyner Morning Show Co-host J. Anthony Brown



Hit the Highway • July 7th – 31st
Come in on Mondays, Play & Get Free Gas Cards!

JOINT'S JUMPIN'

Joint's Jumpin' • July 11th – 13th at 8pm in Harrah's Theatre
A Musical Revue that celebrates Classic New Orleans Rhythm & Blues from the 50's and 60's



A TOTAL REWARDS® CASINO & HOTEL

For more information, call 504-533-6600 or visit www.HarrahsNewOrleans.com

Harrah's reserves the right to change, cancel or amend these events at any time. Must be 21 or older to enter casino and to gamble. Know When To Stop Before You Start. ©2008, Harrah's License Company, LLC.

G A M B L I N G P R O B L E M ? C A L L 1 - 8 0 0 - 5 2 2 - 4 7 0 0

Health

Free Programs Help Uninsured Americans Pay for Medicine



NNPA Newswire- Programs from America's pharmaceutical companies are helping Americans in minority communities that are hit hard by rising health care costs.

Today, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, more than one in five African-Americans live without health insurance. For people with diseases – such as diabetes and cancer – it is very important to have access to doctors, medical tests and prescription medicines. However, without insurance it can be tough to get this necessary care.

Disease has a very harmful effect on the African-American community. For example, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, African-Americans are more likely to die from cancer than any other ethnic or racial group. Disease affects uninsured and insured people alike. So how can uninsured patients get the care they need?

The Partnership for Prescription Assistance (PPA) is a service from America's pharmaceutical companies. It helps low-income, uninsured and underinsured Americans get needed medicine. People who call the PPA can also find out about free health care clinics in their area. There are more than 475 public and private patient assistance programs that provide free or nearly free medicines. The PPA can help people figure out which ones they may potentially qualify for. Simply visit www.PPARx.org or call 888-477-2669.

One such patient assistance program is

Pfizer Helpful Answers®, a family of programs that helps uninsured Americans get Pfizer medicines for free or at a savings. Since 2002, the program has helped more than 5 million people get their Pfizer medicines.

Alvin Estelle is one of the millions of patients who have received prescription assistance through Pfizer Helpful Answers. Estelle is a patient at a community health center in Waco, Texas that helps him get his medicines for free.

"I have been going to the same clinic for my health care for 25 years. My clinic participates in a Pfizer program for uninsured people, so I am able to get my Pfizer medicine right there, for free."

Estelle's clinic is one of more than 430 community health centers in the U.S. that partner with Pfizer to help their patients get medicines for free or at a savings. The company also partners with doctors' offices, hospitals and pharmacies to help the uninsured get access to their Pfizer medicines.

"I am truly grateful to the staff at the clinic and the assistance Pfizer provides so I can get the care and medicine that is essential for my health and well-being," said Estelle. Uninsured Americans can get help paying for their Pfizer medicines, no matter their age or income, by calling 866-706-2400 or by visiting www.Pfizer-HelpfulAnswers.com.

If you are uninsured and need medical care or prescription medicines, help is out there. Don't give up on good health.

In The Spirit

What about the Children?



Dr. Aaron E. Harold
Data Columnist

Relationships

Folks, when a relationship doesn't work between a husband and a wife, or a man and a woman, eventually there will be a separation or a divorce, most times, that separation or divorce will be permanent. Separation or divorce can lead to a lot of pain and frustration to a couple that was once happy and content in their relationship. However, when couples break up, many times there are children involved and they suffer the most from the separation or divorce.

Folks what I'm saying is that it's not all about the two of you. What about the children? Yes, what about them? That separation or divorce may have been very painful for you, but did you stop to even think about the pain that it could cause the child or the children. They too will experience pain and sometimes severe pain when this happens. Children may have problems at the beginning if the situation is not handled well. Nevertheless, the children will need time and attention from the both of you for emotional support.

Folks, your child or children need you now more than ever after a divorce or separation. Again, it's not just about the two of you, because your children may be hurting also. This is what you must do if you love them. You must first swallow your pride and stop crying over and over again, next, stop cussing and fussing when you go to visit them. Lastly, you must take a stand to let them know that you still love them no matter what.

Family, don't be the kind of man or woman that turns their back on the kids just because your relationship failed. They need you both, and they need to know that you are still there for them. Take the time and talk to them, and let them know that it's not their fault. If the children are going to be with the mother or father, do your best to create an atmosphere of peace and unity where ever they are. Look, you fathers, stay committed to your children even though you may not be with your wife or girlfriend.

The children are still yours and they didn't ask to come to the world when you were having your fun, if you know what I mean. Look, be a man and a father and take care of your responsibilities. Fathers, what you do after a divorce or a break-up most of the time will determine how your child or children will turn out later in the future. Don't put that burden on the women to try to take care of the children by herself because it's wrong. Continue to be their father and always let them know that you love them no matter what.

Spend as much time with them as you can, and don't forget about them like so many others have done in past relationships. When your children are around you, both father and mother should talk about the good and not about the bad. Folks, when they hear you talk about the good in the other one, it will bring out the good in them. They may not understand exactly everything that happened, but they can learn to accept it in most cases. Always remember to treat your children with dignity and respect.

I've seen so many children suffer from divorces and separations. They suffer from lack of knowing whether they or still loved or not. Some suffer from emotional problems, which lead to them having difficulty concentrating in school or interacting with others. You fathers and mothers, let your children know that you want them to be better than you, so continue to show them love and respect and hold them even more than ever, and remember that its not about you, its about the children. God Bless.



Is Organized Labor Taking African Americans for Granted

By: Marc H. Morial



Marc Morial
President & CEO
National Urban League

To Be Equal Column

There is no question the civil rights and labor movements have shared a public commitment to issues of parity and justice

affecting African Americans and working people over the years. Forty years ago, Dr. Martin Luther King embodied that partnership when he led his last march for justice in support of the striking sanitation workers of AFSCME Local 1733 in Memphis.

But, it is also true that the union movement has been slow to practice what it preaches when it comes to equality within its own ranks.

In the early years of the labor movement, African Americans were systematically excluded from major unions, which led to the formation of separate Black labor unions. A. Philip Randolph founded the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters in 1925 and waged a 12-year fight to gain recognition by the American Federation of Labor. He went on to become a national leader in the fight against racism within unions, in the workplace and throughout America.

Those early barriers have slowly fallen

and now Blacks represent about 14 percent of American union workers. But, at a time when African Americans are an increasingly important part of the organized labor's future, they are still not adequately represented at the top echelons of the American labor leadership. But don't take my word for it.

Listen to what William Lucy, AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer and the highest ranking African American in American labor has to say. In remarks to a 2005 national summit on labor and diversity in Chicago, Lucy said that at a time when the vast majority of new union members are women and people of color, "a majority of people of color still encounter barriers to gaining leadership positions within their union and even where they have reached leadership positions, they face additional challenges."

Lucy recommends mentoring support, education, training, and other pro-active ef-

forts to achieve opportunities and equality within the union movement. The National Urban League agrees. Organized labor must not take African American support for granted.

As the presidential election of 2008 draws closer, the American labor movement is mobilizing to represent the interests of working people on issues like universal health care, the elimination of poverty and the right to organize. Let's hope they apply that same vigor to increasing diversity in union leadership and in the continued fight for equal opportunity throughout America.

As A. Philip Randolph reminded us, "Salvation for a race, nation or class must come from within."

Marc Morial is President and CEO of the National Urban League.

What's Wrong with Selling Your Vote?

by Sheldon Richman

Poor Max Sanders. The 19-year-old University of Minnesota student faces five years in jail and a \$10,000 fine; he is accused of putting his vote in the presidential election up for auction on eBay. He started the bidding at \$10. The charge is bribery, treating, and soliciting.

I'm confused. Aren't all our votes for sale? Each candidate tries to bribe us with future benefits of all sorts. Basically, a campaign is an effort to buy votes wholesale.

Why do you think Barack Obama is "refining" his positions on so many issues? He's in the process of buying the independent votes he needs to win in November. This creates a problem. If he goes too far in buying independent votes, he may have to return votes he already bought from left-leaning Democrats during the primaries. His updated positions on the Iraq occupation, the death penalty, handgun bans, campaign finance, money for religious groups, and immunity for telecom companies that illegally helped the Bush administration wiretap us without warrants have upset people who thought their vote sales were final. In politics no sales are final.

John McCain may have a bigger problem. He's had trouble buying votes from the conservative base of the Republican Party. Those voters don't seem eager to sell

their votes to him because they don't like what he's promising to pay in return. While McCain is trying to close the deal with conservatives, he also needs to buy votes from independents. That's one of the dilemmas of politics. If you buy votes from, say, fiscal conservatives, you might have a hard time also buying votes from advocates of climate control through cap and trade, which would be a tax on energy production.

Keeping most campaign promises costs money. For politicians, money comes from the taxpayers, who are forced to surrender their cash whether they like it or not. As H.L. Mencken understood, "Every election is a sort of advance auction sale of stolen goods." So the only difference I see between a politician who buys a vote and an eBay bidder who buys it is that the bidder spends his own money. Since people spend their own money more wisely than they spend other people's, we can conclude that the eBay sale might be preferable. I'm sure many people were appalled that young Mr. Sanders - eligible to vote in his first presidential election - would even dream of selling his vote. How cynical he is, they must be thinking.

I don't think he's cynical. I think he's naive. He thought someone would be willing to buy his vote for \$10 or more. Why would anyone do that? One vote isn't going

to change the outcome of the election. The chance that McCain and Obama will tie in any of the 50 state elections is roughly zero. No single vote will be decisive. So we can be certain that for any voter, on election day it won't matter if he stays in bed. Now, if a person's one vote doesn't matter, are two votes - his own and the vote he buys - likely to change the outcome of the election? Of course not. Yes, his vote total would increase 100 percent, but that only shows you how misleading percentages can be. It's still only one more. So why would anyone pay

\$10 for it? If there is such a person, tell him I have newborn unicorns for sale.

Mr. Sanders's entrepreneurship would have run into other problems. How would the buyer know the vote he purchased was cast for his favorite candidate? There'd be no way to prove it. He'd have to rely on Mr. Sanders's honesty. That strikes me

as a big risk to take with a stranger. But I guess it's no bigger than the risk you take when you trust the honesty of a politician when you sell him your vote. Sheldon Richman is senior fellow at The Future of Freedom Foundation (www.fff.org) and editor of The Freeman magazine.

American Stroke Association Memorials

Celebrate Life

Mark special events in the life of a friend, relative or colleague — and continue the fight against stroke — with an American Stroke Association Memorial.

For more information, please call 1-888-4-STROKE or visit us online at StrokeAssociation.org

American Heart Association
American Stroke Association
Learn and Live.

TRUE TO HEART
MEMORIAL AND TRIBUTE
PROGRAM

©2008, American Heart Association. 1/08CB0243

Obama's Urban Policy Rocks

By Ron Walters

I noticed a picture of some Black mayors smiling as Barack Obama spoke at the annual meeting of the Conference of Mayors in Miami that took place on June 21. He was offering a vision of his urban policy that apparently was pleasing, as he lifted it from the floor of American social policy where the Republicans had placed it for nearly 30 years by proposing to create a new "White House Office of Urban Policy."

This was also good news for Black Americans who are concentrated in cities and others who live there, because for so long cities had been equated with poverty, crime, violence and, therefore, negative images of Blacks.

The policies of Ronald Reagan turned America away from cities and few of the candidates in this year's primary elections talked about getting down to the sources of the problems of poverty, crime and violence. But if Barack Obama becomes president, there looks like there is hope that these problems will be addressed, as he

pointed out that too often cities have been viewed as America's problem when they are actually the solution to many of the issues of the future.

As a former community organizer, he opened his speech with the thought that he felt at home, and that Republicans had been too concerned with Wall Street and not Main Street, and the proof of it is that John McCain doesn't even have an urban policy to present to America.

Then, he went on to propose a "partnership" with cities that would tackle the problem of concentrated poverty, fund the COPS program, fully fund the Community Development Block Grant (that Republicans cut at every opportunity), fund more teachers for public schools, set up a trust fund to provide affordable housing and help move the housing bill through congress that addresses the home foreclosure crisis.

One of the keys to his proposal that emphasized job creation in these areas is to concentrate on metropolitan government, and put-

ting urban growth within the context of a wider regional growth strategy. The issue of place in the political economy of many areas is that while some populations are virtually locked up in cities, they are also locked out of suburban growth that is taking place on the outer highway rings and beyond.

So, it makes sense to build pathways through the blockage by linking cities to that suburban and exurban growth. An Obama government would set up a pool of \$200 million for matching grants to states and localities to stimulate the development of metropolitan economies.

Much of Obama's focus is on rebuilding infrastructure as a job creating force. Linking cities to suburban areas will require infrastructure development such as roads, bridges and buildings that feeds into a national problem of the crumbling infrastructure that is causing such calamities as the floods that are ravaging many mid-western states at this moment.

Pointing out that the American

Society of Civil Engineers gave our infrastructure a "D" grade, he noted that while we are spending \$10 billion per month on Iraq, much of that could be spent to propel America into the 21st century and stimulate its economy from the bottom up.

Another great idea for investment in America is the building and enhancement of local and regional transit systems, a project made even more urgent now by the high gas prices for automobile transportation and the cancellation of many airline flights to regional airports.

I agree with Barack Obama that while he offers change, the change that most effects people begins in the neighborhoods. Too often, cities have had to sacrifice neighborhood development and concentrate on downtown projects that would theoretically bring in revenue because the state and federal government funds had been reduced.

Building football and baseball stadiums, proposing gambling, in other words, are relying on proj-

ects that have a questionable to little impact on real growth and development of cities. The backbone of government urban policy proposals have relied on tax abatement schemes like Urban Enterprise Zones, the record of which is also dismal in most cases.

Obama's plan is a great start, but because we have ignored cities so long, it will take even more effort if his administration is to truly make change.

Ron Walters is the Distinguished Leadership Scholar, Director of the African American Leadership Center and Professor of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland College Park. His latest book is: *Freedom Is Not Enough: Black Voters, Black Candidates and American Presidential Politics* (Rowman and Littlefield)

NAACP President-Elect Tells Black Press, "We Have Serious Work to Do"

By Hazel Trice Edney

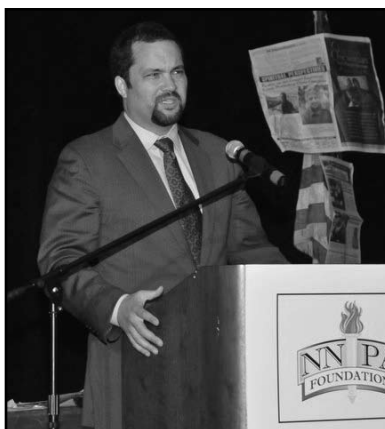
LOUISVILLE (NNPA) - NAACP President-elect Benjamin Todd Jealous, applauded by members of the National Newspaper Publishers Association for whom he once served as executive director, says Black organizations must work hand in hand in order to increase the NAACP membership and fight the ills of racism still pervasive in America.

"The NAACP is a house, it's a big house, it's a mighty house, it's a house that our people will never see again if we don't keep it strong," he told the more than 200 publishers, journalists and supporters during the NNPA's annual Merit Awards Dinner June 27. "It's built with at least four pillars - the Black church, the Black Press, the Black business community and the membership who pay their dues."

Jealous, named the new NAACP CEO last month, worked for NNPA from 2000-2003. He led the construction of the organization's Black Press USA network as well as the NNPA News Service's partnership through the Converged Media Lab at Howard University.

"We did great things together," Jealous told the audience. But, he said the partnership is not nearly over. He said the 274,000 members that the NAACP now claims must be increased to at least the 500,000 once claimed by Walter White, who served as NAACP executive director for nearly a quarter of a century, 1931-1955.

"We need to do it because while the evil of du jour segregation is gone, while the evil of out and out lynching is gone and while the evil of slavery and the slave trade is gone, our people are still finding their dreams squashed,



Benjamin Todd Jealous, President-Elect NAACP addresses publishers at the NNPA Convention.

their families torn apart, their young men thrown in the bars of prisons far too frequently," Jealous said to applause. "The school house to prison pipeline has to be dismantled. And the only way for that to happen is for our two great institutions, three great institutions, four great institutions - the

NAACP, the Black church, the Black Press, and the community to establish it as a priority."

The NAACP-Black Press connection is historic. Jealous, former managing editor of the Jackson Advocate and protégé of its late publisher, the legendary Charles Tisdale, pointed out the connections:

Roy Wilkins, an executive secretary of the NAACP, starting in 1955, had also worked as editor of the Kansas City Call, still an NNPA member newspaper. W.E.B. Dubois, an NAACP founder in 1909, wrote columns for the Chicago Defender, the Pittsburgh Courier and the New York Amsterdam News, all still NNPA members. Dubois also served as editor of the NAACP's Crisis Magazine for nearly 25 years.

Ms. Ida B. Wells-Barnett, also an NAACP founder, was best-known for her anti-lynching crusades in

the Memphis Free Speech, which she co-owned.

John B. Smith Sr., honoring Jealous with the organization's Chairman's Award, recalled words that he had written to Jealous when he first came to work for NNPA. "I said a blessing has been bestowed upon us. He was a guardian angel who had been sent to us," Smith recalled. "We are open to build coalitions with you and NNPA."

Jealous responded with a charge:

"We have serious work to do," he said. "Of course the former managing editor of a Black newspaper, the former executive director of the NNPA will work more closely with the Black Press. But we've got to work as if the success of our publications depends on it, the success of our small businesses depends on it, as if the success of our children depends on it."

Obama Says He's Not 'Distancing Himself' from Black Community

By. Hazel Trice Edney

WASHINGTON (NNPA) — U. S. Sen. Barack Obama, the presumptive Democratic nominee and possibly America's first Black president, denies that he is distancing himself from Black constituents as he seeks to win broader support in the general election.

"I've spent the last year and a half on the campaign talking about problems of poverty and problems of injustice. That's been what my whole campaign has been built around," Obama said in an exclusive interview with the NNPA News Service. "My answer is that's what I've been doing my whole campaign."

Obama was responding to a question pertaining to his criticism of absent Black fathers in a Father's Day message at the Apostolic Church of God in Chicago.

He said that speech should not send a signal that his general election campaign will focus on the negatives of the Black community in order to win the support of undecided or conservative Whites.

"The fact that I made one speech about the very real problems of the fathers not looking after our kids doesn't negate everything that I've been talking about during the course of this campaign, about people lacking health care about the problems of the unjust criminal justice system. I've given multiple speeches on these issues and I will continue to," he said.

Some pundits have observed that since the end of the primaries, Obama's campaign appears to be doing less reaching to African-Americans since he is no longer competing with Sen. Hillary Clinton.

In a current column headlined, "Obama Distances Himself From Blacks: Is There a Cost?" Dr. Ron Walters wrote, "It is common knowledge now that Barack Obama has to distance himself from Black radicals, from his church, and much of his community in order to make White voters comfortable enough with him to trust him and then give him their votes. And he will probably show at the NAACP Convention. But the troubling trend which finds him absent from other venues



Democratic Presidential Nominee Senator Barack Obama

that are the substance of Black life looks like he is taking the Black community for granted because of their thirst for his victory."

Even some members of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, a 200-member group also known as the "Black Press of America" that has given Obama two awards this year, note that he has been absent during both events.

"I am disappointed that Sen. Obama is not here. That is a big disappointment for me," said Seattle Medium Publisher Chris H. Bennett, a former NNPA president, as he spoke on a Black Press-Black Church unity panel at the organization's summer convention late last month. "We're the Black Press of America. If you don't come down here and talk to us and ask us for your support, don't take us for granted. Yes, we love you Obama. But, we'll love you more, Senator, if you bring some of your Obama drama down here and talk to us in our annual convention."

Bennett continued, "We don't need a representative. Does that tell us that when he gets in the White House that we've got to go through 10, 12 or 15 other people in order to deal with him? I would think not. We need to deal with what we need to deal with and not

be taken for granted."

Moments earlier, Obama representative Candice Tolliver had explained to the group that Obama did not attend because he was campaigning in Pennsylvania on his economic tour. She clarified that Obama still recognizes Black people as his base as well as the base of the Democratic Party.

"We are so tremendously thankful and appreciative for everything that you do for us on a daily and weekly basis," she said. "In large part, it is because of the stories that you tell, the editorials that you write, the encouragement that you send to us that keeps us going that keeps our voting base - our core base - informed and engaged in this election. And so, quite frankly we just can't do it without you."

Later that evening, Tolliver received the esteemed NNPA "Chairman's Award" on behalf of Obama and his wife, Michelle, from NNPA Chairman John B. Smith Sr. In March, NNPA honored Obama as its "News Maker of the Year" for the second time. That night, Tolliver said he was not able to attend because he was going through a series of Senate votes on Capital Hill.

Still, Walters and Howard University economist Bill Spriggs both contend there is need for

more targeted policy pertaining to anti-discrimination in the Black community among other issues that neither Obama nor Republican Sen. John McCain are debating.

In the NNPA interview with Obama, which took place the day before the organization's conference that started June 25, Obama said he recognizes the need for targeted policy to undo the long time affects of race discrimination in employment as well as the criminal justice system.

"We've got a special problem in terms of inner city youth who are deprived of a lot of opportunities," he said.

He said while all youth need early childhood education, better pay and training for teachers and his proposed \$4,000 a year tuition credit for college students, there are special needs in urban community which are often predominantly Black and Latino.

"We've got a special category of young people who are getting caught up in the drug trade. And we've got programs that deter them from engaging in crimes in the first place. But, also, we've got diversion programs so that they're not ending up as hardened felons, but instead are in courts, substance abuse treatment programs and if they do end up going to prisons, we've got to make sure that we've got the kinds of second chance programs afterward that can help them to get their lives back on track," he said.

Spriggs, also an adviser to the Obama campaign, said the reason that the unemployment rate for African-Americans is consistently twice that of Whites and the national average is because of race

discrimination.

Obama said he would remedy that as president through Justice Department enforcement as well as strategic judicial appointments.

"I think it's very simple," Obama said. "You've got to make sure that our civil rights laws are enforced. That's something that [the Bush] administration has not put an emphasis on. We want to make sure that the civil rights division is making sure that everybody is being treated fairly and equally. And we need judges on the bench who are sympathetic to instances of discrimination in the work place. I think the overwhelming majority of Americans support equal treatment. But, we've got to have an enforcement mechanism. That's something that I will make sure is in place when I'm president."

In a turnabout this week, Walters has written a subsequent column praising Obama for a speech he made before the National Conference of Mayors in which he noted that Obama announced plans for a White House Office of Urban Policy.

Black voters who in recent years have overwhelmingly supported Democratic candidates, have historically monitored what Democratic candidates do after they get in office. In relation to the masses of Black people, the outcomes have often been disappointing. That will not be the case with Obama, says Tolliver.

"Understand that while he may not physically be here with you. He is with you. His thoughts are with you," she told NNPA publishers. "You all share the same vision, the same commitment."

Desktop Computers
\$99



Laptops
\$299



nolaptop.com
2766 Belle Chasse @ LaPalco
(504) 392-4300

Easy Layaway Plan!

Sharpton is Cool Despite the Heat

By Herb Boyd

NEW YORK (NNPA) - For several days now, the New York Post has been on a relentless campaign to dig up dirt on the Rev. Al Sharpton. A shovel load was unearthed last weekend when the paper charged that many of the reverend's National Action Network (NAN) chapters have failed to register in states that require non-profits to file public records.

These allegations followed closely on the heels of those by Post writers who claimed that several large corporations donated thousands of dollars to Sharpton and NAN after being told they would be threatened by accusations of racist practices.

Sharpton shrugged off the charges about his chapters not being registered, seemingly more concerned about getting his lines

right June 30 during a taping of his host remarks for "Murder in Black and White," a new series from TV One directed by Keith Beauchamp that will examine cold cases from the civil rights era. "For our part," Sharpton said at the end of each of the segments that are slated to air sometime this fall and emphasizing the show's intent, "we will continue to apply heat to these cold cases until justice is served."

Meanwhile, the embattled minister appears unperturbed by the heat from the Post, which may be something he's grown accustomed to given the tension between him and the paper over the years.

Then there was the wave of new subpoenas that began back in December when several of his former and current employees



Rev. Al Sharpton leads a protest in New York

ple of when Reverend Sharpton and NAN spoke out critically against companies after they had contributed to NAN, such as corporations from the music industry whose offices were marched on for their promoting indecent music lyrics or criticizing Pepsi for its use of a rapper in an ad campaign whose lyrics were offensive,

were asked to surrender their financial records, particularly those in connection with NAN.

It was nothing but another "fishing expedition," Sharpton said, suggesting that it was evident the first round of subpoenas had revealed no wrongdoing. "I think that this is a clear, transparent political investigation, because if they started an investigation in December, why would they be subpoenaing people after December unless they are on a fishing expedition?" he told the press.

Sharpton was even more emphatic and expansive when dealing with the charge that a "shake-down" had been applied to major corporations to get them to fork over large sums of donations.

"As I have stated repeatedly, we will never be silenced or intimidated by political zealots in law enforcement or journalism who clearly operate on agendas rather than facts, and we welcome the IRS, New York Post or any other entity to look into our relationships with corporations because they will find corporations generally give to National Action Network events where they purchase tables and promote their corporations' particular brand or products, and some highlight what they are doing in

the areas of civil rights and economic fairness," Sharpton said in a statement. "NAN does not give complimentary entry to participants since we have event costs and corporations benefit from attending our events and outlining to our delegates from around the country what they do in the area of civil rights."

In none of the Post stories is there any indication from the corporations that they had been shaken down or threatened with demonstrations if they didn't go along with Sharpton or NAN's demands.

"In fact," Sharpton asserted, "Brenda Scott of Macy's joined our board at the suggestion of her superiors to help us continue to monitor our corporate agreements in the areas of personnel, diversity of board members and contracts to minority and women entrepreneurs."

"There has been no shake-down," Sharpton boomed recently at his weekly NAN rally, "but there has been a shake up."

An extensive statement from NAN noted further that "the Post, in its typical fashion, omitted facts that contradicted the article's shakedown premise. Most notably, Ms. [Isabel] Vincent [the reporter] did not include one exam-

or Comcast, who had a reporter who made an offensive statement. In addition, notwithstanding the fact that NBC has long sponsored NAN events and has been honored in the past, Reverend Sharpton led the charge against them to fire Don Imus."

And Imus may be in for another round of protests after his remarks about Adam "Pacman" Jones, the controversial defensive back of the Dallas Cowboys. Hearing that Jones had been arrested several times, Imus asked, "What color is he?" When told he was Black. "There you go. Now we know."

Sharpton reacted promptly, stating: "It has been reported to me that statements were made by Mr. Imus this morning and National Action Network has monitored his show since his return. I find the inference of his remark disturbing because it plays into stereotypes. Any use of stereotypes is always counterproductive. We will determine in the next day or so whether or not his remark warrants direct action on our part as we did in April of last year," Sharpton said.

Whether on the defensive or the offensive, or hosting a radio or television show, Sharpton cannot escape the heat.



STROKE TARGETS BY COLOR.

Know where you stand. The odds are African Americans are twice as likely to suffer a stroke as white Americans.

Beating the odds isn't about winning, it's about living.

You have the power to end stroke.

1-888-4-STROKE / StrokeAssociation.org



POWER TO END STROKE™
You are the Power

Photographed by Sean Kennedy Santos

The Racial Legacy of Jesse Helms

By: Cash Michaels

RALEIGH, N.C. (NNPA) - Up until and including his final burial this week, those on the conservative right, including President Bush, lauded the late former Sen. Jesse Helms as a "great American" and "patriot."

"Laura and I are deeply saddened by the passing of our good friend and a great American: Senator Jesse Helms," Bush said in a White House statement shortly after the former NC senator died last week. "Jesse Helms was a kind, decent, and humble man and a passionate defender of what he called 'the Miracle of America.' So it is fitting that this great patriot left us on the Fourth of July."

Noting the archconservative's strong Christian beliefs, the president concluded, "We pray he finds comfort in the arms of the loving God he strove to serve throughout his life."

But African-Americans, particularly here in North Carolina, remember a very different man who was wholly devoted, both long before he was elected to five terms in the U.S. Senate in 1972, and after Helms stepped down in January 2003, to denying other Americans of color, and particularly those of African descent, the very constitutional and civil rights he and most other White Americans historically enjoyed.

"In the spring of 1984 I had lunch with Senator Helms to ask that he support the Martin Luther King Holiday bill for North Carolina since he had fought so hard to try undo the federal MLK Legislation," Bruce Lightner, a Black Raleigh businessman and civic leader, told The Carolinian. "I thought it would be symbolically important for him to recognize that the tide of the nation was running contrary to his views. We talked for two hours, he was quite a gentleman and most pleasant, and said that he would 'think about it'."

"But what I remember most, almost like it was yesterday, was his spewing venom each night on WRAL-TV denouncing integration and racial progress as a communist plot, followed by a conspicuously prolonged rendition of 'Dixie'," Lightner continued.

"Today WRAL is a beacon of light of insightful journalism. I suppose reason and time just passed the senator by. May he rest in peace."

Rev. William Barber, presi-



Former US Senator, Jesse Helms (R-NC) Caption caption

dent of the NC NAACP, said in a statement Friday, "We in the civil rights community had deep and stark differences with Senator Jesse Helms' public policy positions. Barber concluded, "We pray for his family and those he leaves behind in bereavement."

Though he is lauded as being the right-wing conservative movement's greatest champion during the '70s, '80s and '90s, Helms is also known for being an unapologetic enemy to those who fought for equal rights under the very American flag he held dear.

The first line of the NY Daily News' obituary Saturday read, "Senator No is no more."

The News noted that the American Almanac of Politics once said of Helms,

"No American politician is more controversial, beloved in some quarters and hated in others, than Jesse Helms."

To Jesse Helms, if only civil rights "agitators" like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. left Southern segregation alone in the 1960's, Whites would have eventually decided on their own when to break down racial barriers, if ever.

"There is a difference between opportunity and force," he once said as an editorialist on WRAL-TV in Raleigh during the 60's. "There is a difference between

cooperation and compulsion. Much of America is gaining the impression that 'civil rights' and legal wrongs have become synonymous. And since there can be no action without a reaction, America is beginning to react."

And as to why "Negroes" of the time were not good enough to be integrated with Whites, Helms said, "No intelligent Negro citizen should be insulted by a reference to this very plain fact of life. It is time to face honestly and sincerely the purely scientific statistical evidence of natural racial distinction in group intellect. ... There is no bigotry either implicit or intended in such a realistic confrontation with the facts of life. ... Those who would undertake to solve the problem by merely spending more money, and by massive forced integration, may be doing the greatest injustice of all to the Negro."

Almost 40 years later, a mellower, older former Sen. Jesse Helms, then 83, softened his fiery racial rhetoric.

"I did not advocate segregation, and I did not advocate aggravation," Helms wrote in his autobiography *Here's Where I Stand*.

"I thought it was wrong for people who did not know, and who did not care, about the relationships between neighbors and

friends to force their ideas about how communities should work on the people who had built those communities in the first place. I believed right would prevail as people followed their own consciences."

That measured, considerate tone is clearly not what Helms used back in the sixties when he railed against Dr. "Martin Luther Coon" and "Communist-led" civil rights movement.

Though the conservative senator's office was well known for fair and efficient constituent service, and in latter years, Helms worked diligently with rock musician Bono to combat AIDS in Africa, his political history was too overwhelming to dismiss.

"The old Jesse Helms is the real one," Irving Joyner, law professor at North Carolina Central University in Durham told The Carolinian five years ago. "He's trying to reorient history today; soften the rhetoric now that he's in his last years. But he can't do it. There's too much of a record there."

Others are insulted that Helms would still patronize African-Americans by suggesting they should have waited for their freedom until Whites were ready to give it to them.

"If only we'd just shut up and waited a few more decades," wrote Black columnist Allen Johnson in the Greensboro News and Record in 2002. "It's as if Helms expected the civil rights movement to happen by osmosis, some grand, rapturous mass epiphany where goodness fills everyone's hearts and we all decide, suddenly, to clasp hands and get along."

Even a cursory look at Sen. Helms' record on race - how he voted against every civil rights measure during his 29 years in the US Senate, how he stood virtually alone in trying to block the federal holiday honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. - shows a man not interested in paving a way for integration, but doing all he could to preserve the archaic principles of a segregationist way of life he felt served the South well.

A staunch adversary of liberals, Helms rhetorically renamed the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "the University of Negroes and Communists" during his fiery WRAL-TV editorials of the 1960s.

When he made an appearance on CNN's Larry King Live in Sept. 1995, a caller praised him "for ev-

erything you've done to help keep down the niggers."

Helms looked in the camera and replied, "Well thank you, I think."

It was Nov., 1984 during his reelection victory speech after defeating Democratic Gov. Jim Hunt in a brutal U.S. Senate race, that Jesse Helms literally and unexpectedly held out his hand, and said "Now let me say a word to the Black citizens of our state. If I had said this during the frenzy of the campaign, it would have been dismissed, and understandably so, as a political gesture," a tape of Helms' remarks to the hushed room reveals.

"Now that this election has apparently been decided, I want the Black citizens of North Carolina to know, that I want, and I intend, to work with and for all the people, including our responsible Black citizens, who have the most to gain from a strong and flourishing free enterprise system."

The predominately White Republican crowd cheered.

But six years later, Helms all but forgot his pledge, when he ran the infamous 1990 "a minority took your job" White hands anti-affirmative action ad which fired up White voters, including Democrats, against his Black opponent, former Charlotte Mayor Harvey Gantt.

Helms won that 1990 U.S. Senate race, and African-Americans knew that the man who used the term "nigras" during his 60s television editorials, and called Dr. King a "communist", would never change.

"African-American people basically see Mr. Helms as being bigoted, and from a school of thinking and a time that has long gone by," Rev. E. Randel Osburn, vice president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, told The News&Observer then.

"He is an embarrassment to the American body politic."

Upon Helms' announcement in 2001 that he would not run for reelection, David Broder, respected columnist for the Washington Post, wrote a piece titled "Jesse Helms, White Racist."

"What is unique about Helms - and from my viewpoint, unforgivable - is his willingness to pick at the scab of the great wound of American history, the legacy of slavery and segregation, and to inflame racial resentment against African Americans," Broder wrote then.

Music, Food, Dance and Entertainment

Data News Weekly's

Truly the People's Paper!

42nd Anniversary Celebration



Kermit Ruffins



Michael Ward



Sharon Martin

Kermit Ruffins, Michael Ward,
Sharon Martin, Ed Perkins & BRW

Thursday, July 24, 2008
The Fine Arts Center
1733 Constantinople Street
8:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.

Tickets \$35, available at Java Copy Zone -
616 Baronne St., New Orleans, LA 70119

Pellerin's Reception Hall
3717 Ulloa St., New Orleans, LA 70119

or call (504) 821-7421 for more information

Proceeds to benefit the
JMJ Continuing Education Fund