

Lighting The Road To The Future

New Orleans

Data

News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

Page 8
DataZone

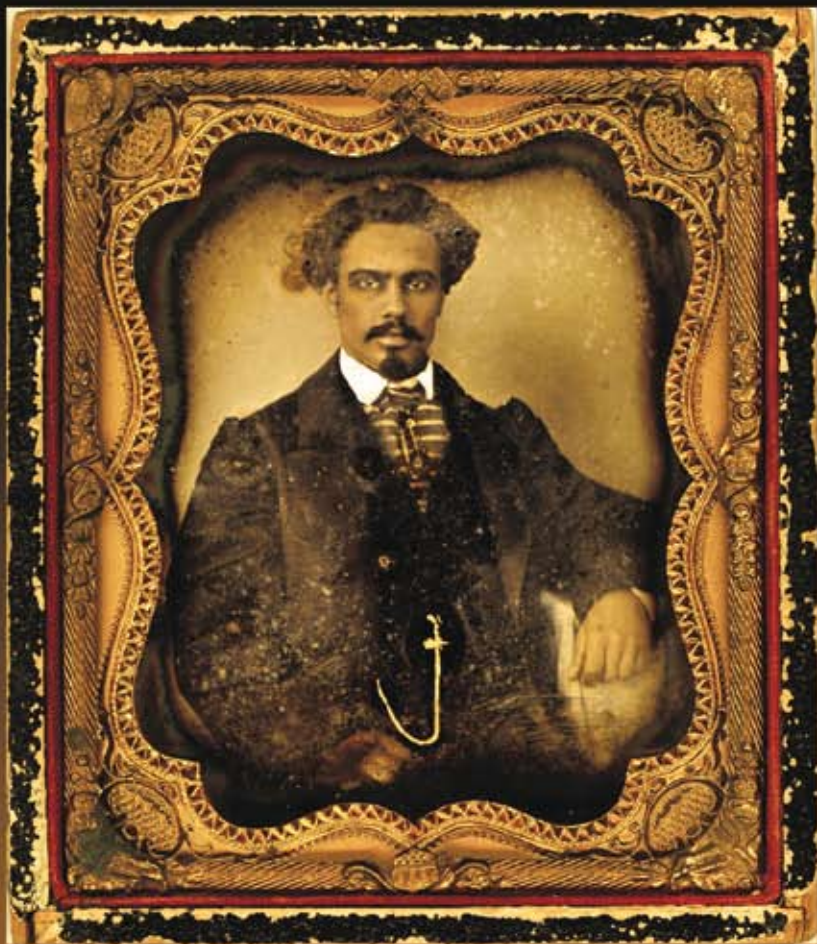
Etta James
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Comment
About Beyonce

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Faubourg Tremé

The Story of Black New Orleans



The Soul of New Orleans

Page 2



Newsmaker

Orleans Parish Criminal
Sheriff Announces STD
Screening Program

Page 4

Local News

NORD's Homework
Assistance Helps Students



Page 6



Anonymous Free Person of Color, circa 1860. Photo courtesy: Gilbert Estrada



Paul, Henry and Peter Broyard with two laborers outside Treme building, approximately late 1880/early 1890. Photo Courtesy: Dionne Butler

Faubourg Treme

The Story of Black New Orleans

by Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief

New Orleans: A Cultural Jewel

New Orleans is a city with a rich and colorful history where the dissonant sounds of brass bands blare through neighborhoods and the savory scent of red beans spiced just right is forever present. New Orleanians also savor the sweet confection of a palate-pleasing praline and their natural, rhythmic speech. New Orleans is a gumbo of people that have contributed to the unique way of life that makes the city a living museum. New Orleans is a place where antiquity meets modernization; it is a marriage of traditions of a storied city steeped in history.

An important part of that history is Treme, which is the oldest African-American neighborhood in America. After Hurricane Katrina and the displacement of many of its inhabitants, Treme like many other areas of the Crescent City is experiencing a fight for its cultural life. As the lifeline to a rich and vibrant place may be strangled by newly arrived people to this close knit community, and where the spirit from its past and present: Sidney Bechet, Jelly Roll Morton to Trombone Shorty and many others may be in jeopardy as the city faces what many are calling a second reconstruction. And many are asking what will happen to these traditions that make New Orleans such a special place?



Lolis Eric Elie

Treme.....The Story of Black New Orleans

Times-Picayune columnist and Treme resident Lolis Eric Elie along with Dawn Logsdon, daughter of noted historian the late Joseph Logsdon, and Lucie Faulknor along with co-executive producers Stanley Nelson and renowned trumpeter Wynton Marsalis have produced a gripping documentary about the history of this cultural jewel of a community nestled outside of the French Quarter entitled Faubourg Treme: The Untold Story of Black New Orleans which is airing on public television throughout the month of February. For Elie this is a labor of love, a love of a people, a city and a neighborhood. According to Elie, the film has an increased importance after Hurricane Katrina.

Continued next page.

INSIDE DATA

Cover Story	2	In The Spirit	11
Newsmaker	4	@Issue	12
Data Zone	8	National News	14
State & Local.	6		

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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.

Cover Story, Continued from previous page.



Images from the documentary Treme

"We have lost a lot as a result of the federal levees failing and the city being flooded. It helps us to understand what has been lost; it is also to remind us that the process of destruction of the history of the architecture, and the legacy began

long before Hurricane Katrina, so this film is an attempt to revitalize interest in our city," said Elie. He also said that they wanted to do a film that would not only put the storm's experience in a historical context, but also present a portrait of the city that would celebrate New Orleans.

Elie said it has been an uphill climb, but the film has been receiving rave reviews and critical acclaim including several awards.

"In terms of an independent film, the first hurdle is to get accepted in major film festivals. So, we had our debut at Tribeca, which is one of the most important film festivals in the world that was confirmation of the importance of our film." Continuing Elie said, "In addition to winning awards at the San Francisco International Film Festival and the Martha's Vineyard Black Film Festival, we realized that not only were we



Dawn Logsdon

telling an important story, but we were telling it well. We were reaching people both intellectually and emotionally."

Elie narrates and stars in the film serving as a tour guide of sorts taking the viewer on a historical journey from the beginnings to present day Treme. In the film he interviews notable residents who speak about important events that have occurred in the Treme community. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Elie said he feels a lot of what's going on mirrors what happened in the 19th century.

"I feel like the city is undergoing a reconstruction, but this is the second reconstruction we are going through." "When you look at the issues you see a lot of the same things, and what we argue in the film is that the failure to address these issues appropriately after the Civil War is linked directly to people being stuck in the Superdome unable to help themselves." "And our hope is that the film becomes part of the discussion about how we can move forward in such a way as to include all New Orleanians in the recovery and rebuilding of our city."

Elie also said that in addition to serving as a historical piece, the film is a statement about the country and its promise of liberty, justice and freedom to all Americans.

"We talk about in the film the promise that America had at that point [decided] to really bring democracy into practice for the first time and the country failed. We lost our heart, and after Hurricane Katrina in re-

building New Orleans, we have a similar opportunity to remake schools, remake housing and voting rights and all those issues that were crucial in the 1860s and 1870s. Our film attempts to make that comparison and the film is an appeal to our state and our nation not to make the same mistakes again."

Faubourg Treme: The Story of Black New Orleans addresses how during Reconstruction New Orleans was the epicenter for the Civil Rights Movement of that period. Of the 25,000 persons of color in New Orleans, nearly half were freedmen during slavery



Lucie Faulknor

in the 1800s. The ravages of slavery tore a nation apart during those times, but New Orleans was the city that was a center for commerce that rivaled New York. Freedmen prospered in the city of New Orleans. The first African-American owned daily newspaper the, New Orleans Tribune, was launched as the organ that was used to promote the idea of equal rights for persons of color. It was also during this time that a delegation went to the nation's Capitol where they met with President Abraham Lincoln to petition for black voting rights.

See Cover Story, Continued on page 4.

Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff's Office Launches New Comprehensive STD Screening and Treatment Program

The Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff's Office and the Louisiana Office of Public Health announced on Feb. 6 a comprehensive sexually transmitted disease (STD) and HIV screening and treatment program for all incoming and current inmates. This cooperative project is intended to help at-risk individuals learn more about their health and create a plan for treatment while they are in the custody of the OPCSO and as they return to the community.

"By screening and treating these individuals as they enter our system, we are making them aware of health conditions they may have never known they had," said Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff Marlin Gusman. "More importantly, we are offering them the opportunity to begin health treatment and manage their health situation even after they are released from our custody. With the help of the OPH, we are



Sheriff Marlin Gusman

addressing a health need for our inmates and working to prevent the spread of STDs in the larger community."

With this current initiative, the OPCSO's Medical Department has created a system to provide access to STD testing for all OPCSO inmates. The program will provide comprehensive test-

ing and treatment for gonorrhea, chlamydia, syphilis and HIV soon after incarceration. Additionally, it will provide pre- and post-test education and counseling through the OPCSO's partnership with the OPH.

"Access to community resources after an individual's release from the custody of the OPCSO is a significant component of this program," said Sharon Howard, deputy assistant secretary for the Louisiana Office of Public Health. "Post-release treatment opportunities allow for uninterrupted care, further testing of contacts, and establishment of long-term medical care. Considering the transient nature of many individuals after their release from jail, access to long-term health treatment at Delgado Personal Health Clinic is a huge step in the right direction. This program has incredible potential to improve the lives of these individuals, their partners, and the communities within which they live."

Louisiana and Orleans Parish are high risk areas for the transmission of STDs. According to the Disease Control and Prevention's 2007 STD Surveillance Report, Louisiana ranks:

- First for primary and secondary syphilis.
- Second for gonorrhea cases.
- Seventh for chlamydia cases.

Additionally, Orleans Parish ranked 23rd among all U.S. counties/parishes for primary

and secondary syphilis, as well as 49th for gonorrhea cases.

The goal of this program is to assist citizens in the custody of the OPCSO and the community as a whole by preventing transmission and providing treatment and ongoing education. All inmates, current and new, will be given the option to take part in this program.

The following national, state and local agencies have joined with the OPCSO and the OPH in its creation and implementation.

The New Orleans Health Department and the OPH will provide for full-time staffing and ongoing laboratory support to assist the OPCSO medical staff. Additionally, the OPH will provide follow-up for persons who test positive for an STD and are released prior to receiving their test results.

The Delgado Personal Health Clinic will serve as a referral location for patients who are released prior to receiving their test results. Patients will be able to receive test results and treatment at this location. The clinic is a collaborative effort of LSU School of Medicine, The Office of Public Health and the New Orleans Health Department.

The LSU HIV Outpatient (HOP) Clinic is an established ambulatory care department providing care and treatment of HIV-infected persons, support and coordination for the affected

significant others, disease prevention, research and health promotion.

The Office of Health Policy and AIDS Funding ensures that the incarcerated population has continuous access to HIV care and treatment upon release by linking those released from custody to free services.

The New Orleans Regional AIDS Planning Council has provided collaborative support for the group planning. Its mission as the public planning body for Ryan White Part A funds in the New Orleans area is to develop and maintain a comprehensive system of care for people living with HIV in the metropolitan area that is accessible, responsive, culturally sensitive and of the highest quality to ensure that all people living with HIV and AIDS live with dignity.

The Tulane University School of Public Health has provided HIV counseling and testing, project planning, and proposal development and is committed to advancing public health in the U.S. and globally through learning, research, and practice.

Family Advocacy, Care and Education Services (FACES) of Children's Hospital provides HIV/AIDS social services in the greater New Orleans area. FACES' assists the program by developing services that are comprehensive, culturally competent and family-centered.

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Cover Story, Continued from page 3.

What Does It Mean to be in New Orleans?

Life in New Orleans is a very unique experience, where the sonorous sounds of music makes one have an extra bounce in their step, or their life palate is a plate filled with joy and wonder. After Katrina with many buildings in ruins and people scattered about the country what will happen to the culture and traditions of the city? Elie said he feels that a cultural war is taking place.

"In the city right now there is a culture war and what it means to be a true New Orleanian, between eating a Big Mac and a po-boy, between listening to whatever they are playing on the radio, and listening to our music," said Elie. "While I understand we have to be part of the modern world and embrace these changes, we can't let these changes suffocate us."

Addressing the recent changes in the cultural landscape where people who have moved into the community who do not understand or appreciate the culture or its importance he said, "We have to be careful because the city is evolving. A lot of people move to Treme because they like the culture of the community. The problem is people who don't. It is people who move here who want the people to behave



See Cover Story, Continued on page 6.



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Data News Editor Chosen for Fellowship at Harvard



Data News Weekly Editor-in-Chief Edwin Buggage

Data News Weekly Editor-in-Chief Edwin Buggage recently attended a fellowship where he participated in a boot-camp with fellow journalists from across the country. The fellowship was possible thanks to a partnership between the Education Writers Association, the Nieman Foundation for Journalism and the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University. Buggage was one of 22 journalists chosen to participate in seminars and workshops that took place at the Walter Lippmann House at Harvard University.

Gentilly Library Demolished to Make Way for New Facility

Sixty years after the opening of the Norman Mayer Library, known to most people as the "Gentilly Branch," a new chapter of the library's history is being told. Originally opened in 1949, the 14,000 squarefoot facility was completely destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. The demolition of the library has begun, signifying a positive step forward in developing a new library for the community. A temporary facility will be located adjacent to the old facility with future plans in development for the new and improved Norman Mayer Library.



Remnants of the Gentilly Library. Photo Credit: www.cityofno.com

NORD's Homework Assistance Program Helps Area Students

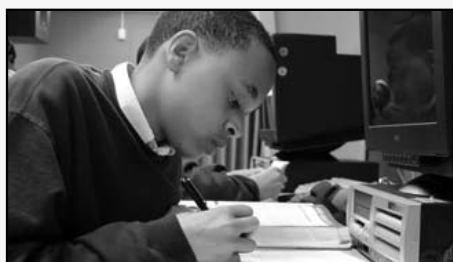


Photo Credit: www.cityofno.com

Children gathered after school at the St. Bernard Center to dive into their school work, thanks to the NORD After School Assistance Program, which assists students in areas that may have become a challenge for them at some point during the school term.

With over 25 participants, the program supports and encourages each child academically by providing them with one-on-one tutoring. In addition to academic services, the program provides mentoring for the youth on everyday obstacles that may be a distraction during their school day. NORD is dedicated to providing this service to students as well as their parents as a tool to aid in the enrichment of a positive educational experience through our City's recreational resources.



Photo Credit: www.cityofno.com

Liberty Bank and Trust Company announces merger with United Bank and Trust Company

Liberty Bank, a Louisiana based commercial bank, announced the acquisition of United Bank and Trust Company adding another viable institution to its expanding portfolio of financial institutions. The acquisition, which has been approved by United's shareholders but must gain regulatory consent, will increase Liberty's locations to 17 branches in five states, including Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Kansas, and Texas.

Liberty Bank President Alden J. McDonald, Jr. says the acquisition makes sense and increases Liberty's ability to provide better services to its customers. "Anything that makes banking easy and more convenient for our customers is very important to us. By obtaining United Bank's portfolio, we increase our capacity to compete with larger institutions", said McDonald. According to United Bank's CEO Howard Brooks, "this is a win - win situation for all concerned. We are now part of a much larger financial network and can provide more and better services to our base customers."

Liberty Bank was founded in 1972 with assets of \$2 million. Alden J. McDonald, Jr. has lead the bank since its inception and has grown Liberty to its current holdings of \$374 million, which positions Liberty as the third largest African-American owned financial institution in America. United Bank was founded in 1990. Their current holdings are \$25.5 million. With the acquisition, Liberty will inherit United's locations on Canal Street in New Orleans, branches in Algiers and Elmwood, and a branch in Opelousas, LA.

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Cover Story, Continued from page 4.

as if they lived on St. Charles Avenue. And if those people are able to remake Faubourg Tremé and unmake our culture, the neighborhood would be doomed."

He talked specifically, about the celebration of the life of tuba player Kerwin James that took place in Tremé where a barrage of 20 police cars came to break up an impromptu parade, leading to the arrests of drummer Derrick Tabb, and trombonist Glen David Andrews. Since that time, an outcry from the community in support of these traditions have been loud and forceful, something Elie believes is a positive thing.

"Fortunately, the citizens have demanded that the police show some sense and sensitivity. I think this shows that for those who live

[here], we appreciate those cultural expressions and will not let the city destroy them," said Elie.

Cultural Crossroads....Who are we moving forward?

In post-Katrina New Orleans, the word progress has been used in a mantra-like way and has taken on many different definitions, but the question becomes what is progress by New Orleans standards since the city does not always easily fit into the mold that is the rest of the country. Lolis Eric Elie believes that progress should be judged by those who it affects, not those from outside of the community. "Most of the time when people talk about progress, they talk about being less like ourselves and more like the rest of the country. I don't think we have

to do that," he said.

As the people of the city continue to fight to get back home and those who are here struggle to survive and keep the culture, heritage and spirit alive; Elie said that maintaining and preserving the culture of the city is not a one size fits all project.

"We all need to figure out how we need to preserve our culture, and there is not one answer. It is not like everyone should be doing the same thing," said Elie. "We all need to figure what it is about this culture—whether it's the food, the music, the way we talk to each other, the way we dance, the way we build our homes. Whatever is important to you should be part of preserving the culture so that it can live on."

Mayor Nagin Works to Expedite Funding to Restore Additional Enhanced Services to Vieux Carre



Mayor Nagin and City Council officials announce plans for Vieux Carre services. www.cityofno.com

Immediately following a Feb. 4 press conference with members of the New Orleans City Council and Sidney Torres, president of SDT Waste and Disposal, Mayor C. Ray Nagin spoke with the Chair of the Economic Development Fund Committee to discuss expediting the approval of \$2.5 million in funding to pay for the remaining two (2) enhanced services in the Vieux Carre. The Chair expressed support for the funding and will work diligently to move the process forward quickly.

According to Mayor Nagin, the funding must be approved by the EDF Committee, then by the City Council. The money will pay for mechanical street sweeping and street flushing in the Vieux Carre. The Mayor estimated it would take two weeks to complete this process, but he is encouraging all entities to expedite their process to move forward.

120 Dryades YMCA Teens Take Over State Capitol

One hundred twenty teens from Orleans and St. James Parish who participated in the Dryades YMCA Youth & Government Program traveled to Baton Rouge to meet hundreds of teens from around Louisiana and take on the roles of senators and representatives in a mock legislative conference Feb. 12 – 14, 2009.

The Youth Legislature program is an opportunity for students to learn the legislative process and have their voices heard. In their clubs, students wrote a piece of legislation they felt strongly about, and they presented that legislation during the conference. They even debated the bill in an attempt to make it law.

During the program, students also participated in mock elections for Governor, Lt. Governor and other state offices. Visit the Dryades YMCA's web-site at www.dryadesymca.com and www.lahiy.org to learn more about this and other youth and teen programs.

CHILDREN SHOULD NOT SMOKE

Maturity is Needed to Make an Informed Choice

We all agree that children should not smoke. Until a person has the maturity to understand and appreciate the consequences of smoking, they should be discouraged on all fronts. Parents, teachers, guardians and mentors should talk to young people about not smoking. Retail stores must be diligent in carding consumers to ensure that no one under the legal age purchases cigarettes. These and many other preventive measures – some funded by the tobacco industry – are being aggressively practiced.

Youth Prevention Measures Are Working

The good news is that these measures are working. According to the 2008 Monitoring the Future study conducted by the National Institute of Drug Abuse and the University of Michigan, the teen smoking rates are "at or near record lows."ⁱ The study also reported that the smoking rate for 12th graders is at its lowest rate since the study started tracking smoking behavior 33 years ago.

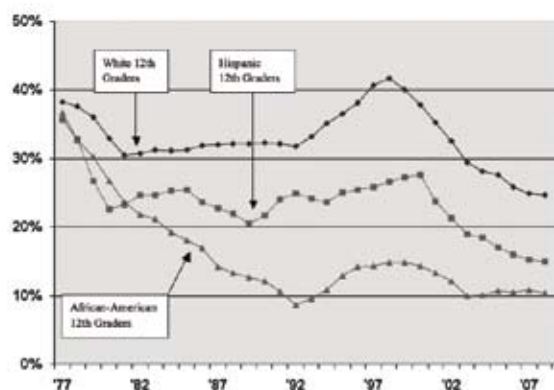
The results in the black community are the most encouraging. The Monitoring the Future study found that smoking rates among African American youth are dramatically lower than that of other race groups.

Specifically, the study of 12th graders showed the rate of white students who reported using cigarettes within the prior 30 days of the survey is more than twice the rate for

African American students; and that the rate for Hispanics is nearly one and one-half times that for African American students.ⁱⁱ

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Adults who understand the risks of smoking should continue to have the right to choose to smoke and to smoke the brand of cigarettes that they prefer.

To help preserve and protect those rights, visit www.mentholchoice.com and learn more.

ⁱ Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., Bachman, J. G., & Schulenberg, J. E. (December 11, 2008). "More good news on teen smoking: Rates at or near record lows." University of Michigan News Service: Ann Arbor, MI, <http://www.drugabuse.gov/Newsroom/08/MTF2008Tobacco.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., Bachman, J. G., & Schulenberg, J. E. (December 11, 2008). "Trends in 30-Day Prevalence of Use of Cigarettes by Subgroups in Grade 12." University of Michigan News Service: Ann Arbor, MI, <http://monitoringthefuture.org/data/08data/pr08cig8.pdf>

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Etta James Sings New Song About Beyonce Amid Public Backlash

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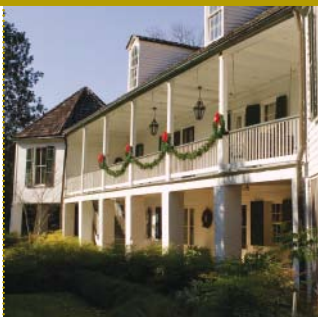
Tour stately plantations and hear about the slaves' craftsmanship, ingenuity, family life, and resistance. Learn about Homer Plessy's refusal to move from the "whites-only" section of a Louisiana rail car, which led to the landmark Supreme Court case of Plessy v. Ferguson. And remember the 1953 Baton Rouge bus boycott, an important model for the historic Montgomery boycott three years later.

DISCOVER THE PERSONALITIES THAT LED THE WAY

Share the story of Madam C. J. Walker, who rose from poverty to become America's first self-made female millionaire. Find out about P. B.S. Pinchback, who became America's first black governor during Reconstruction. Visit Grambling State University, best known for the long career of head football coach Eddie Robinson, one of the most respected and beloved coaches in American history. Then walk the streets where jazz legends were born and explore the roots of this amazing musical form.

THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING!

There is so much more to see and do and explore. We invite you to travel Louisiana's African American Heritage Trail—both on the ground and online. Visit LouisianaTravel.com/AfricanAmericanHeritageTrail or call 1-800-47-GUMBO for your free Louisiana Tour Guide.



Melrose Plantation, built, owned, and operated by a freed slave



Madam C. J. Walker, America's first self-made female millionaire



P. B.S. Pinchback, the nation's first African American governor



The late Eddie Robinson, longtime head football coach at Grambling State University



Statue of jazz pioneer Louis Armstrong in his hometown of New Orleans

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Etta James and Beyonce

Special to the NNPA from the St. Louis American

(NNPA) - Soon after her comments about Beyonce and President Obama set the internet ablaze and made their way to mainstream entertainment news last week, Etta James has come forward to say it was all just a joke.

An audio tape of James slamming Beyonce for singing her signature song at the first Inaugural Ball, and ridiculing Barack Obama for allowing it to happen, were not meant to be taken seriously, according to James.

"I'm a comedian besides a singer," she explained in a telephone interview with California's Press Enterprise from her home on Thursday morning. "I wasn't doing it to be hateful."

From "The View" to "Access Hollywood" to CNN, the sound of James disowning the president and threatening to "whip Beyonce's a**" blanketed television news outlets after TMZ.com first posted the comments from James' Jan. 28 show at Seattle's Paramount Theatre.

Before performing the song "At Last," which has been Etta's signature song since it became a hit for her in 1961, she told the crowd: "You guys know your president, right? You know the one with the big ears?" began her rant. "Wait a minute, he ain't my president. He might be yours; he ain't my president. But I tell you that woman he had singing for him, singing my song — she's going to get her a** whipped...The great Beyoncé," James went on. "Like I said, she ain't mine. ... I can't stand Beyoncé. She has no business up there, singing up there on a big ol' president day, gonna be singing my song that I've been singing forever."

James made similar anti-Beyonce remarks during a gig in Coquitlam, British Columbia on Jan. 31. She told the Press Enterprise that her comments were intended to be taken as, "She's up here singing my song, now what am I gonna do?"

The negative comments seemed to have come out of nowhere as James had nothing but admiration for Beyonce a year ago when it was first reported that she would play her in the film "Cadillac Records."

Information from eurweb.com contributed to this report.

Open Mic Night at Sweet Lorraine's Features Up and Coming Artists



Dionne Character
Data News Weekly Contributor

Known as one of America's Best Jazz Clubs according to "USA Today", at Sweet Lorraine's on Tuesday nights located at 1931 Saint Claude Ave., you may run into director Spike Lee, actor Wendall Pierce and a host of artists both local and abroad who frequent the club for some good ole' Creole cuisine, jazz and poetry.

Also on Tuesday night, which is Open Mic Night, you can hear some of

the best poets and up and coming talent who are showcased weekly. The show is hosted by world-renowned poet and author, Shelton "Shake" Alexander, last seen in Spike Lee's "When The Levees Broke."

Up and coming artist Caren Green was recently featured at Open Mic Night with her band and had everyone dancing to her soulful renditions of "Golden" by Jill Scott and "A Wonderful World" by New Orleans own Louis Armstrong.

A native of New Orleans, Caren is a combination of Jill Scott and Chaka Khan. She is soft spoken when she speaks, but when you hear her sing, her voice is as powerful as the whistle on the Natchez Steamboat traveling down the Mississippi.

Caren is a former member of the Gospel Soul Children who has a style of her own. She has intertwined Neo-Soul with her rooted Gospel and musical background. She has also studied piano and violin, but

decided to focus more on singing. Her mentor, singer/actress Lady "BJ" Crosby, who made it from New Orleans all the way to Broadway, saw a hidden talent and helped refine her natural gifts.

Caren Green will showcase her voice to the world with her debut album entitled, "Royal Misfit" to be released in April of 2009. Check out Caren Green at carengrn@myspace.com.

If you are in the mood for some



Caren Green

good ole' Creole cuisine, culture, and poetry come on down to Sweet Lorraine's Jazz Club on any Tuesday night to get your "swagger."

The show begins at 9:30 p.m. Admission is \$5.00.

Fighting for Democracy: Who is the 'We' in 'We the People'?

*Special exhibit at The National WWII
Museum explores the fight for freedom
on the battlefield and the Home Front*

The National World War II Museum in New Orleans tells the story of the war that changed the world using the personal accounts of men and women from the battlefield to the Home Front. As part of that mission, the Museum is presenting a traveling exhibit that highlights the stories of some Americans that are not often told. The exhibit Fighting for Democracy: Who is the 'We' in 'We the People?', presented in New Orleans by Chevron, is on display through May 17, 2009.

Fighting for Democracy features the stories of seven brave young men and women who went abroad to fight for freedom despite the inequalities they faced at home. Among them are a Mexican-American who was inspired by suffering he saw abroad to fight for his people at home, a Jewish immigrant who waded ashore after D-Day as a nurse, a Tuskegee Airmen who would give up his wings to stand up for his rights, a Japanese-American who left his family behind in an internment camp to fight for his country, a Filipino who would spend the rest of his life teaching tolerance to prevent another great war, a Chinese-American whose dream of flying would come true in the Women Airforce Service Pilots and a Navajo code talker who used his native culture to save lives.

Some would give the ultimate sacrifice for their country while others would return to continue the fight for the rights of their people. Through these compelling stories, today's students can better understand the conditions facing diverse Americans be-

Democracy, Continued on page 10.

What's a mind
if it doesn't think?
What's a heart
if it doesn't feel?
What's a voice
if it doesn't speak?
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celebrating
black history

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“Your actions speak louder than your words”



Dr. Aaron E. Harold
Data Columnist

Hi, this is Dr. Aaron Harold, pastor of New Millennium Breakthrough Ministries. Many of us will be celebrating Valentine’s Day all across the nation. Some of us are going to go to the extreme to express our feelings toward the one or ones that we say we love. In most cases, it’s easy to say I love you with your mouth because it really doesn’t take too much to tell people verbal-

ly that you love them. When you truly love a spouse, your child or children, friends, family members, or couples who have been dating for a period of time, true love means more than words can say.

True love is giving of oneself without looking for something in return. It means loving someone with your heart, your mind, and with all of the strength that is inside of you. Some people give, but they give without the presence of love in their hearts. However, you cannot love without giving. Love shows in so many ways, because those who love always see it.

Love in the spiritual sense, or in the eyes of the Creator, is greater than any kind of love. In Luke Chapter 10 verses 30-37, Jesus is teaching in a parable. He is trying to show a lawyer who was present along with his disciples the true meaning of love toward your neighbor. He talks about a certain man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho who was robbed of his clothes by thieves. They also wounded him severely leaving him almost dead.

There were others who saw this man who desperately needed help because he was dying in the road. The men looked at the man and the condition he was in, but they kept going. On the other hand, a Samaritan who was not like the other two men took the time out to go to the extreme to help this man. This is what love truly is. When we take the time to show those persons who are closest to our hearts and even those who are neighbor’s true love, God will smile upon these actions. My brothers and sisters God is love. He demonstrated his love toward us by giving of himself. God told us that in John 3-16, “For God so love the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever should believe in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.”

God also shows his love through others such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who fought for freedom and civil rights, Mother Teresa who labored to help the poor for many years. When you were a child your mother stayed up through the night to take care of you. This represents a mother’s

unconditional love for her child. God’s love speaks in many voices and those who love him will always hear it. Look at what David says in the 23rd Psalm; “The Lord is my Shepherd and I shall not want.” This means that God’s love will take care of you and me to the point that we don’t have to worry about tomorrow’s problems.

Love is also not being afraid to love, even when you have been hurt in relationships in the past or present. God loves you and me unconditionally, which means even when we have made huge mistakes in our lives, he still will forgive us. Therefore, if God still can love us no matter what, we need to act on our love toward each other by not just saying I love you, because “I love you means more than words can say.” Let’s make everyday a Happy Valentine’s Day and may God Bless You.

Please feel free to contact me @ 504-813-5767 for your comments.



Happy Valentines Day From Data News Weekly

MARDI GRAS PARADE KREWES 2009 Parade Schedule

DAY	DATE	PARADE	PLACE	TIME
Saturday	Feb 7	Krewe du Vieux	French Quarter	7:00 pm
Sunday	Feb 8	Lil Rascals	Metairie	12:00 pm
Friday	Feb 13	Oshun	Uptown	6:00 pm
		Cleopatra	Westbank	6:30 pm
		Excalibur	Metairie	7:00 pm
		Gladiators	St. Bernard	7:00 pm
		Pygmalion	Uptown	7:00 pm
		Eve	Mandeville	7:00 pm
		Atlas	Metairie	7:30 pm
Saturday	Feb 14	Choctaw	West Bank	11:00 am
		Adonis	West Bank	11:45 am
		Gladiators	St. Bernard	1:00 pm
		Pontchartrain	Uptown	2:00 pm
		Olympia	Covington	6:00 pm
		Sparta	Uptown	6:00 pm
		Caesar	Metairie	6:00 pm
		Pegasus	Uptown	6:45 pm
		Alla	West Bank	12:00 pm
		Carrollton	Uptown	12:00 pm
Sunday	Feb 15	Dionysus	Slidell	1:00 pm
		Nemesis	Chalmette	1:00 pm
		Rhea	Metairie	1:00 pm
		King Arthur	Uptown	1:15 pm
		Barkus	French Quarter	2:00 pm
		Centurions	Metairie	5:30 pm
		Ancient Druids	Uptown	6:30 pm
		Thor	Metairie	7:00 pm

DAY	DATE	PARADE	PLACE	TIME
Thursday	Feb 19	Babylon	Uptown	5:45 pm
		Muses	Uptown	6:15 pm
		Chaos	Uptown	6:30 pm
Friday	Feb 20	Hermes	Uptown	6:00 pm
		Krewe d’Etat	Uptown	6:00 pm
		Selene	Slidell	6:30 pm
		Orpheus	Mandeville	7:00 pm
		Morpheus	Uptown	7:00 pm
Saturday	Feb 21	NOMTOC	Westbank	10:45 am
		Iris	Uptown	11:00 am
		Tucks	Uptown	12:00 pm
		Endymion	Mid-City	4:15 pm
		Isis	Metairie	6:30 pm
Sunday	Feb 22	Okeanos	Uptown	11:00 am
		Thoth	Uptown	12:00 pm
		Mid City	Uptown	11:45am
		Bacchus	Uptown	5:15 pm
		Napoleon	Uptown	5:30 pm
Monday	Feb 23	Proteus	Uptown	5:15 pm
		Orpheus	Uptown	6:00 pm
		Zeus	Metairie	6:30 pm
Fat Tuesday	Feb 24	Zulu	Uptown	8:00 am
		Rex	Uptown	10:00 am
		Elks Orleans	Uptown	follows Rex
		Crescent City	Uptown	follows Elks
		Argus	Metairie	10:00 am
		Elks Jefferson	Metairie	follows Argus
		Jefferson	Metairie	after Elks
				Jefferson
		Grela	West Bank	11:00 am
		BES	West Bank	follows Grela

Democracy, Continued from page 9.

fore, during and after World War II.

“Supporting diversity is one of Chevron’s core values,” said Chevron’s Gulf of Mexico Business Unit Vice President Warner Williams. “We value and respect the uniqueness of individuals and the varied perspectives and talents they bring to our business, our country, and our world. Chevron is proud to sponsor Fighting for Democracy at The National World War II Museum.”

The exhibition will be highlighted by an array of free, public programs at The National World War II Museum. For a full list of activities including films, lectures and hands-on learning experiences for kids and families, visit www.nationalww2museum.org.

To book a tour of the exhibition for a school group, call 504-527-6012 x 222.

Fighting for Democracy: Who is the “We” in “We, the People?” is presented in New Orleans by Chevron with additional support from the Eugenie & Joseph Jones Family Foundation. The exhibition was created by the National Center for the Preservation of Democracy, an educational program of the Japanese American National Museum, with major support provided by the U.S. Army Center for Military History. The traveling exhibition is made possible through the generous support of The Boeing Company and the U.S. Army Center for Military History.

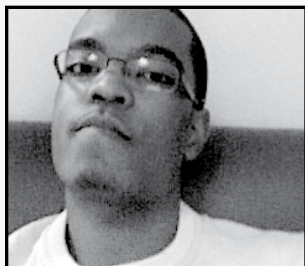
The National World War II Museum tells the story of the American Experience in the war that changed the world – why it was fought, how it was won, and what it means today. Dedicated in 2000 as The National D-Day Museum and now designated by Congress as America’s National World War II Museum, it celebrates the American Spirit, the teamwork, optimism, courage and sacrifice of the men and women who fought on the battlefield and the Home Front. For more information, call 877-813-3329 or 504-527-6012 or visit www.nationalww2museum.org.

PIPELINE TO THE PEOPLE

by Corey Anderson

We are living in an age where history is being made right before our eyes. In turn it is reshaping the lives of the people who will be leading us into the future, so Data News Weekly caught up with some of them to get their feelings about who they thought were some important people in African-American History.

Dexter Graves



The most important person to me in black history is Shawn Corey Carter (Jay-Z) because he has impacted so many African-Americans across the country. He's a business man and entrepreneur. He came from nothing and inspires me.

Gregory Dixon



The most important person to me in black history is Dr. George Washington Carver. Reason being is because he was a renowned scientist. It's a good to always know that we ha African-Americans that played a major role in some of the small but significant developments that we continue to use today."

Amber LeJeune



The most important person to me in black history is Dick Gregory. He is really one of the political figures that is left from the Civil Rights Movement. He has universal truth and is an inspiration."

Judge Harry E. Cantrell Jr.



Salutes Black History Month

Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed

--Booker T. Washington

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Data News Weekly

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Mike Tomlin Makes Super Bowl History



Marc Morial
NNPA Columnist

To be Equal

Like many Americans, I was glued to the television last Sunday as the Pittsburgh Steelers came from behind to clinch the sixth Super Bowl victory in their storied history.

With that exciting win, the Steelers and their 36-year-old coach, Mike Tomlin, made history of another sort. Tomlin became the

youngest head coach to earn a Super Bowl championship and only the second African-American coach to do so.

It is worth noting that Tomlin is a protégé of Tony Dungy, one of the most successful coaches, both on and off the field, in the history of the NFL. Dungy, who recently retired after 10 consecutive playoff seasons as coach of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Indianapolis Colts, holds the distinction of being the first African-American coach to win a Super Bowl. He accomplished that feat in 2007 when his Colts defeated the Chicago Bears.

It is fitting that Mike Tomlin and his Steelers achieved their 2009 victory on February 1, the first day of Black History Month. Historically, there has been a glaring disparity between the number of African Americans on the playing fields of professional sports and those in the coaching, managing and executive ranks.

Former Los Angeles Dodgers General Manager, Al Campanis may have unwittingly moved the ball forward in 1987 when he

said on ABC's Nightline TV show, "Blacks may not have some of the necessities to be, let's say, a field manager or perhaps a general manager."

Campanis was immediately fired for that remark, but it highlighted the appalling lack of African Americans in managerial positions in professional sports.

The NFL, for example, has been in existence since 1920. And while about 70 percent of its players are Black, it was not until 1990 that Art Shell broke the League's racial goal line stand by becoming the first African-American NFL head coach in the modern era. In 2002 there were only two Black head coaches in the NFL. Today, out of 32 teams, there are six.

What progress has been made is largely the result of the Rooney Rule, named after Steelers owner Dan Rooney, who is also chairman of the NFL's diversity committee.

The Rooney Rule states that any NFL team with a head coaching opening has to interview at least one minority candidate.

The Rooney Rule was instrumental in Mike Tomlin being hired to coach the Steelers in 2007. It did not give him or other minorities unfair advantage.

It simply opened a door which had been closed to them before. Black head coaches like Tomlin, Lovie Smith and Tony Dungy have shown by their winning records and winning ways that diversity is good for the game and makes everybody better.

Tony Dungy saw something in Mike Tomlin way back in 2001 when he gave him his first coaching job in the NFL.

The key to success for both men is not only their excellent football minds, but also their ability to motivate their players and bring out the best in them. Like our newly elected President, they have proven once again, that leadership knows no age or color.

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

Black History Month Still Needed



George C. Curry
NNPA

An increasing number of people, including two of my journalism colleagues – Rochelle Riley and Cynthia Tucker – are proposing that we stop celebrating Black History Month. I strongly disagree and, evidently, so does Barack Obama, who signed an executive order designating February as African-American History Month.

"I propose that, for the first time in American history, this country has reached a point where we can stop celebrating separately, stop learning separately, stop being American separately," Riley wrote in the Detroit Free Press. "We have reached a point where most Americans want to gain a larger understanding of the people they have not known, customs they have not known, traditions they have not known."

Riley must be confusing Detroit, which is 81.6 percent Black, with the rest of America.

Cynthia Tucker is even farther afield. She says that Black History Month seems "quaint, jarring, anachronistic." Writing in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Tucker added, "Suffice it to say that the nation of Tiger Woods, Oprah and Barack Obama no longer needs a Black History Month."

Suffice it to say that this is sheer nonsense. The America of Tiger Woods, Oprah and Barack Obama is also the America where the Black unemployment rate is twice that of Whites, where the rate of poverty among Blacks is more than twice that of Whites and where the median family income for Whites is \$25,000 higher than that of African-Americans.

The election of Barack Obama demonstrates how little White America knows about Blacks if they think he is the first African-American with the skills or education to serve as president of the United States. If students were taught about the contributions of Blacks in America perhaps they would know that W.E. B. DuBois earned a Ph.D. from Harvard in 1895. That same year, William Monroe Trotter, the crusading editor of the Boston Guardian, graduated from Harvard with Phi Beta Kappa honors, the most prestigious academic recognition in college. Yes, two African-Americans graduated from Harvard more than 100 years ago.

A year after they graduated from Harvard, the Supreme Court issued its famous Plessy v. Ferguson decision, upholding Louisiana's Separate Car Act requiring seg-

regation on all common carriers operating in the state. Plessy wasn't overturned until the Brown decision outlawed "separate but equal" schools in 1954.

The Supreme Court decision notwithstanding, Jim Crow laws separating the races remained in effect for a decade after Brown, prohibiting Blacks from attending desegregated schools, being treated in the same hospitals, or being buried in the same cemeteries as Whites.

Although many American history textbooks carry accounts of the Plessy decision, many are riddled with lies, beginning with the notion that Christopher Columbus "discovered" America. First, Columbus discovered land already occupied by Native Americans. Second, he was lost, thinking he was in India. Consequently, we have two groups of people called Indians today because Columbus got lost.

Rarely are the contradictions about the so-called Founding Fathers taught to students. They were fighting for their freedom while enslaving Africans. Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, enslaved nearly 200 Africans.

Even Abraham Lincoln wasn't the great liberator he is portrayed to be in the history books. In fact, he said during one of the Lincoln-Douglas debates in 1858: "I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races, that I am not nor ever have been in favor of making voters or jurors of negroes, nor of quali-

fying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people ... I as much as any other man am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race."

Were you ever taught that about Lincoln in school? Today's students are not being taught that either, which is why we need Black History Month and more. I have posted on my Website, my Top 100 Books on Black History. Because the emphasis is on Black history, classics, such as Invisible Man and other works of fiction, are not included. Rather these are books that both Blacks and Whites should read in order to be fully educated about African-American history. If you read 10 books on the list – any 10 – you will learn more Black history than you covered over the course of your elementary, secondary and probably college education.

I understand the point Rochelle Riley and Cynthia Tucker were trying to make: Our history books should be inclusive and tell the history of all Americans, including Blacks. But the books aren't inclusive and simply pretending they are does not contribute to our education nor justify ending Black History Month.

George E. Curry, former editor-in-chief of Emerge magazine and the NNPA News Service, is a keynote speaker, moderator, and media coach. He can be reached through his Web site, www.georgecurry.com.

The Great 28...The Making Of History



Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief

February is upon us once again, and as we all know, it is Black History Month.

February is the time of year when we pay homage and acknowledge those figures that have helped shape America and the world. Initially conceived by Dr. Carter G. Woodson author of the classic book, 'The Miseducation of the Negro,' during the year of its inception, 1926, this one week celebration occurred during the second week of February to coincide with the birthdays of President Abraham Lincoln and abolitionist and statesman Frederick Douglass. The week was a time for reading, reflecting, and enlightening citizens of the struggles, triumphs and accomplishments of African-American people. In 1976 while the country was observing its bicentennial Black History Week, the celebration was extended to an entire month.

Woodson's idea for observing these accomplishments were to refute the popular notion that posed as irrefutable truths at that time in this country's history. It was believed that African-Americans contributed nothing to the advancement of mankind. Over the years, the celebration has highlighted what Blacks have been able to achieve while sometimes facing the most adverse of circumstances. And with courage, fortitude and perseverance; accomplishing great things in spite of the road blocks placed before them by those who attempted to impede their progress, many blazed a trail for future generations forging ahead and making their mark in many fields of endeavor.

As those who came before us toiled

away breaking new ground, today we see the results of their struggles. In today's America there aren't many places in our society where Black people are not visible. African-Americans in 2009, we have an African-American as President of the U.S. as well as African-Americans serving as CEOs and high ranking executives in companies where fifty years ago they were either barred from employment, or worked performing the most menial tasks.

In the world of politics, African-Americans are reaching unprecedented heights. African-Americans are running and winning elected offices at the local, state and national levels. The dark days of yesterday when legal barriers didn't permit many

Great 28, Continued on page 15.

The Cradle to Prison Pipeline: America's New Apartheid



Marian Wright Edelman
NNPA Columnist

Child Watch®

Incarceration is becoming the new American apartheid and poor children of color are the fodder.

It is time to sound a loud alarm about this threat to American unity and community, act to stop the growing criminalization of children at younger and younger ages, and tackle the unjust treatment of minority youths and adults in the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems with urgency and persistence.

The failure to act now will reverse the hard-earned racial and social progress for which Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and so many others died and sacrificed. We must all call for investment in all children from birth through their successful transition to adulthood, remembering Frederick Douglass's correct observation that "it is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men."

So many poor babies in rich America enter the world with multiple strikes against them: born without prenatal care, at low birthweight, and to a teen, poor, and poorly

educated single mother and absent father. At crucial points in their development after birth until adulthood, more risks pile on, making a successful transition to productive adulthood significantly less likely and involvement in the criminal justice system significantly more likely.

As Black children are more than three times as likely as White children to be poor, and are four times as likely to live in extreme poverty, a poor Black boy born in 2001 has a one in three chance of going to prison in his lifetime and is almost six times as likely as a White boy to be incarcerated for a drug offense.

The past continues to strangle the present and the future. Children with an incarcerated parent are more likely to become incarcerated. Black children are nearly nine times and Latino children are three times as likely as White children to have an incarcerated parent. Blacks constitute one-third and Latinos one-fifth of the prisoners in America, and 1 in 3 Black men, 20 to 29 years old, is under correctional supervision or control. Of the 2.3 million in jail or prison, 64 percent are minority. Of the 4.2 million persons on probation, 45 percent are minority; of the 800,000 on parole, 59 percent are minority. Inequitable drug sentencing policies including mandatory minimums have greatly escalated the incarceration of minority adults and youths.

Child poverty and neglect, racial disparities in systems that serve children, and the pipeline to prison are not acts of God. They are America's immoral political and economic choices that can and must be changed with strong political, corporate and community leadership.

No single sector or group can solve these child- and nation-threatening crises alone but all of us can together. Leaders

must call us to the table and use their bully pulpits to replace our current paradigm of punishment as a first resort with a paradigm of prevention and early intervention. That will save lives, save families, save taxpayer money, and save our nation's aspiration to be a fair society. Health and mental health care and quality education cost far less than prisons.

If called to account today, America would not pass the test of the prophets, the Gospels, and all great faiths. Christians who profess to believe that God entered human history as a poor vulnerable baby, and that each man, woman and child is created in God's own image, need to act on that faith.

The Jewish Midrash says God agreed to give the people of Israel the Torah only after they offered their children as guarantors, deeming neither their prophets nor elders sufficient. It is time to heed the prophets' call for justice for the orphans and the weak. America's Declaration of Independence says, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights..."

After more than two centuries, it is time to make those truths evident in the lives of poor children of color and to close our intolerable national hypocrisy gap. America's sixth child is waiting for all of us to welcome him or her to the table in our rich land and show the world whether democratic capitalism is an oxymoron or whether it can work. Our national creed demands it. All great faiths demand it. Common sense and self-interest require it. And our moral redemption and credibility in the world we seek to lead compels it.

Ending child poverty is not only an urgent moral necessity, it is economically beneficial.

Dr. Robert M. Solow, M.I.T. Nobel Laureate in Economics, wrote in Wasting America's Future that "ending child poverty is, at the very least, highly affordable" and would be a boost to the economy. A healthy Social Security and Medicare system for our increasing elderly population need as many productive workers as possible to support them. We can ill afford to let millions of our children grow up poor, in poor health, uneducated, and as dependent rather than productive citizens.

What then can leaders do to help build the spiritual and political will needed to help our nation pass the test of the God of history and better prepare for America's future?

What steps can you take to heed Dr. King's warning not to let our wealth become our destruction but our salvation by helping the poor Lazaruses languishing at our closed gates? How can our nation use its blessings to bless all the children entrusted to our care and rekindle America's dimming dream?

As President Obama and Congress contemplate ways to stimulate our economy, let them begin by investing in a healthy, fair, head, and safe start for every American child and measures to ensure their successful transition to college and productive adulthood.

Learn more about CDF's Cradle to Prison Pipeline® Campaign.

Marian Wright Edelman, whose latest book is *The Sea Is So Wide And My Boat Is So Small: Charting a Course for the Next Generation*, is president of the Children's Defense Fund. For more information about the Children's Defense Fund, go to www.childrensdefense.org.

White House Unveils Stimulus Package Impact on Blacks

Special to the NNPA from the St. Louis American

ST. LOUIS (NNPA) – Responding to an inquiry by the editor of The St. Louis American newspaper, Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood last week outlined portions of the \$827 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan that he says will specifically impact the Black community.

The White House response came after a telephone press conference with Midwest reporters during which NNPA award-winning editor Alvin A. Reed asked LaHood about the minority participation aspects of the act, which President Obama has implored Congress to pass this week.

Initially, LaHood hedged, responding, “That’s a point I have really not considered. We’ll have to get back to (him,) rather than give an answer I don’t really know.”

Only hours after a story reporting the inquiry and response was posted on stlAmerican.com Feb. 5, LaHood issued the following detailed strategy, titled, “African Americans and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan” (The response has been lightly edited for style and clarity by the

NNPA News Service):

- **General:** The majority of the provisions in this recovery and reinvestment plan will assist African-Americans, who have been dramatically impacted during these tough times, in making it through this period with tax cuts for 95 percent of families, programs including extension of unemployment benefits, COBRA healthcare benefits, and food stamps and temporary assistance for needy families (TANF), while also preparing them for new opportunities with training for new jobs in existing and emerging industries.

- **Tax Cuts:** This plan seeks to put money in the hands of consumers as quickly as possible through tax cuts for 95 percent of families. This is especially important for African-Americans who have experienced a reversal of fortune in the gains in wages and salary reached during the 1990s compared to others in the workforce. This immediate infusion of resources will not only allow them to purchase the items they need for their families, but also help rebuild our economy.

- **Job Creation:** The unemployment rate for African-Americans was 12.1 percent and had risen

to 12.6 percent when new job numbers were announced Feb. 6. This plan will create jobs with its investments in rebuilding roads and bridges and retrofitting government buildings while also working to help prepare job seekers for the 21st Century economy with training for new “green jobs” and other emerging industries. The key is ensuring that African-Americans have access to information about all of these opportunities.

- **Education:** Right now 95 percent of African-American children rely on public schools in America yet a great number of these systems lack the funding they need to deliver the education that our children deserve and the facilities themselves are generally inadequate. This plan makes a historic investment in school modernization sufficient to renovate and modernize 10,000 schools, which also saves or creates jobs.

The plan also invests in our children’s future by doubling the Early Head Start program which will provide additional pre-k services to more than 350,000 children and create at least 15,000 new teaching and teaching assistant jobs. Efforts are also being made to increase the Pell Grant

maximum award to \$500 making college affordable for 7 million students.

Finally, understanding that we are living during a time when tough choices have to be made, state and local governments should not have to cut education to make their budgets work. This plan provides resources so that potential education cuts can be bypassed in the immediate future.

- **Healthcare:** African-Americans suffer from higher percentages of chronic diseases such as heart disease, kidney disease and diabetes while also suffering from a lack of access to quality care. Therefore during a time when many who rely on receiving healthcare through their employers are losing jobs, access to quality healthcare is an even greater concern. This plan offers a new tax credit to help families keep their health insurance through COBRA as well as a new option in Medicaid for low-income people who lack access to COBRA. Adjustments will also be made in funding formulas for state Medicaid programs so that Medicaid and SCHIP are not impacted by state budget shortfalls, protecting 20 million people whose eligibility might be at risk.

- **Public Services:** Local governments are threatened with budget cuts that could impair services, including support from police and fire departments. No community that relies on these services to protect them should have to endure cuts in these areas. This plan invests \$4 billion for state and local law enforcement funding.

In the Feb. 5 call, LaHood said the Recovery Act would save or create millions of jobs each year, with many coming in building and repairing roads, bridges and transit lines. More than 90 percent of the jobs would be in the private sector, he said.

It remains unknown whether there will be any specific inclusion plan through the state and federal levels. However, days before inauguration Obama told the NNPA News Service that many such infrastructure projects are slated specifically for urban areas where a majority of African-Americans live and work.

LaHood said, “The idea is getting money out of the door for projects, this spring, summer and fall.”

NNPA Editor-in-Chief Hazel Trice Edney contributed to this article.

Steele Resigns, Clay Named Interim President of National SCLC

Jennifer Bihm

LOS ANGELES (NNPA) – Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC) officials announced the resignation of their president Charles Steele Jr. last week and immediately afterwards a ground swell of rumors focused on The Rev. Eric Lee of the Greater Los Angeles Chapter as his replacement.

Citing his desire to make “a career change decision,” Steele, 62, said, “the time is right to bring on new leadership.”

However, he announced, he would still be a consultant to the civil rights organization co-founded by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Steele held the position since 2004, a time when SCLC was headed for bankruptcy, it was reported. He was able to turn things around financially and he also

oversaw the building of conflict resolution centers overseas and a new site for national headquarters.

SCLC Vice President Byron Clay will serve as president until a replacement for Steele is found, officials said.

Rev. Eric P. Lee is President/CEO of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference of Greater Los Angeles and Chairman/President of the California Christian Leadership Conference, the parent organization for seven the California SCLC Chapters.

Lee has been instrumental in increasing membership and managing the largest financial budget of any chapter outside of the national headquarters.

“There is no other person that I can think of to lead the national SCLC into the new millennium

than Eric Lee,” stated Los Angeles City Councilman Bernard Parks.

A Diversity Task Force member, Lee has been working to reintegrate African-Americans into the hotel and restaurant industries in California. He’s a founding member of the Alliance for Equal Opportunity in Education, a collaboration of organizations in Los Angeles leading the fight against UCLA’s admission policies for Black students. In addition, he is a co-founder of the Knowledge Transfer Summit, an African-American Leadership Forum.

Lee has a B.S. in Political Economics of Industrial Societies from UC Berkeley and a Masters in Pastoral Studies from Azusa Pacific University. He is an affiliate member of the Black Business Association, Recycling Black Dollars, 100 Black Men of Los Angeles,

and Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity.

“At this time my primary focus is on the chapter that I have been selected to lead, but my commitment for the SCLC would not prevent me from doing whatever I’m asked of on any level,” Lee said.

Treasurer of the Los Angeles SCLC Board Danny J. Bakewell Jr. suggested that, “Eric Lee is certainly qualified because the Los Angeles chapter is as large as the national chapter and he has done a magnificent job in that post.”

SCLC is now a nation wide organization made up of chapters and affiliates with programs that affect the lives of all Americans: north, south, east and west. Its sphere of influence and interests has become international in scope because the human rights

movement transcends national boundaries.

Past National Presidents have included, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: 1957 to 1968

Rev. Ralph D. Abernathy: 1968 to 1977, Rev. Joseph E. Lowery: 1977 to 1997

Martin L. King, III: 1997 to 2004, Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth: February 2004 to November 2004 and Steele, Jr. Will Lee be next?

Reverend Lee is one of Los Angeles’ most vocal and visible civil and human rights activists. From addressing the right of African-American security guards to organize into unions to addressing homophobia, Lee has already leading the SCLC into the 21st Century.

Wal-Mart Honors the Contributions of African Americans to the Nation During Black History Month and Beyond

Retailer Emphasizes "Every Day is a Good Day to Learn Black History"

BENTONVILLE, Ark.,— History is made each day and African Americans continue to contribute to our country's rich legacy. During Black History Month, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. encourages its associates and customers to celebrate black history every day. The company reminds Walmart customers that "Every day is a good day to learn black history" through a series of radio and television ads, along with in-store and online educational material designed to promote awareness of black history.

"This year's Black History Month theme encourages our associates and customers to honor the positive impact African Americans have made throughout our nation's history," said Esther Silver-Parker, senior vice president of Corporate Affairs. "Our company continues to be committed to the communities it serves through education, opportunity and celebration, and our campaign to celebrate black history throughout the year is perfectly aligned with this commitment.

We proudly engage in initiatives to celebrate black history and we encourage our customers to join us in making this a year-round observance."

Walmart customers will be able to pick up the complimentary "Profiles and Pride" and "Black History Timeline" pamphlets at select stores. The pamphlets provide insightful black history information ideal for schools, organizations or individuals. This year's "Profiles in Pride," produced in partnership with Kraft, features African-American heritage and cultural events that take place throughout the country. Featured events include the National Black Arts Festival in Atlanta, the Gullah Festival in South Carolina and the Pan-African Film Festival in Los Angeles.

Organizers of the highlighted events will also share their insights on how black history can be celebrated throughout the year. Additionally, in light of the historic presidential election, Wal-Mart's "Black History Month Timeline," produced in conjunc-

tion with Colgate-Palmolive, will feature African-American firsts and milestones from the 1900s to the present.

To help parents and children increase their knowledge of black history, select Walmart stores nationwide and Walmart.com will feature the GEEBEE Black Heritage Series TM games and puzzles. The offerings will include an African counting game, a game about The Underground Railroad, black history trivia games, and an assortment of puzzles.

In an effort to stay connected to its African-American customers, Walmart's "Our Voice" Web site offers resource information for families to enjoy throughout the year. The Web site - www.wmourvoice.com - provides an online platform for reinforcing the company's black history message through games and useful information.

Users can enjoy an online version of the GEEBEE Black Heritage Series TM games and puzzles or access the site to obtain updated information about Wal-Mart's

corporate initiatives supporting the African-American community. Walmart has also established a partnership with ancestry.com, which allows them to offer an interface on the site to aid users in tracing their family genealogy.

Wal-Mart proudly engages in year-round cultural initiatives. As an employer of choice for more than 251,000 African-American associates, Wal-Mart's commitment to the African-American community extends to a variety of partnerships and corporate programs reaching customers where they live. Some major initiatives include:

- o Walmart announced its commitment to serve as the presenting sponsor of Tavis Smiley's America I AM: The African American Imprint, a mobile and museum exhibit that celebrates the imprint African Americans have had on nearly 500 years of American history. The mobile exhibit visited more than 40 communities and events throughout the country in 2008 as it made its way to the National Constitution Center

in Philadelphia for the unveiling of a 15,000 sq. ft. museum exhibit. The museum exhibit will travel to major cities across the country until 2012.

- o In 2008, the Wal-Mart Foundation provided a \$12.5 million letter of credit to the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial Project Foundation, Inc., which will allow the foundation to begin construction of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial.

- o In 2008, Wal-Mart associates and the Wal-Mart Foundation, contributed more than \$300,000 in charitable donations to the United Negro College Fund (UNCF). These contributions were in addition to the \$1 million grant by the Wal-Mart Foundation to support the UNCF's Institute for Capacity Building Fiscal and Strategic Technical Assistance Program (FASTAP). The program helps Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) strengthen their operations.

Switch to Digital TV Delayed

James Wright

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - Black members of Congress praised the 264-158 vote by members of the U.S. House of Representatives to give consumers four more months to prepare for the end of analog broadcast television to digital.

The switch was to take place on Feb. 17 but because of the action of Congress, it will not occur until June 12.

The Senate had previously voted for a delay. President Obama is expected to sign the bill soon.

An estimated 6.5 million Americans have not yet bought the special converter boxes that will be necessary to continue receiving free TV signals on analog sets once the transition is completed, according to a Nielsen Co. survey.

Rep. Maxine Waters' (D-Calif.) district based in south-central Los Angeles is considered one of the least prepared for the change, according to Commerce Department statistics, with 7,502 households waiting for converter box vouchers.

"I am glad that we voted for this bill because all hell would have broken loose if we did not," Waters said.

D.C. Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D) agreed.

"Despite our efforts and the efforts of residents to get the coupons, some D.C. residents would have seen their televisions go dark without today's bill," she said. "The government did not carry its side of the bargain. The only fair thing to do was to delay the transition."

Great 28, Continued on page 15.

African-Americans to strive for excellence are a distant memory. Albeit, America is not where it should be, but it has moved beyond the shadows of the times before the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Acts of the 1960s. During those times, a large number of African-Americans could not exercise their most basic human rights in the country that at that time—and still to this very day—espouses the principle of democracy, fairness and equality to the rest of the world.

For some African-Americans, today is a new frontier of opportunities: Blacks today own homes in places where they were once denied access through restrictive covenants. They own land today where their ancestors toiled tirelessly in areas owned by others without adequate compensation or without being treated with basic human decency. Today, many

are teaching and being educated in institutions once closed to them, and today these places where they were once denied access provide them with the tools necessary to be competitive in the workforce. Today, we see that there is possibly light at the end of this 'Underground Railroad' and that the efforts of our fore parents had not been in vain.

Yes, the accomplishments of Blacks today are unprecedented, but we must remember today we are no smarter or better than those who came before us; we have just been provided with more opportunities and access. Today, we are standing on the shoulders of giants. Whether it's well known historical figures like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Dr. Daniel Hale Williams, Nat Turner, Mary McCloud Bethune and Harriet Tubman or everyday people who have sacrificed so that

we can have a chance at a better life, they all played a role. Our personal heroes and mentors, the mothers, fathers, grandparents, coaches, friends, teachers and preachers gave us words of encouragement and the love we needed when times got tough to persevere and keep our eyes on the prize.

Today we are a living testament of those who have come before us. In our actions, we reflect the best and worst of our past. And we must remember that every one of us is a gatekeeper of our history; making a contribution to the beauty and ugliness of our existence in America. And today we must work together to emulate the best and goodness that's in all of us, realizing we will as any other people never be perfect, but hopefully, just better than we are presently, because as the days pass we are all part of history.



Mom's dream, my achievement

Walmart recognizes the importance of history and education, and proudly celebrates African-American history as the sponsor of the America I AM exhibit. And to encourage future history-makers, we've donated nearly one million dollars to the Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund. With the right tools, all dreams can become achievements.

Learn more about our commitment and America I AM at walmart.com/ourvoice.

TAVIS SMILEY PRESENTS
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The African American Imprint

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