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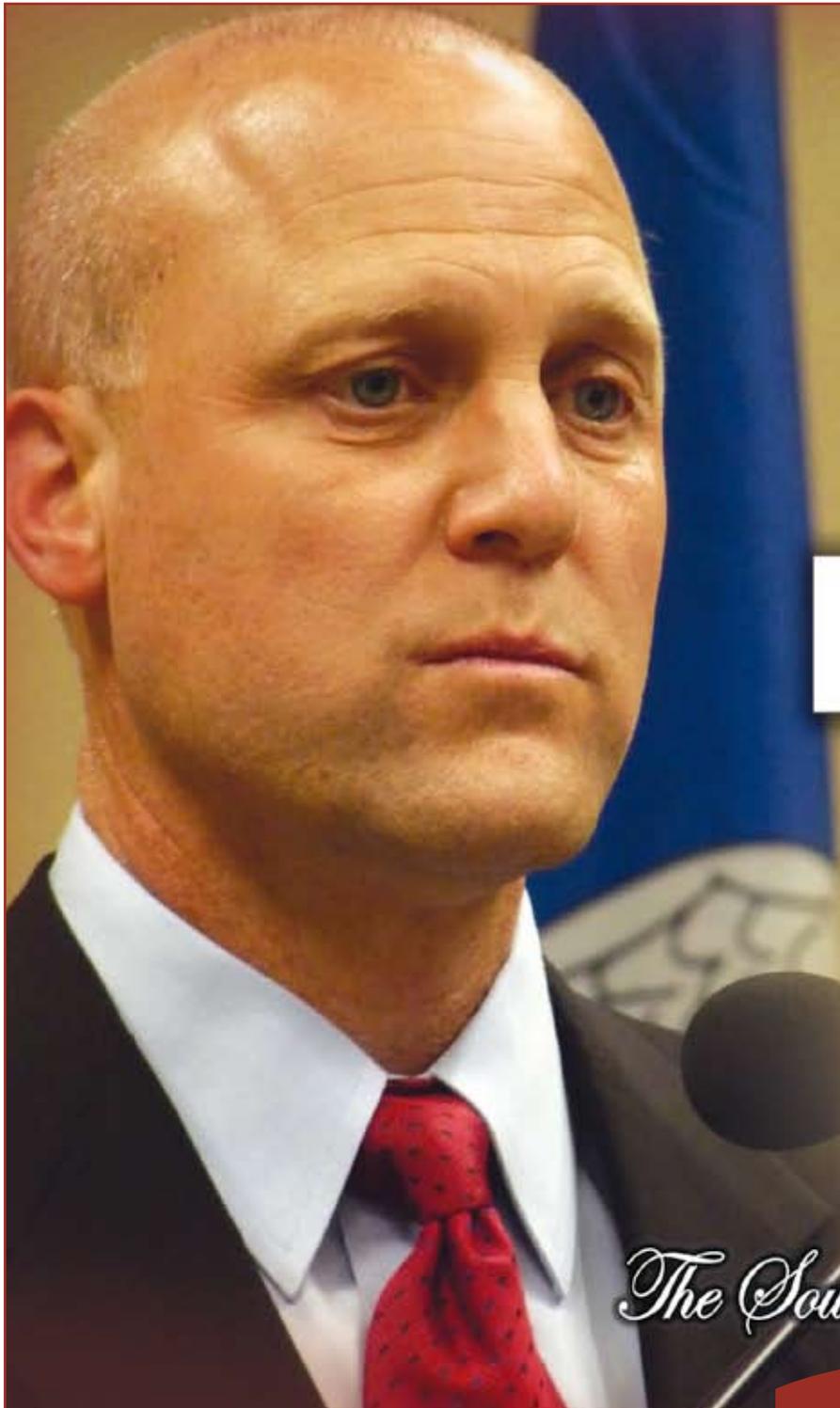
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## Treme Wrap Party

May 15 - May 21, 2010 44th Year Volume 31 www.ladatanews.com



# Mitch Landrieu

## A Fresh Start

*The Soul of New Orleans*

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# Mitch Landrieu

## A New Beginning



**By Edwin Buggage**

The city has a new mayor, Mitch Landrieu. He is the first white mayor in over three decades since his father Moon Landrieu, a trailblazer who changed the racial landscape at

City Hall. The younger Landrieu has inherited a city that is grappling with a recovery from Hurricane Katrina and a host of other issues that continue to create a wide gulf of misunderstanding between the populous

about the city future.

Landrieu as had his predecessor Ray Nagin made a plea for one New Orleans. While this is a laudable goal it is far from the reality of the city; today, it is a tale of two cities

*Continued next page.*

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### DATA NEWS WEEKLY

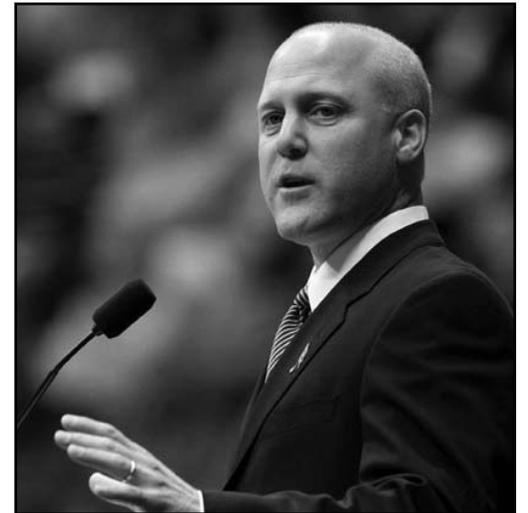
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Cover Story, Continued from previous page.



where race and class have collided creating a breach of understanding. In his inaugural address he talked about the monumental task of healing and rebuilding.

These two areas are important parts of the city moving forward. But today more than a simple band-a approach to a problem is needed in the city. Today a surgery is needed for a city that is in drastic need

of a new leadership model. And the question some are asking is Mitch Landrieu the answer? Is he the one who can bring people together under one tent united to make New Orleans the place it could be if it is rebuilt in a way that all citizens can prosper? That the divide between the haves and have-nots can be fixed and that with all the resources that are to come down the pike that it can have an impact on all of the citizens not just a few.

Mitch Landrieu won with a large percentage of crossover votes that covered the whole of the city, but will this translate into substantive change in the city where a parallel universe

exists between populations? This beginning must lead to a new destination, not simply a new driver going down the same path. New passengers must be on board working together to take New Orleans in a new direction.

This city must make bold moves to become the city it can be by people forging new alliances and relationships. The days of only a few eating from the tree of prosperity must end, for this is a new beginning. For this to occur the city must evolve and be open to change, erecting new structures and ideas to move the city forward into this new day.

A city cannot measure a victory by simply looking at one man and what he does or does not do. It is the mission of all citizens to put their best foot forward in this march towards a new reality for New Orleans.

A city with a unique culture and history that is poised to be a great city in the international arena with the proper planning and execution of strategies.

Today is not the time to look to the past for answers, but in

a future with new ideas and innovation.

That the blind date effect of different communities trying to get to know one another has to give way to bridging divides on every side. Fear must not give way to misunderstanding and chaos.

This city must change to move forward, the restart button must be pushed and the realization that the things that unite a city and its population are greater than the things that divide it. This is a new beginning and what the future holds for New Orleans is in the hands of the citizens not just elected leaders. It is everybody's duty to make the city a better place. And be united as one city with one aim shooting in the same direction. This will take a rethinking of old ways as the city moves to new days. The page has turned and the writing of a new chapter has begun. What the pages will contain is up to citizens as well as leaders to what will be the future of New Orleans as it celebrates a new beginning.



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# trailblazer

## Reginald Stewman

### *Healing and Rebuilding Lives*

by: Edwin Buggage

He is a man with a kind heart that has given his time to help others. Reginald Stewman has touched the lives of many in their time of need through his company Louisiana Re-Entry and Rehabilitation Services. A company that's purpose is to assist persons with substance abuse problems as well as those afflicted with issues surrounding mental health. "I think post Hurricane Katrina one of the most important issues facing people affected by the storm is mental health," says Stewman.

As Louisiana's largest African American owned mental health facility with locations throughout the state Stewman feels he is servicing a community that sometimes get overlooked when it comes to mental health. "I think sometimes there is a stigma attached to being in counseling in our community but it is time for this to stop, particularly as it comes to people affected by Katrina, which was a devastating event that for many still has not found a constructive ways to cope with."

Stewman's work has taken him into schools, corporations as well as penal institutions where his work has positively impacted the lives of many, "I believe we have a model that works and is culturally sensitive to the needs of our people, because I think sometimes that is missing and there is a disconnect." "That is something we have identified and addressed and have become successful at helping ex-offenders turn their lives around as well as deterring young people from getting involved in activities that may derail their trail to living a successful and prosperous life," says Stewman.

In addition to drug rehabilitation and mental health services, he says developing skill sets that are conducive to living a productive life is essential, "We help people in a more holistic way assisting them with other skills that can benefit them in



managing their lives that includes how to integrate themselves back into society such as how to deal with people and conflict resolution are important keys to navigate a way to a lifestyle where one can not only survive but thrive," says Stewman. His passion for helping people takes him all over the state and recently he has begun working with clients outside of Louisiana and has plans to expand his reach to impact more lives, "I have people I have slated to work with outside of the city because so many of those affected by Katrina are now outside of the city and still need help and it is my goal to reach as

many people as we can."

Stewman is dedicated to his mission of uplift by being a successful model and an example of a thriving African American businessman. "I want to be an example of someone who is being part of the solutions in our community and be a positive force for change." Reginald Stewman has lived a life that has been about serving others. And as the city reconstructs itself for a renaissance, Stewman is like an architect that is helping to heal and rebuild lives.

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# Divas In Harmony

*New Orleans Arts In Education Presents*



Dionne Character, Author  
Entertainment Editor & Columnista

Sunday, May 2, vocals ran rampant like a wildfire, as R&B, Broadway and Gospel exploded into a Night Of Soul, which featured legendary DIVAS, Kelly Price, Jennifer Holiday and special guest, Shirley Murdock, all who pranced around the stage showing their raw talents with no live band.

Dionne Character can be reached at [dasolediva@yahoo.com](mailto:dasolediva@yahoo.com)

Kelly Price, who was accompanied by background vocalists, Kim Mont and Sheri Hauck talked about her weight and love, Jennifer Holiday talked about her longevity in the industry and the Queen Diva, Shirley Murdock, kept it real, reminding us all to be careful of our friends.

High notes were flying everywhere, as each performer gave a little of themselves to an intimate audience, who were able to take pictures and enjoy an up close and personal soulful evening of entertainment.

Proceeds from the show went to NOSA-CONN and The New Orleans Arts In Education Initiative's outreach programs to assist adults with financial literacy and youth cultural programming to keep our New Orleans youth engaged.

This soulful night was one many will remember as these DIVAS empowered the crowd in perfect harmony, letting everyone know that God is the force behind their talents.



Jennifer Holiday with Dionne Character at Two Nights of Soul

**Dionne Character** is having a **Book Release Party** Sunday, May 16, 2010 at Sweet Lorraine's Jazz Club, 1931 St. Claude Avenue, New Orleans, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m., **free** to public. For information visit [dionnecharacter.com](http://dionnecharacter.com)



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**IT'S IN OUR HANDS**

# The Queen Reigns Supreme in Just Wright

By Edwin Buggage

## Just Wright

In many Hollywood films images of women that are deemed sexy or desirable usually comes in one size skinny. While today many of those images are being challenged, there are still not enough balance in the entertainment industry or advertising showing the full range of female beauty images.

The recent Fox Searchlight release of the romantic comedy Just Wright challenges these one dimensional portrayals of women. The film is a heart-warming romantic comedy starring Queen Latifah and Common and directed by Sanaa Hamri. In the film Latifah stars as Leslie Wright, a young woman who is a physical therapist who is an unpretentious Jersey Girl who never seem to get the guy. Paula Patton plays Morgan Alexander, a childhood friend who is smart, funny and beautiful, but conversely is vain and superficial with hopes of becoming an NBA trophy wife.

These two women are involved in a love triangle with Scott McKnight played by Common in his first leading role. In a chance meeting Leslie meets Scott at a gas station after going to a New Jersey Nets basketball game and he invites her to a party and Morgan comes along and Scott is captivated by the stunning beauty of Morgan. Who puts on a convincing ruse to steal his heart, but a career threatening injury place him in



jeopardy and she enlists Leslie to help Scott.

As Leslie helps Scott he in turn helps her to see the beauty in herself and that she should pursue her dream of working as an NBA trainer. While the two have great chemistry and many things in common the idea of such a pairing for some may seem unlikely as the image of what one would think of an NBA wife. But Leslie is sweet, endearing and beautiful in ways that transcend one dimensional image and is the essence of true beauty.

## Ladies First

The career of Queen Latifah has been the embodiment of female empowerment. She has in two decades come to evolve into an actress singer, product endorser, and astute businesswoman. Through her messages of female uplift she has come to be a symbol and inspiration for young girls across the globe, to truly be a queen.

In person Latifah embodies the essence of 21st century beauty with sheer confidence, self assuredness, and sexiness. Giving women the confidence to express and be comfortable with themselves. Of the images of women portrayed in media she says, "We know who we are we know how beautiful we are it's just the media that's had to play catch up. It's the fashion houses that have had to play catch up. They still have a lot of work to do in regards to women with curves. Women come in a variety of shapes and that is not to knock one size or the other it is just about all women being represented. Selling these images is distorting the full range of what women should be. I don't know who we are pumping these images out for, but it is sad that even today African-American girls are becoming bulimic and anorexic because of images in a magazine. I don't think this is a healthy image to aspire to for young women coming up and I think it's something we should not stand for. And it's not about women hating one and other it's about hey I'm a 2, I'm a ten, I'm a twenty two I like what you're wearing but can I have that in my size. Can you make that work for my body type? And some have not been trained to do that even though the market is demanding it

# WildFlower: Growing From The Muck

*Author Paints A Masterful Picture of the Ninth Ward*

*She's faced the hardest times you could imagine,  
And many times her eyes fought back the tears.  
And when her youthful world was about to fall in  
Each time her slender shoulders bore  
the weight of all her fears,  
and her sorrow no one hears, still rings  
in midnight silence, in her ears...  
Let her cry, for she's a Lady  
Let her dream, for she's a Child  
Let the rain fall down upon her  
She's a free and gentle flower, growing wild.*



By: Eric Connerly

The words of this classic song embody the essence of Dionne Character's latest book WildFlower. It is a masterful work that marries the wonder and splendor of New Orleans into a gumbo of poems and short stories that

pleases the literary palate. Her flavorful poetic prose takes you on a journey into the colorful characters, people and places that inhabit the Crescent City.

Her work masterfully captures the essence of New Orleans life; she has a great grasp of the folkloric aspects of a city with a rich cultural history and traditions. In Wildflower she easily goes from sensual and sexy to serious with stories that run the emotional gamut. It is a book that makes you laugh, cry and reflect. This book encapsulates a city that once lived through the eyes of Dionne Character.

In some of the more sensual poems that comprise the first part of her book are very stimulating and provocative, putting you in the mind of Zane but with a 5-0-4 twist. But I found the most pow-

erful works to be her short stories that resemble journal entries. These personal vignettes show the true heart of an artist that has signs of greatness in her future road as a writer.

Her journey is far from over as she has developed a narrative style in these works that keeps the reader captivated and entranced by her gift of imagery. She is like an artist with words using her pen to paint a portrait of a city that could become a masterpiece.

This book shows Character's growth as an artist who's persevered after Hurricane Katrina and has come to be a force to be reckoned with

making her mark as a singer, actress, TV host and writer. She has given the world a gift with her new book that shows another face of New Orleans; a girl who grew up in the Lower Ninth Ward and while experiencing sorrow, setbacks and tragedy, her voice is one of triumph.

Wildflower has planted the seed that will continue to grow as has everything she touches turns into gold. She is a true talent whose time has come, in that in this book her voice comes through clearly articulating the thoughts and feelings of an authentic New Orleanian.

# Shoot Ya Best Shot!

## The Stars Came Out for Treme's Wrap Up Party at the House of Blues



### Inauguration Event at Lafayette Square



Pictured left to right are: Census workers Grace Wynn and Phyllis Boudreaux with Edwin Buggage, Editor of Data News Weekly



Terry B. Jones, Publisher of Data News Weekly with Councilmember-at-Large, Arnie Fielkow



Pictured left to right are: Terry B. Jones, Judy Morse, her daughter, Grace, her son Trey and her husband, Chuck

### Wright/Matthews Wedding



Pictured on the steps of St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Charleston, SC on Saturday, May 8th 2010 after the ceremony where Kristen Dawn Wright married Chris Leon Matthews. As the bride says he is her best friend, the one she laughs with, lives for, and loves.

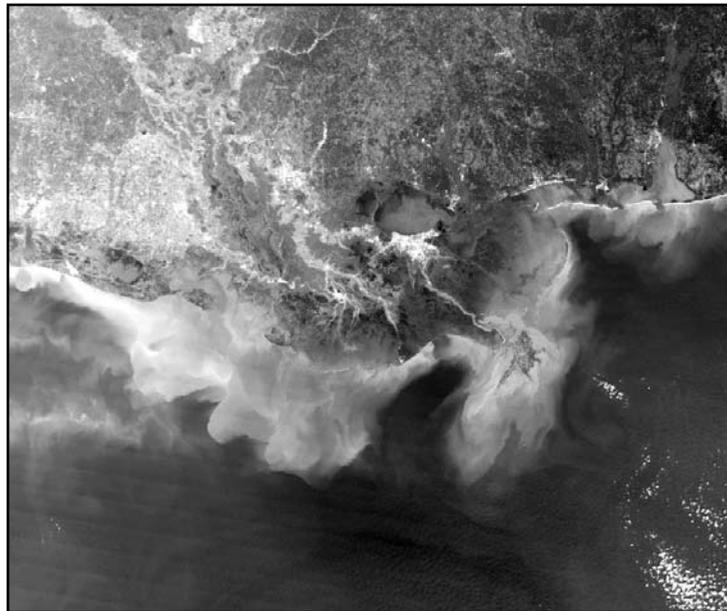


The reception held at The Pavilion at Pepper Plantation in Awendaw, South Carolina. Pictured are most of her wedding party with a pond and beautiful trees as a backdrop. There were thirty-two members. The bride is the niece of June Hazeur, Data's billing and accounts receivables representative.

# The Oil Spill

The oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico is a highly complex event, in some ways more so than even Katrina. Its implications extend beyond the fishing and petroleum industries of Louisiana, around the globe; its magnitude and the extent of damage are unclear, and may be for years; and, compensation is complicated by shared and capped liability.

And yet, like Katrina, out of the challenges of this event can also come opportunity: both near-term opportunity related to clean-up and remediation, but also long-term related to the coast of Louisiana; the science of deep water exploration; and, how we balance our environment and our economy in order to create a vibrant place to live and work - a global model for job creation and sustainability.



GNO, Inc. is helping to manage the oil spill and move our community towards opportunity in a number of ways:

- Economic Impact Survey - In partnership with local organizations, we are reaching out to companies in our region that could be impacted to ascertain potential effects, and ways to mitigate. To see preliminary results of the survey, click here.

- Connections and Information - We are actively connecting potential participants in the near- and mid-term response to the spill with the central players; and, providing key information to the community on an on-going basis on our website

- Strategy Development - As part of our soon-to-be announced Green N.O. initiative, we are developing the strategy that will allow Louisiana and the New Orleans region the opportunity to emerge from this event not only conserving our critical industries like oil & gas and fishing, but also with new opportunity relative to coastal management and sustainability.

Thank you for your support during these dynamic and challenging times.

## New Orleans - The Oil This Time



**Marc Morial**  
President and CEO  
National Urban League

disaster.

Last week, the President and members of his response team, including Coast Guard Commandant, Thad Allen; Homeland Security Secretary, Janet Napolitano; Interior Secretary, Ken Salazar and EPA Administrator, Lisa Jackson toured the region and pledged to spare no effort to fix the problem.

Lisa Jackson, the nation's first African American EPA Administrator, grew up in New Orleans. While in the region, she met with members of the local shrimping and fishing industries to assess the spill's potential economic impact. During meetings in Saint Barnard Parish and at a church in New Orleans's Ninth Ward she made it clear that BP must train and hire local fishermen and boaters to help with the clean-up. Nobody knows the marshes and waterways better than the local fishermen, many of whom are out of work as the region's huge seafood industry grinds to a halt.

Administrator Jackson has also deployed a specially designed aircraft to assist in the collection of air samples and to provide photo documentation of the spill's environmental impact. She has directed EPA personnel on the ground to support the Coast Guard's efforts. All told, the Obama Administration has committed 10,000 personnel, more than 270 vessels and dozens of aircraft to assist in containment and clean-up efforts.

New Orleans is a city on the mend. A dynamic new Mayor, Mitch Landrieu, has just taken office. The New Orleans Saints are Super Bowl champions. And the city

continues to rebuild and rebound in the aftermath of Katrina. Now an oil spill the size of Rhode Island threatens to make landfall. One wonders how much the people of the region can take. The oil recovery effort is a complex operation that must be led by BP and the federal government. But, once again, the spirit of community, self-help, and empowerment that makes New Orleans and the Gulf Coast so great is making its presence known. Citizens are stepping up to do their share - as volunteers, as work-

ers, and as protectors of the environment.

We join all Americans in continuing to pray that a disaster can be averted. And we applaud the Obama Administration and leaders like EPA Administrator, Lisa Jackson, for doing all they can to protect the region's environment, jobs and people.

To Be Equal is a syndicated weekly column by National Urban League President Marc H. Morial, which is distributed to more than 400 newspapers and websites nationwide.

### Sheriff Marlin Gusman Holds Ceremony Marking the Establishment of the Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office



Sheriff Marlin N. Gusman marked the merging of the Criminal and Civil Sheriff's Offices and the historic establishment of the single Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office on Friday May 7th at the Pavillion of the Two Sisters in City Park. Additionally, the ceremony celebrated Civil Sheriff Paul Valteau's 24 years of distinguished service for the City of New Orleans. Pictured is Sheriff Gusman presenting Sheriff Valteau with the award.

By Marc H. Morial  
National Urban League President & CEO

Five years after Hurricane Katrina's swift but devastating assault on the Gulf Coast and my hometown of New Orleans, a slow moving but massive oil spill in the Gulf could have an even more devastating impact on the region's shoreline, wildlife, economy and people. While the BP oil company has accepted full responsibility and moved quickly to coordinate containment and clean up of the spill, the company's efforts thus far have not resulted in capping the flow of more than 200,000 gallons of oil into the Gulf each day. With the spill spreading, fear mounting and the region's multi-billion dollar fishing industry shutting down, the Obama Administration has mobilized all appropriate government resources to assist BP in tackling what may well be an unprecedented environmental

# The Legendary Lena Horne Dead at 92

By Pharoh Martin

NNPA National Correspondent

Legendary singer, actress and dancer Lena Horne died on Sunday night at the New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center at the age of 92. The Brooklyn-born entertainer was the first Black performer to be signed to a long-term contract by a major Hollywood studio and who went on to achieve international fame as a singer. The cause of her death has not been reported.

Horne was a mantle of African-American beauty, who as a versatile and iconic performer made her name from a variety of entertainment platforms including the big screen, where she was the first African-American actor to sign to a long-term contract by a major Hollywood studio; in music, where she won four Grammy awards, and in night clubs, where she extensively toured despite the racism that plagued her era.

As an entertainer, Horne's light skin completion allowed her



to traverse through doors that many other Black entertainers had a hard time walking through. Still, she was loved and highly respected because she refused to let herself become "an imitation of a White woman", as she would later say.

Horne got her start in entertainment as a 16-year-old dancer at Harlem's famed Cotton Club and worked the jazz club circuit before jumping into movies with her major studio debut in 1942

with Panama Hattie. Horne's success in movies helped pave the way for actresses such as Halle Berry and Dorothy Dandridge to become silver screen starlets and for crossover entertainers such as Diahann Carroll and Diana Ross to exist. But, more importantly, her pioneering roles helped open doors for African-American actors to rise above subservient roles in Hollywood.

Although born in a Black upper middle-class family, Horne

spent her life cutting through the red tape of racism. Although she has 22 film credits to her name, her outspoken criticism of the unequal treatment of Black soldiers during World War II and her left-leaning political views and associations got her blacklisted from Hollywood for much of the 1950s.

Despite her absence away from the big screen, Horne went on to become one of the most revered night club performers in the post-war period. During the movement for civil rights, Horne was an active participator in marches and protests, including the 1963 March on Washington where she spoke and performed.

Horne spent the last years of her life focused on her musical career. She released her last studio album, "Being Myself", in 1998 on Blue Note records. She was 81 at that time. She received a Tony Award in 1981 for her one-woman Broadway show, "Lena Horne: The Lady and Her Music".

She is being mourned in both the entertainment and social jus-

tice worlds.

"Ms. Horne was a pivotal figure in the entertainment world. She was a consummate entertainer whose dignified stage presence destroyed many of the stereotypes in which other Black entertainers of her era were cast. She was a cross-over success before the term was widely used. Although many have failed to fully acknowledge her civil rights efforts, Ms. Horne used the power of her celebrity to change the shape of racial discrimination in the United States," said Dr. E. Faye Williams, national chair of the National Congress of Black Women in a statement. "Her life was genuinely iconic. The beauty and enjoyment that she brought to the masses with her entertainment will last far longer than many of the entertainers who followed her. She was a unique personality who will truly be missed."

## Mississippi Officials Report Latest Storm Damage Assessment

Special to the NNPA from the Mississippi Link

PEARL, Miss. (NNPA) - Although the death toll remains at six, new reports show that the number of destroyed and damaged homes continue to rise due to the devastating May 1 storm systems that caused major flooding and produced two tornadoes in North Mississippi. Nearly 250 residences were destroyed or have major damage and 482 homes received minor damage. Mississippi Emergency Management Agency personnel and the Mobile Operations Command Center have been in the affected counties since the storm hit.

MEMA also distributed tarps and water to assist victims.

The following counties are reporting damages to the State Emergency Operations Center in Pearl:

- Alcorn: One death; 10 homes and seven mobile homes destroyed; 107 homes and 40

apartments with major damage; 13 homes with minor; 100 roads with major damage; 11 bridges with minor damage; one publicly owned building with major damage; three nonprofit utilities with major damage; assistance needed with shelter support.

- Benton: Two deaths; four injuries; 11 homes and 13 mobile homes destroyed; seven homes and three mobile homes with major damage; 56 homes and 23 mobile homes with minor damage; 10 injuries; 20 roads with major damage; 40 roads with minor damage; one bridge with major damage; 75 people displaced.
- Lafayette: One death; two homes/ mobile homes destroyed; two homes with major damage and 40 homes with minor damage; shelters are closed, but monitoring needs of victims; clean-up efforts continue.
- Lee: One death; one home with

minor damage; trees down; one bridge with major damage

- Marshall: Twenty one homes/mobile homes with minor damage; 8 roads with major damage; 17 roads with minor damage.
- Montgomery: Two homes and six roads with minor damage.
- Prentiss: Ten roads and two bridges with major damage; 100 roads minor damage; city of Booneville issues proclamation.
- Tippah: Six homes/mobile homes destroyed; 29 homes/mobile homes with major damage; 58 homes/mobile homes with minor damage; Nine roads destroyed; eight roads with major damaged; two roads with minor damage; two bridges destroyed; one public building with major damage; one nonprofit building with major damage; city of Ripley issues proclamation.
- Tishomingo: Nine homes with major damage; one mobile

home with major damage; one business with minor damage which is a church that has two buildings; nine roads destroyed; six roads with major damage; 16 roads with minor damage; five bridges/culvert destroyed; three bridges/culverts with major damage.

- Union: One death; 14 homes and 6 mobile homes with minor damage; 15 businesses with minor damage; 28 roads with major damage; one bridge with major damage; one public owned building with minor damage.
- Webster: One injury reported; one home with minor damage; two roads destroyed; three roads with major damage; 70 roads with minor damage.

To report damages contact your local emergency management office. Homeowners with flooding should contact their local floodplain administrator.

For more information, contact the State Emergency Joint Infor-

mation Center at 866-920-MEMA (6362), or visit us online at [www.msema.org](http://www.msema.org). You can also follow us on Twitter and Facebook using the keyword MSEMA.

PEARL, Miss. (NNPA) - Although the death toll remains at six, new reports show that the number of destroyed and damaged homes continue to rise due to the devastating May 1 storm systems that caused major flooding and produced two tornadoes in North Mississippi. Nearly 250 residences were destroyed or have major damage and 482 homes received minor damage. Mississippi Emergency Management Agency personnel and the Mobile Operations Command Center have been in the affected counties since the storm hit.

MEMA also distributed tarps and water to assist victims.

The following counties are reporting damages to the State Emergency Operations Center in Pearl:

# Landrieu: Learn from accident but not change course on U.S. energy security

*Senator also presses BP to commit to pay claims to impacted individuals, businesses and communities.*

U.S. Senator Mary Landrieu, D-La., today at two Senate hearings offered testimony to stress the importance of learning from the Deepwater Horizon accident on April 20, but urged her Senate colleagues not to reverse course on a balanced approach to produce more energy off America's coast.

"I know that this Committee has its eyes on the environment," Sen. Landrieu said to the Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee this afternoon. "We in Louisiana live in that environment. We not only have our eyes in it, we have our heart invested in it and we are making a living on that delta. But we need the oil that comes from offshore to keep this economy moving. We must examine what went wrong, weigh the risk and rewards, fix what is broken and move on to get this country more independent of foreign oil. If we could do without this oil, we would. But we simply cannot - not today, not in the near future."

Sen. Landrieu also outlined that while the Deepwater Horizon accident on April 20 is a tragedy and has resulted in an unprecedented disaster, Congress must take a measured approach in its response.

"Since 1971, not a single spill in the Gulf, or the entire federal OCS, caused by a well blowout exceeded 1,000 barrels of oil," Sen. Landrieu said during the Senate Energy Committee hearing this morning. "We are exceeding 7,000 barrels of oil every day and a half with this current uncontrolled flow. The record will show from 1947 to 2009, 175,813 barrels have been spilled out of 16.5 billion produced. That is one one-thousandth percent of the total production. I think it is important to keep that in perspective. I also think it is important to understand that America uses 20 million barrels of oil a day. We produce less than half of that. Any constriction of domestic oil and gas production, either onshore or offshore, will only further put us in a perilous situation in an over-reliance on foreign oil. That will export some of these problems to countries less-equipped and less-inclined to prevent this kind of catastrophic disaster."

Sen. Landrieu used today's hearing to again press BP officials, including BP President Lamar McKay, to fairly and fully compensate all individuals, businesses and communities who have been and will continue to be negatively affected by the oil di-

saster in the Gulf.

"Since this accident happened I have been down to Louisiana on every occasion that I can get there," Sen. Landrieu said. "Just as late as yesterday I was visiting with elected officials and fishermen who are extremely concerned about what is actually happening on the ground today. My first question is to BP, because this is the question, Mr. McKay, that I get more than any other question: 'will BP pay?' Let me ask it in this way: it is my understanding that you are the lease operator, the responsible party, under the 1990 Act. It is also my understanding that if you are found to be grossly negligent you will automatically be pressed, by the law, to exceed the \$75 million liability cap. My question is if you are not found to be grossly negligent, is BP prepared to pay the full extent of real economic damage, not just to the individual businesses, but to parishes and other government entities that are expending huge amounts of money to try to contain this incident?"

When Mr. McKay answered that BP will pay "all legitimate claims," Sen. Landrieu again pressed him to define "legitimate claim." Mr. McKay replied, "Substantiated claims. I can't define



Senator Mary Landrieu

the term. Here's the intent. The intent is to be fair, responsive and expeditious. As to the \$75 million you mentioned, we think that we are going to exceed that, obviously and that is irrelevant. So, we have been very clear. We are going to pay the claims and the entire resources of BP are behind us."

From 1947 to 2009, there have been 42,645 wells drilled in state and federal waters in the Gulf of Mexico. The first deep well was in 1979. While Senator Landrieu supports continued oil and gas

development through deepwater wells, during today's hearings she urged industry officials to find ways to make this work safer for workers and for the environment.

"Deepwater wells accounted for only four percent of all production in the Gulf in 1990, but today they are responsible for 60 percent. We need their production but we must find a way to do this more safely."

During her testimony in front of the Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee, Sen. Landrieu outlined the challenges facing Louisiana's coast and emphasized that a fair revenue sharing regime for coastal states would help mitigate the impact of any future disasters.

"Our Congressional Delegation has repeatedly come to this Congress for the last 25 years saying that while these resources belong to the federal government, Gulf Coast states, including Florida that does not drill, are absorbing 100 percent of this risk. So revenue sharing is very important from the billions of dollars generated from this industry, to make sure it is safe, that we have the appropriate response, our wetlands are protected and that this country gets the energy it needs."

## Storm damage, continued next page.

- **Alcorn:** One death; 10 homes and seven mobile homes destroyed; 107 homes and 40 apartments with major damage; 13 homes with minor; 100 roads with major damage; 11 bridges with minor damage; one publicly owned building with major damage; three nonprofit utilities with major damage; assistance needed with shelter support.
- **Benton:** Two deaths; four injuries; 11 homes and 13 mobile homes destroyed; seven homes and three mobile homes with major damage; 56 homes and 23 mobile homes with minor damage; 10 injuries; 20 roads with major damage; 40 roads with minor damage; one bridge with major damage; 75 people displaced.
- **Lafayette:** One death; two homes/ mobile homes destroyed; two homes with major damage and 40 homes with minor damage; shelters are closed, but monitoring needs of victims; clean-up efforts continue.
- **Lee:** One death; one home with minor damage; trees down; one bridge with major damage
- **Marshall:** Twenty one homes/mobile homes with minor damage; 8 roads with major damage; 17 roads with minor damage.
- **Montgomery:** Two homes and six roads with minor damage.
- **Prentiss:** Ten roads and two bridges with major damage; 100 roads minor damage; city of Booneville issues proclamation.
- **Tippah:** Six homes/mobile homes destroyed; 29 homes/mobile homes with major damage; 58 homes/mobile homes with minor damage; Nine roads destroyed; eight roads with major damaged; two roads with minor damage; two bridges

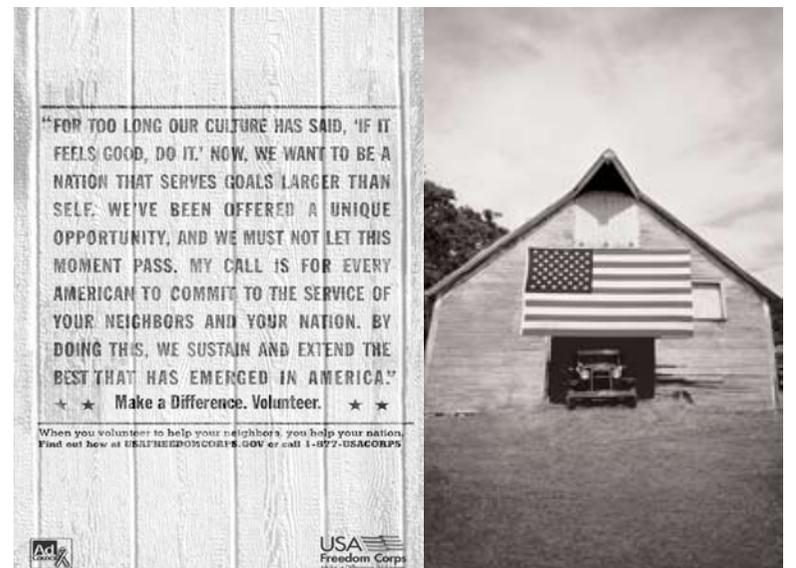
destroyed; one public building with major damage; one nonprofit building with major damage; city of Ripley issues proclamation.

- **Tishomingo:** Nine homes with major damage; one mobile home with major damage; one business with minor damage which is a church that has two buildings; nine roads destroyed; six roads with major damage; 16 roads with minor damage; five bridges/culvert destroyed; three bridges/culverts with major damage.
- **Union:** One death; 14 homes and 6 mobile homes with minor damage; 15 businesses with minor damage; 28 roads with major damage; one bridge with major damage; one public owned building with minor damage.
- **Webster:** One injury reported; one home with minor damage; two roads destroyed; three

roads with major damage; 70 roads with minor damage.

To report damages contact your local emergency management office. Homeowners with flooding should contact their local floodplain administrator.

For more information, contact the State Emergency Joint Information Center at 866-920-MEMA (6362), or visit us online at [www.msema.org](http://www.msema.org). You can also follow us on Twitter and Facebook using the keyword MSEMA.



# Southeast Louisiana Levee Authority Considers Activating Bohemia Spillway To Protect River Marshlands From Oil Damage

The Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority - East (SLFPFAE) is studying the feasibility of activating the Bohemia Spillway in lower Plaquemines Parish to mitigate potential oil spill damage by releasing millions of gallons of freshwater into the rich ecosystems of the marshes east of the Mississippi River.

The Bohemia Spillway is a 12-mile stretch of diversionary structures on the east bank of the Mississippi River at the end of Highway 39 near Narin, Louisiana. It is located approximately 45 miles downriver of New Orleans extending below the terminus of the Mississippi River levees and leading into Bayou Lamoque through 33,000 acres of wildlife rich estuaries and wetlands.

"The Levee Authority, in conjunction with federal, state, parish and local agencies, is exploring every option including the possible beneficial use of the Bohemia Spillway just south of Empire as a way to spare as much potential damage to Louisiana's natural resources threatened by the oil spill," said Tim Doody, president of SLF-

PAE. SLFPFAE's Coastal Advisory Committee member Mark Schexnayder of the LSU AgCenter proposed the idea as a potential tool to lessen the environmental impacts of the growing disaster.

The Bohemia Spillway, a self-activating earthen diversion structure with flow culverts that sends Mississippi River water into the eastern marshlands, has been utilized dozens of times since it was constructed as Louisiana's first flood control spillway in 1924. When the river water rises to certain heights on the Mississippi River, as it did this past winter, water flows over the spillway into adjacent marshlands.

"The Levee Authority is investigating options to lower the earth at the spillway to begin flushing freshwater into the vast areas east of the river that are in danger of damage by the oil spill meandering closer to the ecological life

forms in the marshes facing the Gulf," said Doody. "No decisions will be made without a full understanding of the benefits and potential risks associated with a manual activation."

After further discussions with the participating agencies involved in the oil spill cleanup, the Levee Authority will make a joint decision whether to activate the spillway within the next several days.

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## The Gulf Oil Spill Response.

How to find out more. Where to find help. How to volunteer.

Since the tragic accident on Transocean's Deepwater Horizon rig first occurred, BP has done and continues to do everything possible to respond to the situation. BP has taken full responsibility for dealing with the spill, and is mobilizing its full resources to fight against it in the Gulf of Mexico.

More than 2,500 of BP's operational and technical personnel from around the world are working with many federal, state and local government agencies, local communities and industry experts. Using hundreds of vessels, they are involved in efforts to protect the shore of the Gulf coast, to contain the spill offshore, and to stem the flow of oil from the sub-sea well. Staging posts to help protect the shoreline are in operation at six critical areas, supported by command posts in Houma, Louisiana; Mobile, Alabama; and St. Petersburg, Florida. Thousands of volunteers are being trained to help with the cleanup.

We are grateful for the support of the many volunteers, federal, state, and local government officials, and emergency responders. We are determined to leave nothing undone in the effort to stop the flow and minimize any potential impact.

For current information on the spill and response plan, please go to the following websites:

[www.bp.com/gulfofmexicoresponse](http://www.bp.com/gulfofmexicoresponse)

[www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com](http://www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com)

For assistance or information, please call the following 24/7 hotlines:

To report oil on the shoreline: (866) 448-5816

To report impacted wildlife: (866) 557-1401

To make spill-related claims: (800) 440-0858

For volunteer information: (866) 448-5816





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