

Lighting The Road To The Future

New Orleans

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Essence Highlights

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July 10 - July 16, 2010 45th Year Volume 07 www.ladatanews.com

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Mary J Blige

Recession, Depression, New Orleans and Essence

By Edwin Buggage

New Orleans and Essence

The Essence Festival has come and gone at which time a sea of people flooded the streets for "the party with a purpose." Essence officials are calling the festival a success saying that revenues equaled those of last year. But increased ticket prices may have made up the difference for what to any casual

observer could see that with a line up without recent staple Beyonce and the legendary closers Frankie Beverly and Maze produced a less than capacity crowd.

"I had a good time at Essence but it was not the same," says Anthony Thomas, a New Orleans native and regular attendee of the fest. "Yes it is still a lot of people here but the excitement sur-

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DATA NEWS WEEKLY

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Please call (504) 309-9913 for subscription information. Dated material two weeks in advance. Not responsible for publishing or return of unsolicited manuscripts or photos.

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Mary J Blige Phillip Bailey of Earth Wind & Fire

rounding the performances and festival was not the same this year.”

Have the Economy and Apathy Impacted Essence?

As the economy continues to be in a free fall, and double digit unemployment in the Black community is prevalent, were some people simply priced out? Has the impact of an economic downturn affects attendance? Charles Dicker-

son, a New Orleanian now living in Houston Texas says, “I had plans on going down to the Essence Fest but it was just too expensive this year and with kids and expenses money was just too tight.”

Usually the Essence Festival draws people from all around the nation as well as locals; but with a local Black population that has decreased in addition to Blacks from the

city now living in other cities, could it be that some former residents are not as interested in the city as they were previously?

“I love my city and I went to the seminars versus the shows but the first two days they were more crowded than usual,” says Shayla De LaRose, a New Orleanian now living in Lake Charles, Louisiana. Continuing she says, “I don’t know what the future of the fest is or how do local people fit into it, it was way overpriced for the evening concerts.” “I think that much of the overflow in the daytime was due to that, and also I felt the night shows ran way to long and it had an impact on the after parties as well.”

Essence in Black and White: The Future of Black New Orleans

Usually “the party with a purpose” kicks off with a large gala hosted by the mayor. This year the party as opposed to being at Club Metro with multiple rooms in addition to both local and national entertainment was scaled down and held at Gallier Hall. “In previous years the party although an invitation only event was more inclusive now, it felt exclusive,” says Wilbert “Chill” Wilson, a local entrepreneur whose experiences has been chronicled in media as well as a book entitled, ‘When the Walls Came Down.’ “I feel is this an indication of how the city will deal with Black events in the future, and how Blacks

or small businesses will be factored into the equation of the city that now has a White mayor and majority White city council?” Continuing he says, “I wonder will there be a time when there is a disinvestment or disinterest by the city in Essence as well other Black events moving forward?”

New Orleans is a city with an uncertain future, with a new administration in place that looks very different than it had in previous years. And with this shift will it have an impact on the importance of Black cultural events? Have five years after the calamity that changed the city; have the Black people of the city moved on with their lives and the strands that connected them to the city now not so tight? On a lighter note will Frankie Beverly and Maze return next year to the Essence Fest?

New Orleans is a city that revels in its traditions; it is a place where culture sometimes overrides commerce. But today, the city stands at a crossroads of race, class and economics. Moving forward how will Blacks and the importance of their culture and expressions of their culture in events be viewed and supported by the leadership of the city? With the final question being what will be or better yet, what makes up the ‘Essence’ of New Orleans?

Shoot Ya Best Shot!

Attorney Bates-Anderson Candidacy Announcement Reception



The Essence of Who We Are

Essence Musical Festival 2010



Dionne Character, Author
Entertainment Editor & Columnist

The Essence of who we are was captured in so many venues, brought to us by so many folks from around the country who are at the top of their game, but for the most part, Essence Musical Festival brought together many who just plain ole' love the culture of New Orleans.



Essence Music Festival showcases and mirrors to many that African Americans are on top of the world, as many of us have created our own niche in society using our

God given talents. It replenishes our souls with seminars, gives us something to rejoice about, makes us proud of who we are, as we connect with our ancestry knowing that we are different, resilient, and can overcome any obstacles put before us.



I had the opportunity to sign yet another book during Essence at the Convention Center, interviewed Niecy Nash, Ledesi, Doug E. Fresh, Saints, Michael Williams, who, by the way let me try on his Super Bowl "bling." I signed with the Queen of Erotica, Zane, along with two brothers representing New Orleans, Brian W. Smith, Chuck Brown, II and a host of other authors.

Now, that the festivities are all over and everyone has returned to their pro



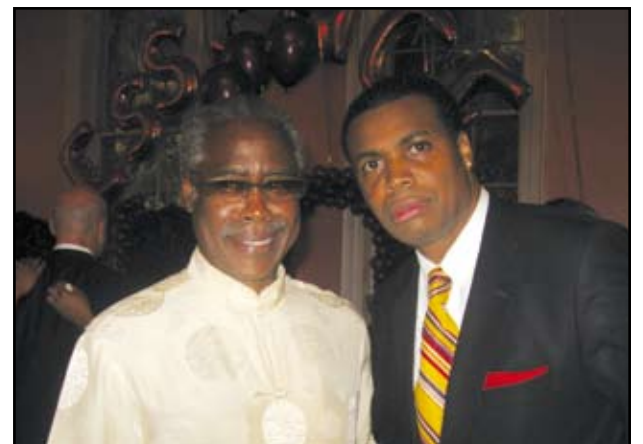
spective cities, I am sure the Essence of New Orleans will remain in the pours of many, because we know how to party and we know how to make strangers feel like friends.

New Orleans is the substance of Essence Music Festival. We are who many desire to be. There ain't no party like a party with the Essence of true New Orleans.

Dionne Character can be reached at www.dionnecharacter.com.

Shoot Ya Best Shot!

Essence Mayor's Reception and Essence Music Festival Suites



photos by Terry Jones & Glenn Summers

Mayor Reacts to Tar Balls in Lake Pontchartrain Basin

Mayor Mitch Landrieu and St. Tammany Parish President Kevin Davis Monday said that they will remain vigilant and that every asset available will be deployed to protect the Lake Pontchartrain basin from further oil encroachment a day after tar balls were first spotted in Lake Borgne and the Rigolets. On Sunday, 680 pounds of oily material were removed from the Rigolets area. Monday, quarter size tar balls were removed from the Treasure Isle vicinity of St. Tammany Parish.

"I was out at Fort Pike earlier this morning and can attest that our assets are in place and crews are picking up tar balls as quickly as the weather conditions permit," said Mayor Landrieu. "We have always asserted that this is going to be a long, tough slog, but I remain confident that every asset we have available is being deployed to protect the Lake."

"We are continuing to utilize all

our resources to remove the tar balls in the area," said President Davis. "We are actively monitoring Lake Borgne, Lake Catherine and Lake Pontchartrain, and using the models to best deploy assets where they will be needed. This is a fight we are committed to, and one which will require both time and resources."

In a combined effort to keep available assets ahead of need, an additional 30 vessels of opportunity are being called into service immediately.

"The oil flow doesn't respect parish boundaries, so we will continue to work together to ensure that every action imaginable is being taken to protect Lake Pontchartrain- an important natural and recreational resource bounded by six parishes- which connects the New Orleans metropolitan area. This disaster threatens both our natural resources and the economic livelihoods of many of our residents and we will

remain vigilant as we fight to save our way of life," said Landrieu and Davis.

Approximately 150,000 feet of boom has been deployed as part of joint protection efforts and 35 barges are in place to close off six different cuts or passes should oil creep farther into Lake Borgne. Additionally, there are 24 skimmer assets in the area ready to collect approaching oil with more on the way.

Orleans and St. Tammany Parish officials have worked cooperatively since the week before the beginning of Mayor Landrieu's administration. They have developed integrated boom and berm plans to protect Lake Pontchartrain, Lake Borgne and Lake Catherine while ensuring these plans were



Mayor Mitch Landrieu

tied into those developed by St. Bernard Parish. In addition to a multi-tiered boom deployment effort, the U.S. Navy drilled pilings in Lake Borgne at the Rigolets, Chef Menteur Pass, and four other cuts or passes to which barges were tied, and if necessary, can

be closed to keep oil out of Lake Pontchartrain.

Last week, officials from both parishes requested 9,000 feet of a permeable filter fence material called X-Tex, which can be placed on the shoreline to impede oil while letting water pass through. An additional request of X-Tex is expected to be made this week.

In late May, Mayor Landrieu and President Davis asked the U.S. Coast Guard to approve the building a series of earthen berms and rock dikes in Lake Borgne from Alligator Bend to the East Pearl River. The Alligator Bend and Seven Lagoons Shoreline Projection Projects were originally developed to restore the coast as part of the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act (Breau Act), but can also prevent oil from encroaching into the marshland along Lake Borgne and help protect the lower Pontchartrain Basin.

Local Students Unveil Mural to Raise Awareness about Gulf Oil Spill

In a continued commitment to raise awareness surrounding the tragic events occurring in the Gulf of Mexico, over 50 students from grades K-12 enrolled in Young Audiences summer camps throughout the Greater New Orleans area this week unveiled an art mural developed to heighten awareness surrounding the Gulf Oil Spill.

The mural is the culmination of a month's long environmental education and empowerment program designed by students to remind state and federal elected officials about the fragility of our natural habitat. It was unveiled Wednesday, July 7, at Livaudais Middle School. The mural was created with the guidance of famed local

artist and photographer Clifton Faust.

The students also debuted a song and created in response to the ongoing disaster in the Gulf as well as letters written to elected officials about the ongoing disaster from their point of view. The letters and song were written by children in Young Audiences summer camps.

Before creating the mural, students from Young Audiences summer camps visited the UNO-Pontchartrain Institute for Environmental Sciences to gain hands-on understanding of the Southeast Louisiana coast and the far-reaching implications of the oil-spill.

"FOR TOO LONG OUR CULTURE HAS SAID, 'IF IT FEELS GOOD, DO IT.' NOW, WE WANT TO BE A NATION THAT SERVES GOALS LARGER THAN SELF. WE'VE BEEN OFFERED A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY, AND WE MUST NOT LET THIS MOMENT PASS. MY CALL IS FOR EVERY AMERICAN TO COMMIT TO THE SERVICE OF YOUR NEIGHBORS AND YOUR NATION. BY DOING THIS, WE SUSTAIN AND EXTEND THE BEST THAT HAS EMERGED IN AMERICA."

★ ★ **Make a Difference. Volunteer.** ★ ★

When you volunteer to help your neighbors, you help your nation.
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Attorney Candice Bates Anderson Announces Candidacy

Attorney Candice Bates Anderson has announced her candidacy for the Section C Orleans Parish Juvenile Court Judgeship this week.

Dooky Chase hosted the kick-off to Candice Anderson's run for Orleans Parish Juvenile Court. It was a joyous event and those in attendance were former Councilwoman Cynthia Willard-Lewis, Orleans Parish Criminal Court Judges Ben Willard, Judge Lynda Van Davis, Orleans Parish Traffic Court Judge Robert Jones, Orleans Parish Civil District Court Judge Angelique Reed, Judge Charles Imbornone, Clerk of Court Arthur Morrell, former State Representative Sherman Copeland, Assessor Errol Williams and a host of other dedicated supporters.

Anderson received her bachelor's degree from Clarke Atlanta University and her law degree from Tulane University School of Law and has been a practicing attorney in New Orleans for 14 years. Anderson has served as Ad

Hoc Judge for the First City Court of Orleans Parish and has worked as a Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) in the juvenile justice system.

"As the daughter of Penelope Randolph Biagas and granddaughter of Dorothy Randolph, both social workers, I've spent my life seeing a need to reach out and inspire the lives of our children and juveniles. I believe my passion for children and my belief in the juvenile justice system would be an asset to my ability to serve as a Juvenile Judge," Anderson said.

Anderson served as judicial law clerk for the Honorable Charles Imbornone, as staff counsel for the Regional Transit Authority and currently serves as partner in the law firm of Anderson and Darendsburg.

Actively involved in the community, Anderson is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, and a past member of the Pontchartrain Chapter of the Links Incorporated, a current



Sheriff Marlin Gusman, Aaron Anderson, Attorney Candice Bates Anderson and their twin daughters, Penelope and Caydance Anderson. Photo: Terry Jones.

board member of the New Orleans Regional Business District Park and a former board member of the St. Mark's Community

Center. She is a member of the Historic Faubourg Tremé neighborhood association. Candice is married to Aaron and has twin

daughters, Penelope and Caydance Anderson.

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GREAT PARTY? **Your Picture Here**

TOUCHING FAMILY MOMENT? **Your Picture Here**

NEW LOVE? **Your Picture Here**

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

Beating the odds isn't about winning, it's about living. You have the power to end stroke. 1-888-4-STROKE / StrokeAssociation.org

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Sean Kennedy Santos



Darryl Willis
BP Claims

Making This Right

- Beaches
- Claims**
- Cleanup
- Economic Investment
- Environmental Restoration
- Health and Safety
- Wildlife

My name is Darryl Willis and I’m responsible for overseeing BP’s claims process in the Gulf coast. I was born and raised in Louisiana. At age 70, my mother lost her home to Hurricane Katrina. Afterwards, she experienced enormous frustration. So I know first hand that when tragedy strikes on a scale like this, people need help without a lot of hassles.

Independent Claims Compensation Fund

Working with the President, we’ve created a \$20 billion fund to satisfy all legitimate claims. This fund will be administered by a highly respected independent overseer and will not come at any cost to taxpayers.

How To File A Claim

To speed help, BP’s Claims Center is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The number is 1-800-440-0858. When someone calls, they’ll find out how to submit their claim and can schedule a face-to-face meeting with one of our claims specialists. After meeting, we will be in touch in four days or less and can issue them a check right on the spot. They can also file online at bp.com/claims.

Replacing Lost Monthly Income

Our focus has been on helping the fishermen, small businesses and others who aren’t able to work until the spill is cleaned up, by making payments to replace their lost monthly income. These payments will continue for as long as needed.

We have already paid tens of thousands of claims amounting to more than \$100 million. We have recently simplified and accelerated the payment of commercial large loss claims. Over one thousand people are here to help in 33 walk-in claims offices in the Gulf. We have promised to honor all legitimate claims and we will.

Our Responsibility

The Gulf is my home. Doing this right is important to me. My commitment is that we will keep you informed, and we’ll be here as long as it takes. We may not always be perfect, but we will make this right.

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