

Lighting The Road To The Future

New Orleans

Data

News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

Data Zone

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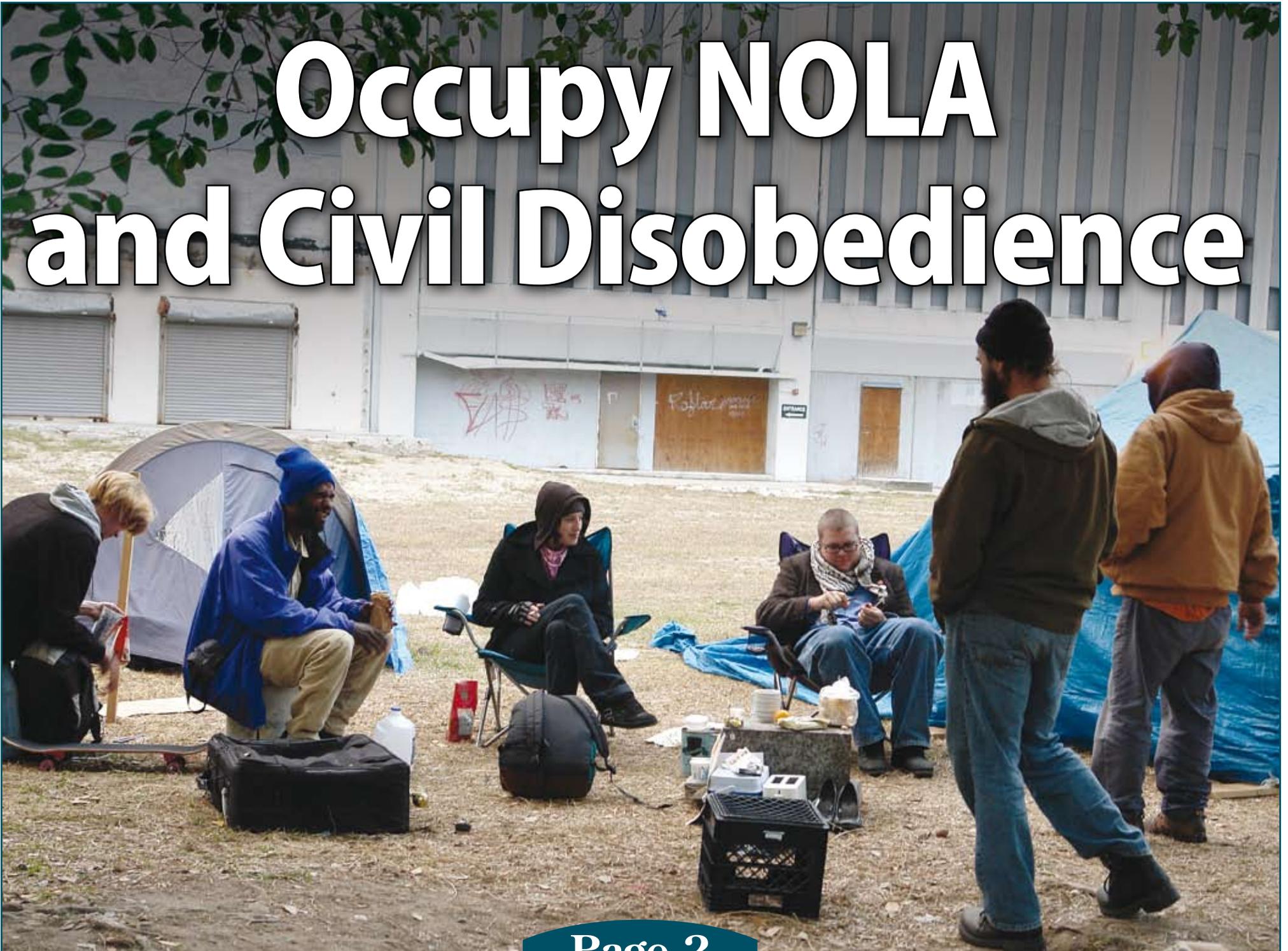
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Occupy NOLA and Civil Disobedience



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Occupy NOLA and Civil Disobedience



People of Occupy NOLA Movement inside of Duncan Plaza.

By Edwin Buggage
Photos by Glenn Summers

The Origins of a Movement

America is in a state of turmoil with a crashing economy and growing inequality, a movement originally fueled by the energy of young people formed Occupy Wall Street; where people came together through grassroots organizing to fight for

change. As the world economy is in a state of flux and the promise of if you work hard and access to the American Dream was obtainable. In contrast today this is a fading reality. According to the Congressional Budget Office from 1992 to 2007 the top 1 percent of Americans income grew by an average of 275 % and in 2007 the top 1% owned 34% of wealth in the U.S.

This state of affairs of today's crumbling global economy paints a bleak picture for the future of many people across the globe that by no fault of their own have the means to maintain or sustain

themselves. These conditions have given birth to the Occupy Movement. In cities spanning the globe people are organizing to fight for what they feel is their right, the right to self-determination and the end of inequality.

Questioning the Right to Protest

As this movement began to take shape, in early October concerned citizens converged on Duncan Plaza, which stands several hundred yards away from New Orleans City Hall. After two months of occupation at this site and several legal battles

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P.O. Box 57347, New Orleans, LA 70157-7347 | Phone: (504) 821-7421 | Fax: (504) 821-7622
editorial: datanewseditor@bellsouth.net | advertising: datanewsad@bellsouth.net

Terry B. Jones
CEO/Publisher
Glenn Jones
VP Advertising
& Marketing
Cheryl Mainor
Managing Editor
Edwin Buggage
Editor
Lynesia Carson
Executive Assistant
June Hazeur
Accounting

Contributors
Edwin Buggage
Kichea S. Burt
Kingfish
Marc H. Morial
Cheryl Pearson-McNeil
Dwight Ott
Glenn Summers

Art Direction & Production
MainorMedia.com
Editorial Submissions
datanewseditor@bellsouth.net
Advertising Inquiries
datanewsad@bellsouth.net

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Cover Story, Continued from previous page.

a federal judge finally ruled against the occupiers. Amidst a sea of controversy Mayor Mitch Landrieu in a statement to the media stated, "Judge Africk's decision is a welcome decision. The Constitution and the Bill of Rights are precious documents that govern our behavior and help maintain both freedom and liberty. That is why wherever there is a right; there is also a responsibility to exercise that right in a way that does not infringe on the rights of other American citizens. A person's right to free speech, perhaps the most precious right in a democracy, is tempered by and balanced with the rights of other citizens," Landrieu statement is one where he is trying to appease his opponents and solve this issue but his actions caused a firestorm among his critics.

One of his critics and person who took part in the Occupy New Orleans Movement is author Shahed Wali Muhammad, a retired N.O.P.D officer who was then known as Charles Kelly. He says the protest was peaceful demonstrations and the people took care of the park and simply wanted their voices to be heard. "These are real issues that the people in the City and for that matter the country are dealing with, a lack of hope for their future and getting the basic things they need; and Mayor Landrieu is in a position to help the people but he refuses to listen; he came into office talking about bringing people together but it seems he is working against the people who helped him get elected," Muhammad told Data News Weekly.

Occupy Movement and the Right to Fight

In another controversial move against the protesters a week before Judge Africk's decision to shut down the encampment site, 150 policeman came out in the middle of the night placing barricades around the occupiers and told them to leave the site while people watched as sanitation workers came to clean up the area and many of the occupiers belongings were not spared in the process according to Allison McCrary, member of the Sisters of St. Joseph's and Attorney for Occupy NOLA, "I was told by Chief Serpas that there would not be any evictions on that Monday, but as I watched I was very disappointed as the police came out in force remov-

ing people from the site, as sanitation trucks crushed some people's textbooks, laptops, cell phones and even medicine's and wheelchairs."

After the ruling against them Occupy NOLA defiant in their fight issued a statement about what they've accomplished and that their fight for justice is not over; "Collectively, we have forged lasting bonds and mobilized for the common good. Occupy NOLA members have held numerous marches addressing diverse issues of economic and social justice. We have protested irresponsible financial practices as part of the National Bank Transfer Day. "Occupy the Stage" events, held at Alexander Plaza (Duncan Plaza), have provided an outlet for creative expression, art, music, and healing. Marching in the streets and demonstrating in front of our elected representatives' homes, we have asked for a real plan to eradicate homelessness. We have spoken out against the unjust seizure of foreclosed homes, formed economics discussion groups, held civil disobedience trainings, and provided mutual aid—including the provision of over 1500 meals for free to those most in need in our City."

In Search of Truth

In the mainstream media there have been many stories of the occupiers as simply a bunch of miscreants and undesirables. Activist Nadra Enzi, known in the community as Captain Black is one of the occupiers and was the name plaintiff in the temporary restraining order that allowed Occupy NOLA to return to Duncan Plaza after the early morning raid by NOPD. He says this mischaracterization of the occupiers is a myth, talking to Data News Weekly he said, "I would like to say there was a spirit of unity out there and it was not a bunch of people out their making a ruckus, but people concerned about their future and the future of others." Continuing he says, "We made sure that there was no drug use or alcohol, it was people simply making a statement about inequality."

While historically there have been problems within the NOPD and instances of excessive force used, Captain Black says that although he is taking part in civil disobedience he believes in law and order. Harkening back to one of the signs he held during the Occupy Movement, "One

of the signs we had, 'I support good cops not bad policy,' I feel some of the policies by the top brass in the NOPD and this administration are as bad if not worse than George Wallace and Bull Conner in Alabama when they tried to suppress the Civil Right Movement in the 1960's."

Civil Disobedience

In another part of the statement released by the Mayor's Office following the decision to shut down Duncan Plaza to the Occupiers justifying their actions the week before, "Last Tuesday, the City moved forward with well-planned, well-executed enforcement of city and state laws in Duncan Plaza. We did so in a fashion that respected the First Amendment rights of those in the park within the bounds of the law that protected the common good. Our actions—successfully cleaning the park, housing homeless individuals, and reducing the threats to public health and safety—were lawful, fair, and reasonable." Continuing he said, "As Mayor I believe that we have balanced the rights and responsibilities of all citizens of New Orleans according to the law. In this regard, we have preserved liberty and justice for all."

Activist Captain Black disagrees with Mayor Landrieu on this point, "This is not justice, this was an opportunity for Mitch to do the right thing and it is unfortunate that he chose not to." While the Occupiers have been in the plaza for two months and have been protesting around the City even in front of the home of Mayor Landrieu, they feel this defeat in court is not the end but only the beginning of the next step in their movement. "This is not the end of our movement because the conditions continue to exist, blight, poverty, people's homes being foreclosed on and a lack of hope among people, so we will continue to fight and as we continue it will take different forms moving forward," says Allison McCrary. Captain Black adds, "For what we have been able to do I feel good we stood up for the 99% and that is the great thing about this movement is not about Black or White, democrat or republican it is about people who want to live in a fair and just society." Continuing he says, "We drew attention to serious issues that affect our society and I hope this is not the end but only the beginning."



Occupy NOLA has been moved from settlement in Duncan Plaza but vows to continue movement.



Occupy NOLA says movement's purpose is focused on securing the American Dream for all citizens of the nation.

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Tulane Names First Black Head Football Coach

Curtis Johnson Named Tulane Head Football Coach

Tulane Director of Athletics Rick Dickson announced last week the appointment of New Orleans Saints' Receivers Coach Curtis Johnson as the Green Wave's new Head Football Coach at a news conference at the James W. Wilson Jr., Center.

A New Orleans native and graduate of St. Charles High School, Johnson becomes the 39th Head Coach in school history. He brings over 25 years of coaching experience from both the collegiate and professional level to the Green Wave and has been a part of an NFL Championship with the New Orleans Saints and an NCAA National Championship with the University of Miami (Fla.) Hurricanes.

"Coach Johnson has a proven track record at the collegiate and professional levels," said Tulane President Scott Cowen. "His Saints Super Bowl ring and national championship at the University of Miami are witness to the quality of programs that he has played an instrumental part in taking to the highest levels of achievement. Finally, he's a New Orleanian with an outstanding record as a recruiter with a reputation as a great developer, motivator and leader of men. I am confident he will be highly successful in building a culture and a sustained record of winning."

Johnson, 50, makes the short trip to the Tulane campus after spending the last five seasons (2006-2011) as the wide receivers coach for the New Orleans Saints. During his time with the Saints, he and his electrifying receiving corps helped the franchise to its first NFL title in 2009 and New Orleans has made playoff appearances in three of his five seasons.

"After conducting an extensive, thorough national search, we consistently gravitated to someone close to home that best fit our profile," Dickson said. "Curtis Johnson is a man of impeccable character and integrity. He has



Curtis Johnson a New Orleans native and graduate of St. Charles High School, becomes the 39th Head Football Coach, in Tulane's history and the first African American to hold the position.

demonstrated a remarkable knack to evaluate, recruit and develop talented young men to their maximum capacity as both student-athletes and professionals at the highest level. He is a leader, motivator and effective teacher, who diligently strives for excellence. His relentless will to win makes him the right man for Tulane."

The Saints have been rewarded with outstanding results from his wide receiver group since his arrival in 2006. He came to New Orleans after forging a reputation for developing top-flight targets on the college level for over two decades, and his stature has only grown on the NFL level.

"Today is a dream come true for me," Johnson said. "I would

like to thank Scott Cowen and Rick Dickson for entrusting me with this wonderful opportunity. I am truly excited to be Tulane's Head Coach. "As a New Orleanian, I grew up watching the Green Wave and have always wanted to be a part of their football program. It is a true honor to work at such a prestigious academic university and I look forward to building the football program into a consistent winner and annual bowl participant. I want to win championships and compete for national titles and I will work tirelessly to make this program into a perennial contender."

Over the last five and half seasons, Johnson has worked with both veteran and young wide re-

ceivers, with all benefitting from his guidance and high-energy teaching style. Among the players who have continued to improve under his watch through their own dedication and his tutelage are Marques Colston, Devery Henderson, Robert Meachem and Lance Moore.

Johnson boasts a list of prominent pupils that very few coaches at any level can match. While specializing with wide receiver development, the group of standouts under his direction while at University of Miami (Fla.) and his prior stop at San Diego State includes some of the top wide receivers over the last decade, including NFL first-round picks Andre Johnson, Santana Moss,

fellow New Orleans native Reggie Wayne and Yatil Green.

At Miami (Fla.), Johnson was part of a staff that went to nine bowl games and won the 2001 National Championship. He polished the skills of at least one All-Big East performer each season from 1996-2005, including Johnson - the third overall pick by Houston in 2003 - and Moss, who became the Hurricanes' all-time leader in receiving yardage before making the Pro Bowl for the Washington Redskins. Wayne departed ranked first in school history in catches is a five time Pro Bowl performer for the Indianapolis Colts.

In his five-year stint at San Diego State (1989-93) Johnson landed some of the school's biggest recruits, including 2000 NFL MVP and fellow New Orleans native Marshall Faulk, who was recently inducted into the NFL Hall of Fame, as well as wide receiver Darnay Scott, who completed his eight-year NFL career with 408 grabs and 37 touchdowns. Each year Johnson was with the Aztecs, the school had an all-conference performer at wide receiver.

Johnson began his coaching career as a Receivers Coach at Lewiston (Idaho) High School in 1984, serving for three seasons before holding a similar position at the University of Idaho. He spent 1987 and 1988 at the school before becoming Receivers Coach at San Diego State. His next stop was at Southern Methodist in 1994 before becoming Wide Receivers Coach in 1995 at the University of California-Berkeley.

Johnson attended the University of Idaho and received his Bachelor's Degree in Physical Education in 1985. He was a four-year starter for the Vandals and an All-Big Sky Conference selection.

Johnson and his wife, Angel, have six children, Janene, Kiejon, Curtis III, and Aaron, Angele and Justin. Curtis III is a junior receiver on the University of Memphis football team.



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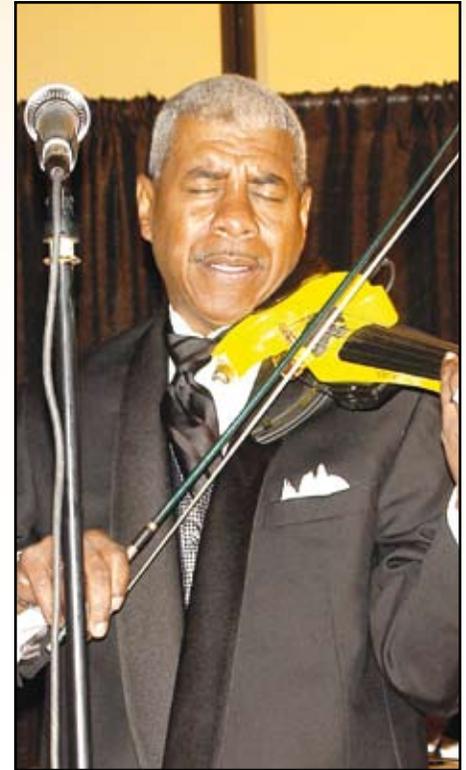
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Shoot Ya Best Shot!

100 Black Men Scholarship Gala

Recently 100 Black Men held its Scholarship Gala where they raised money for young people's education and recognized leaders from the community and Data News Weekly was there.

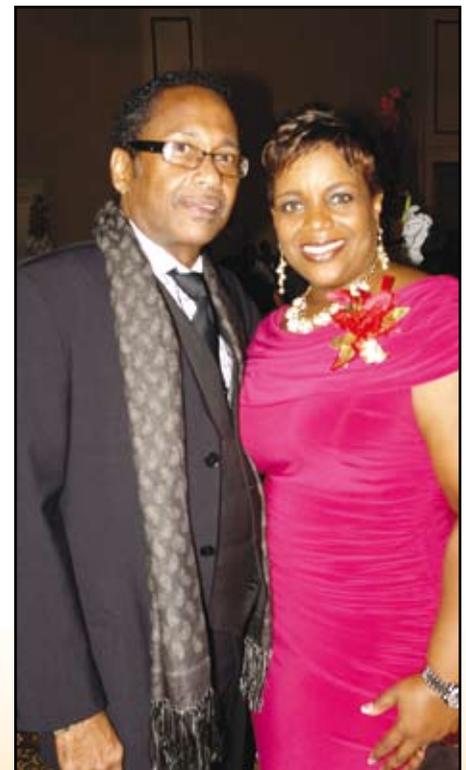
Photos by Glenn Summers



Ring in the Holidays

The holidays are upon us and businesswoman Lisa Crinel owner of Abide Home Healthcare held a holiday party at her new establishment Lace Reception Hall located in New Orleans East and Data News Weekly was there to catch the night of holiday cheer.

Photos by Glenn Summers

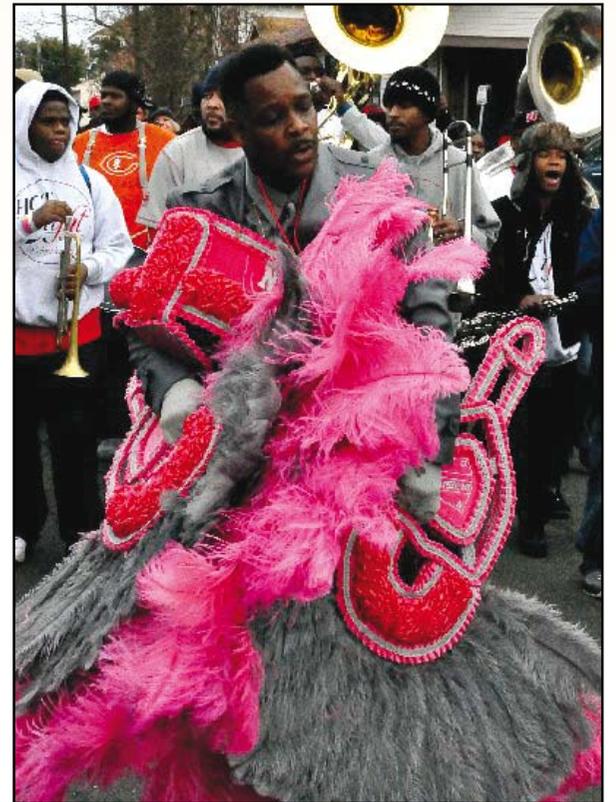


Shoot Ya Best Shot!

It takes One Man to Make a Difference

Photos by Kichea S. Burt

On Sunday Dec 11, 2011 New Generation Social Aid & Pleasure Club was scheduled to second line but the weather did not want to cooperate. The police escort cars were ready and the Hot 8 Brass Band too, as well as a sprinkling of photographers, spectators and participants but, there was no New Generation SA & PC. Except, that is, for Big T who saved the day. Big T paraded with the band and the crowd, and put on a show that proved righteous!!! It's true, one man can make a difference, and Data was there!



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Child Poverty

A Moral Outrage and Wake Up Call



Marc Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League

To Be Equal

“A country that does not stand for and protect its children – our seed corn for the future – does not stand for anything.” Marian Wright Edelman, President of the Children’s Defense Fund

Last week the Census Bureau delivered disturbing news about how the Great Recession

and its aftermath are affecting the most vulnerable among us – America’s school children. Out of a total of 3,142 counties in the United States, 653 saw significant increases in poverty among school-aged children from 2007-2010 – an increase of 20 percent. Nationally, 19.8 percent of school children are now living in poverty.

This poverty increase has hit large, urban school systems the hardest with 96 of the 100 biggest school districts reporting increases in the number of poor children. In Detroit, 47 percent of school children are poor. In New York, the poverty rate rose to 29 percent, up from 26.6 percent in 2007. This is a moral outrage. While the debate drags on in Washington about the right bal-

ance of spending cuts and taxes, a real and preventable tragedy is unfolding before our eyes. Through no fault of their own, millions more children whose parents have lost jobs, are in need of free school lunches, are going without health care and, as depicted in a recent “60 Minutes” segment, are homeless and even living in cars.

The new Census Bureau report comes on the heels of news in September that the number of poor people in America has risen to 46.2 million – that’s 15 percent of all citizens and the largest number in 52 years. Many previously middle-class families are finding themselves standing in line at food banks and homeless shelters. And, according to the Children’s Defense Fund, one-in-

three African-American and Hispanic children are living in poverty. This should be a loud and urgent wake-up call to Congress and policy makers.

By the end of this year, only weeks away, if Congress fails to act, already struggling families face the end of the payroll tax cut. This would add about \$1000 to a family’s tax bill. The extension of unemployment benefits is also in jeopardy. According to the non-partisan Center for Budget Policy and Priorities, unemployment benefits together with supports like the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit are keeping 7 million people out of poverty.

Beth Davalos, who runs Families in Transition in Seminole County, Florida, was interviewed

for the “60 Minutes” segment on children living in cars. She explained in stark terms the impact poverty is having on a kindergarten child she was trying to help: “That little 5-year-old was so troubled over where she would be sleeping; she was not thinking about 2 + 2.” The fact is, we should not even be talking about child poverty in the richest nation on earth. We have the means; we simply need to summon the will to end it. If we can find the money to bail out Wall Street and give tax breaks to the wealthy, surely we can find the resources to provide food, shelter, health care and a good education for our children.

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

An iHoliday, Anyone?

Cheryl Pearson-McNeil NNPA Columnist

When parents read the holiday classic, *The Night before Christmas* to their children, assuming of course this is a tradition that is still being followed, are they doing it from a classic picture book? Or from an electronic device that ensures “visions of sugarplums” are literally dancing in full color across a tablet’s screen? Do little girls still ask Santa for Barbies or Easy Bake Ovens (amazing what a strong light bulb can do, isn’t it)? And, little boys for trucks and action figures? Do either still ask for shiny new bikes? (I was so excited the Christmas I got a tandem – you know a bicycle built for two – and I begged my mom to let me ride it right then and there in the snow ... Best Christmas ever!) But, sadly no. According to a recent Nielsen survey, now when children make out their lists, there is a very good chance they are asking for an iPad. Yes, you heard me correctly.

Nielsen tracks, measures and analyzes everything consumers watch and purchase around the globe, especially during this time of year, and our data shows that the Apple iPad is at the top of the electronics request list among nearly half (44%) of the 6-12 year old set. That number is up from 31% in 2010. I’m sorry, but I waited until my son was 12 before I even considered getting him a no bells and whistles cell phone, so any phone at age six would be out of the question, let alone an iPad. Other “i” products round out the wish list for this holiday season – the Apple iPod Touch (30%) and iPhone (27%). Apple isn’t monopolizing the list, though – 25% of younger consumers want computers and other tablet brands.

Games are still big. Er, no, I’m not talking about Monopoly, Sorry or Connect Four. (A few personal favorites). Research shows that many of today’s kids are asking for Nintendo 3DS (25%) and Kinect for Xbox360 (23%). Younger

children are perfectly happy to ask for older game systems like Nintendo DS (22%), PlayStation 3 (17%) and Xbox360 (16%).

The Nielsen survey results indicate that those of us over age 13 also have iPads more on our wish lists this year (24%) than in 2010 (18%). Thanks to Apple iPads, there seems to be new tablet offerings popping up left and right – and 17% of us are interested in those brands. Even with the popularity of the all-inclusive tablets, 18% of adults and older teens are expressing an interest in E-Readers, which is slightly up from a year ago (15%).

I always feel more connected when I realize that people around the globe are much more alike than we are different. We Americans are not alone with technology topping the gift-giving (and gift asking) department. Another recent Nielsen survey conducted in 56 countries reveals that technology ranks number one around the world, followed by clothing

and books. And, even though holiday traditions differ around the world, the universal theme for us all (well, most of us, anyway) is celebrating on a budget. We’ve got to pay for those fancy electronics, clothes, or books and whatever else may be on our shopping lists. Here’s how we stack up against the rest of the world in terms of our pocketbooks:

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of global consumers expect to spend the same or less on holiday gifts this year than last.

Most Americans surveyed (66%) plan to spend the same as they did in 2010.

About half (48%) of global consumers expect to spend about the same as last year.

25% of global consumers plan to spend less this year.

11% (concentrated in the Asia Pacific and Middle East regions) plan to spend more this holiday.

15% do not purchase holiday gifts.

Shopping on a “budget” may

mean different things to different consumers. Fifty percent have budgeted between \$250 and \$500 to spend this holiday season. Thirty percent plan to spend between \$500 and \$1,000. Only 17 percent report plans to spend more than \$1,000. These are good figures to keep in mind as you venture out for Holiday shopping. Always the procrastinator, I’ve perpetually been a late Holiday shopper, sometimes right up until Christmas Eve. In keeping with my pattern, I will just be getting started this weekend.

Whether you celebrate Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, Christmas or any other shopping opportunity, remember the reason for the season. Now get out there and embrace your consumer power like never before. Happy Holidays!

Cheryl Pearson-McNeil is Senior Vice President of Public Affairs and Government Relations for Nielsen. For more information and studies go to www.nielsen/africanamerican.com

Dillard University Appoints Ruth Simmons and Ronald Burns to Board of Trustees

Dillard University has appointed two new members to its board of trustees: Dr. Ruth J. Simmons, President of Brown University, and Mr. Ronald V. Burns Sr., President and C.E.O. of BMG Enterprises.

"I am very excited to welcome these two stellar individuals to Dillard University's Board of Trustees," said Joyce Roche, the Board's Chair. "Between their appointment and the recent announcement of Dr. Walter Kimbrough as our next president, it is a very exciting time at Dillard."

Ruth J. Simmons has served as President of Brown University since July 3, 2001 and plans to step down from that position at the end of the 2011-2012 academic year. She was President of Smith College from 1995 until the time of her appointment at Brown.

A native of Texas and a 1967 graduate of Dillard University, Simmons received her Ph.D. in Romance Languages and Litera-



Dr. Ruth J. Simmons

tures from Harvard University in 1973. She was recently appointed by President Obama as a member of the President's Commission on White House Fellowships. In 2001, Time Magazine named her America's Best College President. In 2007, she was named one of U.S. News & World Report's top U.S. leaders.

Ronald V. Burns Sr. owns BMG Enterprises, a diverse corporation consisting of three different businesses. Burns graduated from Dillard University in 1973 with a B.S. in Accounting. In 1974, he assumed the position of Vice President and Internal Auditor with Liberty Bank and Trust Company, which he held until 1984.

In 1984, Burns founded Quick Courier Services, Inc., a same-day delivery and logistics service. In 1992, he started Burns Management Group, a consulting firm with an emphasis on business development and government relationships. In 1993, he founded Global Parking Systems, a parking management company whose clients include Louis Armstrong International Airport, Los Angeles International Airport, San Francisco International Airport, and the William Hobby and George W. Bush airports in Houston.

City and FEMA announce new funding for City Streets

Neighborhoods Including Broadmoor, Lakeview, Lakeshore-Lake Vista, Milneburg and St. Claude Join Lower 9th Ward for New Funding Approved

Mayor Mitch Landrieu and FEMA officials have announced over \$52 million in new funding for neighborhood street repairs following the Landrieu administration's prioritization of a second assessment of neighborhood streets. The first neighborhood to have new funds obligated in this program was the Lower Ninth Ward in August 2011 which included approximately \$45 million for street repairs, a major infrastructure improvement targeted for one of the hardest hit neighborhoods in Hurricane Katrina. This round of obligated funding includes other hard-hit neighborhoods including:

- Broadmoor- \$4.8 million;
- Lakeshore/Lake Vista- \$7.5 million;
- Lakeview- \$16.7 million;
- Milneburg- \$1.3 million;

• and St. Claude- \$21.8 million.

During Katrina, roadways throughout New Orleans were inundated with flood waters, resulting in widespread street damages. Additionally, excessive weight from emergency vehicles and construction trucks on the already vulnerable roadways caused further damages. As such, these additional eligible damages have been realized.

"Our recent grants are not only noteworthy in terms of dollars but significant in what they actually represent—ongoing, joint recovery efforts between local, state and federal leaders," said FEMA's Louisiana Recovery Office Acting Executive Director Joseph Threat. "Such committed teamwork always benefits those directly affected by disasters. In this case, the citizens of New Orleans who were greatly impacted by Hurricane Katrina will now see streets throughout many of their neighborhoods repaired and made safer for travel."

Data News Weekly Editorial

The GOP and the Search for a Great White Hope

By Edwin Buggage

Today's political climate and its media coverage have become more of a sport, more spectacle than spectacular. Much of it focuses not so much on issues; it is about polling, sound bites and other things that in my view trivialize the democratic process. As I look at the GOP Nomination Contest I feel it is akin to a reality show, meets a bad horse race, where what may have once been thoroughbreds are now mules plowing along. I feel we are in a shameful state in this country when a political party refuses to embrace real change. And refuses to acknowledge things that are going on in a society that is transforming itself in so many ways, and a major political party that refuses to rebrand itself and embrace the wide diversity that is The United States today.

I look at the GOP and wonder why it is still using old strategies to fight a new fight where the rules of engagement have changed since the days of their hero who is invoked in every de-

bate, Ronald Reagan. Further, I would like to say that when the candidates go through these joint presentations or side shows that passes off as debates there is an underlying issue that many of the pundits are either ignoring or too afraid to discuss in a public forum when analyzing the race for the Oval Office. Absent in their analysis is the primary reason that President Barack Obama could lose the race for the White House in 2012 is not about his handling of the economy, but because he is an African-American.

If history serves as evidence of this practice of racial paranoia or panic when there is an African-American first we can look at the first African-American Heavyweight Champion Jack Johnson. Gaining the title during the beginning of the 20th Century, a time of racial repression where the mere thought of him having the title infuriated many. This led the American Writer Jack London to call for "A Great White Hope," to win the title and restore the rightful place of the White man in society. Today

a century later some of this type of psychology or more accurately the pathology of historical racism is the primary reason some will not vote for Barack Obama.

As we enter the presidential season, if I were to grade Barack Obama he would receive a 90% approval rating. Here is a man who has restored honor to the Oval Office. There has been no Watergate, Iran-Contra, Monica Lewinsky, perjury or impeachment proceedings, or an ill-timed unjust war and eight years of general incompetence. During the last Presidential campaign cycle there were questions of Obama's ability to lead, today he is the man who is responsible for leading to the death of one of the man responsible for 9/11 Osama Bin Laden, and soon troops will be coming home to reunite with their families. Healthcare Reform has given many who weren't covered health insurance; he has ushered in student loan reform, during his first term he helped save the American auto industry, thus saving many American jobs. This is only

a short list of accomplishments of a man who ran a campaign centered on bringing people together and making this country and the world a better place.

Today, as I look at the field of GOP candidates all I see is the politics of old; negative and polarizing rhetoric that does not bring Americans closer together, but drives a wedge between us. I ask what would a presidency by any of the GOP candidates really look like and how will it seal our place in the world with such a narrow thinker as our Commander-in-Chief in a world that has changed so much? We need a leader that understands the Cold War is over and cowboy rhetoric and posturing does not work anymore in a world that requires more diplomacy than diatribes and dictates to our partners in the world. Also we are in a world that is less and less looking to old White men to lead, and that there are others whether it is woman or people of color "the new majority" that are fit to lead.

It is time for the GOP to embrace the fact that this country is

changing for the better and to revert to the politics of old is a move in the wrong direction. It is perhaps time for the GOP to rethink itself less as the "Grand Old Party" and look at today assisting in ushering in an age for this nation as a "Great Opportunity for Progress." Those in the Republican Party must realize that it is foolhardy to turn back the hands of progress. And that as opposed to looking for a "Great White Hope," should consider looking for a "Great Right Hope," with policies and rhetoric that can bring people together in the spirit of unity in this great nation. It is time for the modern GOP to embrace change and realize that the citizens of America may come here on different ships but now we are all in the same boat. And when making a decision on electing a president it is not about a Black or White president but the right president. Someone that can restore hope and fuel the positive change we all desire, and if we can achieve that Lady Liberty's light will shine brighter on this nation.

Gingrich's Idea Exploits Stereotypes

By Dwight Ott

NNPA Nat'l Correspondent

Special to the NNPA from the Philadelphia Tribune

GOP hopeful wants to instill work ethics in poor children by putting them to work — as janitors.

Poor kids, especially in projects and inner city neighborhoods, should be hired as part-time janitors for neighborhood schools.

So was the declaration of Republican presidential frontrunner Newt Gingrich in brainstorming recently about ways to lessen unemployment and economic decline in urban areas.

Clarifying remarks he made last month in a speech at Harvard, he said redesigning child labor laws to allow 14- and 15-year-olds to work would help curb the lack of a work ethic in many poor neighborhoods. It would also allow schools to give such mid-teens part-time jobs as janitors or janitorial assistants.

Gingrich said that successful people he knows started work early by doing small jobs like babysitting and shoveling snow.

Such simple answers to complex questions have some likening Gingrich to the Grinch who stole Christmas. His comments have gained weight as he has risen in the polls in the last two weeks ahead of Republican frontrunner Mitt Romney.

Speaking with the pomp and authority of a child study expert, Gingrich diagnosed the unemployment problems in inner cities as a kind of self-perpetuating cycle of lack of work leading to more lack of work and more Americans being crippled by a merry-go-round of poor work ethics.

Sizing up the problem as such, Gingrich immediately offered his own remedy for the country. His solution — put lazy and helpless inner city youth to work. It was a solution, some experts say harkened back to the days when the stereotype of welfare queens refusing husbands, was used by the Ronald Reagan campaign in 1980 to help frighten the country into ultimately implementing workfare reform as an antidote to welfare, ironically, during the Clinton Administration.

This time Gingrich has thrown his own form of dynamite into the presidential race igniting contro-



Newton Leroy "Newt" Gingrich

versy and accusations against him of race baiting. Catching stiff flak, Gingrich backpedaled a bit to say he obviously was not talking about the "working poor," but rather households where there is no work.

"They have no money. No habit of work," the politician said. "[They have] No concept of working and nobody around them who works. 'No concept of I do this and you give me cash,' unless it's illegal."

What was left unsaid, according to critics, was that Gingrich was speaking about Black and Hispanics who, more than any other groups, fit the profile of the "very poor" inner city kids Gingrich described.

"What kind of nonsense is this?" exclaimed City Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell. "How dare anybody make such a suggestion. It's ridiculous that a white candidate for president would try to put people in certain classes based on economic background saying they lack work ethic."

"I was born in public housing — Richard Allen projects. These were low-income people. But I have a brother with a Ph.D. My sister and I have master's degrees. My oldest sister is a computer expert. We have so many exceptions of poor people. This Thursday (Dec. 15) I will be honoring the original Richard Allen Committee — a group of success stories [out of Richard Allen]. They have all given back."

Things didn't improve after Blackwell's retort as the floodgates of criticism opened.

"I think there is a clear 'dog whistle' of racial signaling, when he talks of inner city poor," said Daniel Cook, associate professor of Childhood Studies at Rutgers-

Camden in South Jersey. "Statistically he's referring to families and children of color."

Charles Gallagher, chairman of the sociology department at LaSalle University, agreed, saying Gingrich was using "coded" language for Blacks and Latinos when he spoke of the "very poor," "inner city poor" and children "in projects."

What Gingrich also did not say outright was that if his plan to use youth as janitors in schools were adopted, it would be a matter of throwing a single brick through two windows at the same time, windows that were institutions that have long been targets of conservatives — unions as well as child labor laws.

While sidestepping labor laws, Gingrich admitted that the proposal would allow the reduction of unionized school janitorial unions and their members.

"Most of these schools ought to get rid of the unionized janitors, have one master janitor and pay local students to take care of the school," said the former U.S. Speaker of House of Representatives.

Gingrich has drawn criticism in the past from some Democrats and pundits for contending that U.S. child labor laws are "truly stupid" and should be "re-jiggered" to allow such things as children janitors in schools.

There are Blacks who agree with Gingrich's prescription. Ward Connerly, political activist, businessman and former University of California Regent, based in California, is one of them. Connerly's position is not surprising since, in the past, he has opposed racial preferences and quotas.

"His [Gingrich's] observations

are quite valid ...," said Connerly last week. "America is in decline not just budget-wise ... but the infrastructure [of our families and our culture] is deteriorating. There are enormous problems in the urban core. There needs to be the right kind of tutelage to lead productive lives."

He said Gingrich's suggestion that "really poor" kids lack work ethic and could profit from school janitorial jobs may help remediate the situation. According to Connerly, some young Blacks feel that doing the things required to hold down a mainstream job is "acting White."

"This is a problem with a lot of our kids," said Connerly. "But not just our kids [lack work ethics]. White kids too. These kids are low income and don't see parents going to work or coming home from the job. ... There is a need for love here."

Critics like Al Sharpton, who recently did a tour through inner city schools with Gingrich [at the behest of President Obama in an effort to heighten awareness of the problem plagued education system] agreed. He said Gingrich's words sounded suspiciously similar to the coded language used to describe felon Willie Horton during the campaign of George H.W. Bush for presidency. He said it was also similar to the use of the "welfare queen" image by Reagan and Richard Nixon in their presidential campaigns. Now the target seems to be children as potential scapegoats for the current economic situation, he said.

"This is where we are getting into this cheap kind of race-baiting kind of poor," Sharpton said in a radio interview. "[He is talking about] criminal kind of behavior and we need to call it out."

"He knows better," said Sharpton.

He said this should be especially so following Gingrich's inner city tour that included Philadelphia. "He knows these kids have parents that work and that are not making money illegally."

According to Charles Gallagher, in the sociology department at LaSalle, "Gingrich is way off with this. He is trying to score points with white Americans that Black culture is a culture of poverty that the children learn about helplessness and laziness because their

parents don't work. This is amazing coming from a man who is supposed to know history.

"It's not laziness," said Gallagher, "but the lack of opportunity. The structure no longer exists for jobs based on manual labor [or entry level skills]. It's disingenuous looking at 11- and 12-year-olds and say 'Get a job.'"

Gallagher said Gingrich failed to mention discrimination, "which is very much a part of this."

Adds Gallagher: "He doesn't look at the structural conditions that create poverty. It's unbelievable that he would stoop so low as to blame 14- and 15-year-olds for the recession we're in."

Daniel Cook, a sociologist at Rutgers-Camden said he disagreed with Gingrich's argument that having or not having parents was key to youths having work ethics.

"Anybody who knows anything about children from less economically advantaged backgrounds, know they live in situations [in which they have to practically raise their brothers and sisters and provide unpaid care]. They are at different ages, and they have to be incredibly responsible, helping siblings with clothing, eating, getting to school. It's not paid labor but it's an incredible amount of responsibility. The picture he paints because of class divisions is incorrect."

LaSalle University's Gallagher said the focus of Gingrich's argument — tying the minority families to their economic level — is reminiscent of the work of Daniel Patrick Moynihan who blamed young Black women who got pregnant without looking for marriage as a reason for the ills in Black upward mobility.

Some have said that Gingrich's comments are another effort to pin Black and Hispanic economic levels on their own family backgrounds.

Regardless, some local political leaders agree with City Councilman Curtis Jones, who argued recently that Gingrich's comments would be helpful to President Obama campaign.

"It's the best thing that could have happened," said Jones. "With Gingrich running it makes us see that whatever Obama did wrong, Gingrich proves that it could be a lot worse."

Five Golden Wins

By Kingfish
Data Sports Columnist

I'm taking the "12 Days of Christmas" theme because this game was a gift by the, wait for it, wait for it the Defense. I cannot go without saying the refs were horrible in the entire game. I'm never the one to blame the refs for a loss. There have been many games over this season where refs have made calls I thought were questionable, but I have never spoke on them because at the end of the day a great team overcomes them. These calls however were so bad I have to say great effort by the Saints to overcome them. True, some of them were definitely the Saints fault but more of them were a bunch of well, you know what I mean. Three in particular got my blood boiling. One, the holding call on Darren Sproles touch-down run back. Two, the obvious touchdown by Jimmy Graham, and the third was the sack fumble by Tracy Porter. None of these calls were good calls. Some would argue the sack fumble but please, Porter hit him as he was drawing his arm back.

The Defense held the explosive Chris Johnson to under 30 yards. I don't care what they are saying in their post-game interviews they were in the game until the two touchdowns in the fourth quarter. The Titans had no reason to abandon the run with such a prolific runner other than the Saints were shutting it



The Saints look to continue their 5 game winning streak as they take to the road this weekend facing the Minnesota Viking.

down. The Saints' run Defense was at its best this year. The run Defense gives me hope for next week's game against the Vikings' Adrian Peterson. Don't get it twisted, regardless of what the Vikings may say during the week Peterson will play.

The Saints' prevent Defense is suspect to say the least. You witnessed it in the Falcons game and now this game. Other than that the Defense did well today and has improved, as they have gotten healthy over the year. I ask you to watch nose tackle Tom Johnson who has been hurt most of the year from the Canadian League. He is a beast. We also had a sit-out from Shaun Rodgers in this game. Maybe he'll get bet-

ter as the year goes on. He came into the Saints with high expectations but has not lived up to them. If the Saints' interior defensive line steps up they can truly make a push in the post-season.

It is no surprise to our readers I have been begging for the Saints to run more. Yes, they are ranked 7th in the NFL in running averaging 120 yards per game by committee. On Sunday they gained a little over 100 yards by committee of course. Chris Ivory racked up the most yards with 53 out of three active backs Ivory, Thomas and Sproles. When it comes to beating the 49ers and the Packers they are going to have to be able to run the ball when it counts. That's being successful

in your four-minute Offense at the end of the game when you're protecting a lead. Sunday we saw the Saints fail in that effort. The Saints needed a first down with 5 minutes left in the game and on first and second down got two yards and tried to throw the ball on third down and Brees almost threw an interception; turning the ball over with one-minute and fifty-three left. The Titans went 75 yards down to the 5-yard line with a chance to win. Doing that against a playoff team will not end with the same result, the offensive running game has to do better. Don't get me wrong the Saints have the talent to do so, but as I have said, they have to be able to do it in game situations to feel comfortable to do it when it matters.

This was a "gut checks win" as Coach Sean Payton said. This was a momentum win for the Defense. Hopefully, they will build on this and continue this next week against the Vikings. Congrats to the Saints on a five-game winning streak in November and December. I can't end this article without saying great game to Linebacker Dunbar. Dunbar played great sitting in for Vilma as the middle linebacker for the Saints during the Saints winning streak and then moving to outside linebacker for this game.

Next week the Vikings, the Saints last road game of the regular season.

Lets Geaux Saints!!!

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