A Home Run
Sterling Farms Brings Fresh Food Back to the Community

Page 2

Newsmaker
Final Four Fever

Page 4

Pipeline to the People
Should Gay Marriage Be Law?

Page 9
A Home Run

Sterling Farms Brings Fresh Food Back to the Community

By Eric D. Griggs, M.D.

Travelling to Sterling Farms Grocery at 5899 Lapalco Boulevard in Marrero is a pleasant field trip to a simpler time. A time when a trip to the store to run errands for your mother or grandmother to buy milk, eggs, butter or whatever else was on that handwritten list was as routine as brushing your teeth. Walking through the door, you are greeted by the typical hustle and bustle of what is to be expected at a standard grocery store - shopping carts, people moving in and out, the sounds of cash registers, bags rustling and being filled. The difference today is standing at the door are the owners greeting every shopper, helping people to bag their wares and even offering rides home to customers with full baskets. It is truly a step back in the time continuum to a place when the neighborhood market was truly a "super" market, and stood as one of the pillars of the community, providing not only the necessary food and supplies for sustenance, but often including a pharmacy.

Photos by Glenn Summers
Cover Story, Continued from previous page.

for prescriptions as well. Equally important, the neighborhood market provided opportunities for employment in the surrounding community, thus enhancing the sense of self-respect, responsibility and community investment. All of which was the vision of two little league baseball teammates that grew up in Pontchartrain Park here in New Orleans. They saw an opportunity for recreation and re-development in post-Katrina New Orleans. Mr. Wendell Pierce, a successful New Orleans Actor and Mr. Troy Henry, a successful local Businessman, joined forces with Mr. James Hatchett, a 30 year grocer from Chicago. They created a plan and the rest is history.

“We want to be known as your neighborhood grocery destination. We want to know our customers who come in. They get to know our point of sales people. They know where the sales are... They get their circulars...There’s 25,000 homes around here (in Marrero) that we send circulars to. That’s what’s most important. That’s our demographic, this neighborhood that’s been undererved right here.” relates Mr. Pierce, who is best-known for his role as “Bunk” on the HBO series, “The Wire” and more recently as the star of the HBO series, “Treme.”

What Pierce, Henry and Hatchett observed was a need for access to fresh produce in urban communities. New Orleans, like so many other cities, is known to have areas considered as “food deserts.” These areas lack access to fresh food and food necessities. As a consequence, the neighboring communities are denied access to proper nutrition and suffer subsequent health maladies (increased incidence of Obesity, Hypertension, Heart Disease and Diabetes) because of limited choices and resources. Pierce relates, “I would like to start with aisle 1. This is the most important aisle in the store. This is where all of the fresh produce and healthy food choices begin. First of all they must have a (healthy) choice. They must have a choice, and education will come along with that. We are going to have cooking demonstrations and different nutritional demonstrations. Our first Community Outreach Program is going to be a ‘Let’s Move’ event (First Lady Michelle Obama’s initiative). It’s about making sure that people have the access first. The fact is, you have people in the community that have to travel five miles in one direction, and seven miles in another just to get to a corner store.

“The corner food store doesn’t give you options like kale, and spinach and broccoli and plums, and if they do, it’s in poor condition. We’re challenging that with even our Express stores. (At this point, he is interrupted by a customer thanking him for bringing the store to her neighborhood).

“It’s about pent up demand. In communities like this, other American industries have stood on the sidelines...The fact is, we are entrepreneurs who have said we’re... A landmark for 40 years in the New Orleans Ninth Ward is the H & W Drugstore, which is now housed in the new Marrero store. H & M was owned and operated by Troy Henry’s father.

First NBC Bank recognizes that a community based financial institution grows when it has professional and caring employees. We strive every day to supply the best banking services to each of our customers.

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2013 NCAA® Women’s Final Four® Community Initiatives and Surrounding Events

Prior to and in conjunction with the 2013 Women’s Final Four NCAA Middle School Madness®

**Participating New Orleans Middle Schools**

The NCAA Middle School Madness program links classroom learning for sixth- through eighth-grade students with the NCAA’s Women’s Final Four. Through the Middle School Madness program, the Women’s Final Four serves as a catalyst to encourage girls and boys to learn from the achievements, actions and positive examples set by women’s basketball student-athletes.

The program consists of two components: a classroom curriculum and a mural/essay contest encouraging middle school students to express their thoughts regarding what is the power of youth - making a difference in the community. Participating middle schools are provided honorariums and physical education equipment donated by the NCAA and Wilson® Sporting Goods Co., the official basketball supplier of the NCAA. Essay contest winners will be awarded laptop computers and participating schools in the mural contest will have their murals displayed throughout New Orleans. Contest winners will be included in a wide variety of Women’s Final Four activities, at which they will be recognized for their accomplishments.

**NCAA Pinnacle of Fitness® Program**

Selected Middle Schools

The NCAA Pinnacle of Fitness Program is an NCAA Division I women’s basketball initiative emphasizing healthy living and education for young people in the New Orleans community. Middle school students will be encouraged to participate in physical activity for sixty minutes on school days and complete one healthy eating goal each week for ten weeks prior to the Women’s Final Four. Participating schools that return the highest percentage of completed logs will receive credit and a gym equipment voucher from Wilson Sporting Goods.

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**Friday, April 5**

**Women’s Final Four Salute Premiere**

Mardi Gras World
6:30 p.m.

Women and girls will meet and share the charismatic entrance of four outstanding teams as they experience the power of their dreams coming true. The event will pay tribute to the coaches and student-athletes in a celebratory Salute. The red carpet arrival of the teams is open to the public, while tickets ($20 general admission) are required for the Salute Premiere.

**Saturday, April 6**

**4Kay® Run Presented by Northwestern Mutual®**

Tourney Town (Center Stage)
8:00 a.m.

The sixth annual 4Kay Run Presented by Northwestern Mutual® is a key event during the 2013 NCAA Women’s Final Four. The run, a mainstay of the Women’s Final Four weekend of events, is scheduled for Saturday, April 6 at 8 a.m. The 4Kay Run is held in honor of the late North Carolina State University head women’s basketball coach Kay Yow. Proceeds from the run will benefit cancer research through the Kay Yow Cancer Fund®. The Kay Yow Cancer Fund is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization committed to the fight against women’s cancers by raising funds for scientific research, assisting the underserved and unifying people for a common cause. Walkers are strongly encouraged to participate.

**POWERADE® NCAA Youth Clinics**

Isidore Newman School and Joe Brown Memorial Park
8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

The POWERADE® NCAA Youth Clinics serve as an NCAA outreach initiative that youth participate in throughout the city of New Orleans. Boys and girls will have the opportunity to learn and enhance their sports, conditioning and life skills with women’s basketball coaches and student-athletes, as well as collegiate administrators and basketball experts from various parts of the country. NCAA Youth Clinics encourage children to participate in basketball training, as well as on organized team sports, and stress the importance of participation rather than winning. These “active participation” sessions will cater to the developmental level of each participant, providing them with the fundamental tools they need for basketball. Through a focus on discipline, confidence and commitment, these youth will use what they have learned through athletics and apply them to other areas of their lives. Free and open to the public.

**Big Easy Bounce fueled by POWERADE®**

Mercedes-Benz Superdome Plaza (Gate C)
1:00 p.m.

The Big Easy Bounce fueled by POWERADE® will feature several thousand youth dribbling their way within the city of New Orleans. Youth, 18 and under, are invited to participate in the free event at which participants receive a t-shirt and basketball, donated by the NCAA and Wilson® Sporting Goods Co. There will be entertainment, activities and lots of free fun for the whole family! Tourney Town will welcome dribblers and fans with live music and performances throughout the afternoon. Free and open to the public.

**Talent Showdown™ Refreshed by Coca-Cola Zero™**

Tourney Town (Center Stage)
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

The Talent Showdown Refreshed by Coca-Cola Zero is a community outreach program created to locate and display the best in local talent. The Talent Showdown Refreshed will provide a platform for all participating women’s teams to display their unique skills in a head-to-head competition live on Center Stage in Tourney Town. The winner of the Talent Showdown will have the chance to perform the National Anthem at the WBCA High School All-American Game as well as receive many great prizes.

**Battle of the Bands**

New Orleans Arena/Tourney Town
3:45 - 4:15 p.m.

The Battle of the Bands will be held immediately following the open practice sessions at New Orleans Arena. This exciting, energy-filled competition features the pep bands from the four institutions displaying their school spirit. The winner of the Battle of the Bands will be selected by the fans in attendance at open practice. Always a Women’s Final Four fan favorite, this fun competition symbolizes the passion and camaraderie of college basketball. Free and open to the public.

**Sunday, April 7**

**AT&T Mascot Challenge**

Tourney Town (Center Stage)
Noon - 1:00 p.m.

AT&T Mascot Challenge is the perfect event for all participating Women’s Final Four teams’ mascots to get warmed up before the big games. Come out and witness the mascot’s display of their own unique skills in a head-to-head competition live on Center Stage in Tourney Town. So come out and cheer for your favorite mascot - every vote counts!

**NCAA Pep Rally**

Tourney Town (Center Stage)
1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

The NCAA Pep Rally will feature performances by the pep bands, cheerleading squads and mascots from the Women’s Final Four teams. Thousands of fans will gather for the rally and cheer on their favorite pep band and spirit groups. The pep rally is free and open to the public.

**National Semifinal Games**

New Orleans Arena
5:30 and 8:00 p.m.

The wait is over! The Women’s Final Four teams will compete...
Public Invited to Join NOLA For Life Day on April 20th

The City of New Orleans announced plans for the third NOLA FOR LIFE Day on Saturday, April 20, 2013, and invited all residents to join in a revitalization effort in and around McDonogh Park in Algiers.

Volunteer activities at the April 20 event will take place from 9am to noon at McDonogh Park, 1500 Teche Street in the McDonogh Neighborhood.

“Many people have asked what they can do to help curb the unnatural level of violence in our City, and one way they can make an impact is to help our fellow citizens reclaim their neighborhoods, particularly our most troubled areas,” said New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu. “As part of our NOLA for LIFE murder reduction strategy, we’re asking everyone to get involved and help rebuild our neighborhoods, because we cannot end this cycle of violence alone.”

Volunteer activities will include improvements to the park and projects to enhance the surrounding area. Those interested in volunteering can click here to register.

NOLA FOR LIFE Day also will include blight eradication and public safety enhancements from City departments and agencies including Code Enforcement & Hearings Bureau, NOPD (Quality of Life officers), Sanitation, NORA, NORDC, Public Works, Parks & Parkways, Neighborhood Engagement Office, Mosquito, Rodent & Termite Control Board, and Sewerage and Water Board. The City will repair street lights, replace missing street signs, remove abandoned cars, cut overgrown lots, and perform code enforcement sweeps.

In advance of April 20 event, the Department of Public Works has canvassed these areas to identify and repair non-working street lights, as well-lit streets are a deterrent to criminal behavior. Missing street signs, abandoned cars, overgrown lots and other nuisances have been identified.

Partnering with the City of New Orleans in this effort are Rebuilding Together New Orleans, Hike for KatREEna and Revolution Foods.

In addition, there will be a resource fair at the park with representatives from City and partner agencies on hand to share useful information to the public.

NOLA FOR LIFE Day will conclude with a celebration featuring food and music.

For more information on NOLA FOR LIFE, visit http://www.nolaforlife.org.

Nagin Trial Postponed and Rescheduled

U.S. District Judge Ginger Berrigan agreed to the joint request from both the U.S. Attorney’s Office and the Defense on Monday to postpone the trial of former New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin by several months.

Nagin’s trial was scheduled to begin on April 29 where he faces several federal charges which include bribery, money laundering, conspiracy and tax fraud.

Judge Berrigan agreed to delay the trial until October 7 at 10 a.m. according to court documents.

The April trial date was originally a preliminary date a federal magistrate judge set after Nagin pleaded not guilty February 20 to a 21-count indictment, a grand jury handed up against him a month earlier.

The joint request for the delay from both sides of the case stated that the case is “complex and involved an extensive amount of electronic and documentary discovery.”

Setting the court date for later this month would be “unreasonable” the U.S. Attorney’s Office argued. The Judge agreed and moved the date.
Easter Night Out At Bertha’s Place with Free Food and Fun

Photos by Glenn Summers

Everybody came out to Bertha’s Place to celebrate Easter. With free food, music and fun, who could say it wasn’t the place to be? And, of course, Data was there.
Shoot Ya Best Shot!

Sterling Farms Grand Opening

Photos by Glenn Summers

The community turned out to preview Sterling Farms, and Data was there.

Customer Marguerite Jackson with Doc Griggs
Customer Mae Easterling with Doc Griggs
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Race, Crime and the Search for Justice

As per his request with mounting pressure, the mayor staged his own meeting, while King held a separate meeting that was not attended by Mayor Landrieu. And while both of these meetings took place one received limited coverage in the media while the other hosted by the mayor continued to be aired for several days.

The issue of crime and racial profiling is a major issue in the City of New Orleans and it is important that all hands are on deck and that all voices are heard. It seems that throughout the term of Mayor Landrieu who has done a great job in some areas, has a problem facing some of the voices in the community that are critical of him and some of his policies.

Admittedly, the mayor has quite a balancing act to do in a City that is always a step away from a racial firestorm. But it is time for the mayor to step into sometimes uncomfortable settings to hear what the people have to say. Mayor Landrieu always speaks of One New Orleans, but for us to get to that the voices of dissent must be respected and given the ear of the person elected to represent all the citizens of New Orleans.

And not simply as some of the mayor’s harshest critics say he chooses to meet with hand-picked safe African-Americans, many of whom agree with the mayor’s policies.

Today the City faces many challenges and only together can we make New Orleans a better place for all its citizens. And the mayor must lend his ear to all the citizens of the City even if some of the words they speak to her might not agree with. And for those in the African-American community that are not in the mix with those who have political and economic power it is time to organize and begin to let your voices be heard and begin to solve the problems that exist in our communities ourselves.

It is time for the African-American leaders who give lip service to change to begin to do the work to clean up our communities. To raise our families and this is a call for the males to become more involved in the lives of children, it is something that can make a real difference in their lives. If segments of our community did this, the police and their sometime occupying, adversarial like presence would not be as necessary. Because much of the crime and violence would not exist in some of our communities as it does today.

The problem of crime and monitoring police misconduct is an issue that continues to be a black eye for the City. And it is up to all the citizens, the mayor and the changing of the culture inside of NOPD if we are to get to solutions.

And what the elected leadership in addition to community, business and religious leaders need to grasp is that there can be unity without uniformity. And that substantive dialogue is necessary moving forward, if we are to become the kind of City our great citizens deserve that all voices need to be heard, not just a selected few. And when we get to that glorious day, we can truly be “One New Orleans.”

Medical Condescension Can be Deadly

Too many African Americans are treated in emergency rooms as criminals, not people in need of health services. After learning of the Anna Brown case, a sister-friend shared that she had such an extreme anxiety attack that her 10-year-old son called 911. When she got to the emergency room (with health insurance, thank you), she was queried about her use of drugs and alcohol, not her health condition. It was only after her blood was tested that she was treated. So she spent four agonizing hours on a hospital bed with raspy breath, a frightened son, and no medical care.

She isn’t the only one who was mistreated. African American and Latino men with broken bones are less likely to get pain medication than others. Even children of color are less likely to receive painkillers than White children, because some physicians think they are faking the severity of their pain. When we look at health disparities and wonder why African Americans are more likely to have diabetes, high blood pressure, kidney failure, breast cancer, AIDS and other diseases, one might point to the many ways that doctors, especially those in emergency rooms, signal that Black pain is not worth treating. The result is that someone who is really hurting chooses to forgo medical care instead of dealing with medical condescension and arrogance.

To our society’s shame, emergency rooms often become the health providers of last resort. Those without a regular physician are stuck going to an emergency room when all else fails. A cold becomes the flu and the flu becomes pneumonia and only when a patient is struggling for breath does she seek treatment in an emergency room. I can understand a doctor’s frustration because the patient did not deal with her challenges earlier. But, well-paid emergency room doctors need to do their work without judgmental attitudes getting in their way.

Anna Brown deserved to be treated as a human being. She deserved to be treated as someone who was struggling with pain. Instead, she was treated as a criminal because she insisted on care. Thus, she was accused of trespassing, instead of being treated as someone who was hurting.

While many would describe our society as post-racial that is a specious and inaccurate description of the world in which we live. Racism muddies the water that we all swim in, and physicians are not exempted. Those who swim in muddy water reflect the muddy attitudes that are prevalent in our society. Many doctors consider themselves “culturally sensitive” but they have to come to certain conclusions about poor folks, Black folks, and others that they treat. It is easier to write off a woman like Anna Brown than it is to find out what is really wrong with her.

The Hippocratic oath that physicians swear to says “first, do no harm.” From the facts that have been published about Anna Brown though, this homeless 29-year-old mother of two was harmed by a medical indifference that landed her in a jail cell instead of a hospital bed. The tragedy is that Anna Brown is not the only one who has been treated this way.

We have health disparities because people are treated differently in our health care system. We cannot talk about closing gaps without talking about the ways that medical attitudes shape the medical experience for those who are so underserved that they come to emergency rooms for help. While the jury is out on the ways that Obamacare will reform our health care system, the intent of health care reform is to eliminate tragedies like Anna Brown’s. Julianne Malveaux is a Washington, D.C.-based economist and writer. She is President Emerita of Bennett College for Women in Greensboro, N.C.
The times are changing, and quickly too! For some, it is too quickly, for others it is not quickly enough, but no matter where you fit in the spectrum of the most visible fight in America today, the times are changing. It seems that daily, one politician after another “comes out” in favor of Marriage Equality. So much so that as this column is being written, chances are that the count today (Tuesday) of Democrats in Washington who have voiced their support will be even fewer than it is now which leaves only seven Senators who have not thrown their support behind Marriage Equality. Louisiana Senator Mary Landrieu (D-La.) is one of those seven. The other remaining holdouts are Senators Mark Pryor (D-Ark.), Joe Donnelly (D-Ind.), Bill Nelson (D-Fla.), Heidi Heitkamp (D-N.D.), Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) and Tim Johnson (D-S.D.). Only two Republican senators, Rob Portman (R-Ohio), and Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) have announced their support for same-sex marriage.

What do you think? Should gay marriage be legal? Join the discussion on Facebook.

Casey Robinson
“I have a more practical outlook on the situation. I feel that God meant marriage to consist of a man and woman but who am I to judge. If they want to marry... Who am I to stop them?”

Morgan Stallings
“I feel like the issue is being taken into the Supreme Court now because gay and lesbian marriage is no longer pushed aside or swept under the rug. Our generation is much more accepting of all things as compared to the older generations. I personally am not in agreement with it for the simple fact that I am a Christian and I abide by the things in the Bible. But, at the end of the day people are going to do what they want to do. Who are we to stop them?”

Whitney Fears
“I believe that two people who love each other and are willing to make a lifelong commitment to one another should be able to get married. No harm is being done.”

For more information on the Sterling Farms Food chains go to the following links:
- Wendell Pierce seeks to - Eatocracy - CNN.com
- http://www.cnbc.com/id/100578096
- Food chains go to the following links:

Planting Techniques

By MG Calla Victoria
Data News Weekly Columnist

There are several planting techniques that can be utilized when planning your garden design:

1. Mass plantings are designed for impact. Using this method tightly plant groupings of the same plant in the same color and the eye is immediately drawn to that spot in the garden. An example of this type of planting can be seen in the photo with the drift of lavender petunias. When considering mass plantings we are talking about a minimum of five large plants of the same species to create this impact, or fifteen to twenty small seedlings. As a general rule you should always buy plants in increments of five.

2. Graduated plantings are designed to showcase each plant in your garden with respect to heights. The low-growing plants and groundcovers should be in the front, shrubbery of medium height should be in the middle of your planting bed, while the tallest plants should be towards the back of your bed. A perfect example of this technique can be seen in the photo of the four levels of impeccably manicured hedges. At ground level the dense chartreuse moss, used as a groundcover, stands out against the second level which is dark green monkey grass (Liriope muscari). The wispy long thin texture of the monkey grass contrasts beautifully against the bright pop of green rounded foliage of the rhododendron, and finally the rich hues of the ‘Purple Pixie’ Loropetalum (Loropetalum chinensis) adds yet another layer of texture, color, and interest. In order to achieve this perfect display in your garden it is mandatory that you pay close attention to the maximum heights listed on the planting labels of each variety of plant that you purchase. This will save you from having to dig up and re-plant specimens that were planted in the front of your garden bed that are taller than other plants mistakenly planted behind it.

3. Mixed Flower border is a flower bed that combines multiple types of plants (such as annuals, perennials, shrubs, trees, and groundcovers) and multiple colors, shapes and textures. It is planted tightly so there are little or no weeds, and there is something of interest blooming year round.

4. Planting on Berms-Berms are little man-made hills that can be used to provide interest in an overly-large expanse of yard, improve drainage, to give dimension to flat landscapes, create a privacy cove function as a barrier from wind or water, and buffer against road noise. Berms are great aesthetic solutions to cover that bland concrete on all of those elevated homes.

Check out my “Gardening Tip of the Week” on my website www.thegardeningdiva.com and send your gardening questions to sowing@thegardeningdiva.com.

Remember, never be too busy to stop and smell the beautiful flowers!
for a chance to advance to the National Championship game. The two national semifinal games will take place Sunday, April 7 at the New Orleans Arena, with games set for 5:30 and 8 p.m. CT. Go to NCAA.com/womensfinalfour for the latest on ticket availability.

Monday, April 8

Cheerleader Hospital Visits Tulane Medical Center
1:00 - 4:00 p.m.
The two national championship cheerleading squads and mascots will participate in hospital visits in the New Orleans community. Hospitals will be determined and plans will be made for in-patient programming.

Tuesday, April 9

POWERADE® NCAA Youth Clinics
Tourney Town
3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
The POWERADE® NCAA Youth Clinics serve as an NCAA outreach initiative that youth participate in throughout the city of New Orleans. Boys and girls will have the opportunity to learn and enhance their skills, conditioning and life skills with women’s basketball coaches and student-athletes, as well as collegiate administrators and basketball experts from various parts of the country. NCAA Youth Clinics encourage children to participate in basketball training, as well as organized team sports, and stress the importance of participation rather than winning. These “active participation” sessions will cater to the developmental level of each participant, providing them with the fundamental tools they need for basketball. Through a focus on discipline, confidence and commitment, these youth will use what they have learned through athletics and apply them to other areas of their lives. Free and open to the public.

Women’s Final Four National Championship Game
New Orleans Arena
7:30 p.m.
The top two teams in the nation will compete for the right to be called “national champions!” The 2013 national championship will be crowned Tuesday, April 9 at the New Orleans Arena, with the game set for tip-off at 7:30 p.m. CT. Go to NCAA.com/womensfinalfour for the latest on ticket availability.
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<td>Alka-Seltzer® Original Antacid and Analgesic 116 ct.</td>
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<td>Zone Perfect® Bars Chocolate Peanut Butter and Chocolate Caramel Cluster 24 ct.</td>
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<td>Ziploc® Sandwich Bags 4 pk., 125 ct. ea.</td>
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Save on breakfast favorites.

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<td>Nestlé® Coffee-mate Powdered Creamer, Original 52 oz.</td>
<td>$5.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quaker® Instant Oatmeal Variety Pack</td>
<td>$9.48</td>
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* Get a $20 gift card with a new Plus Membership or a $10 gift card with a new Advantage or Business Membership. This offer is limited to current non-members. You must be over the age of 18 to purchase a membership, and membership is subject to qualifications. This offer is valid for memberships issued in-club and is not valid online. Gift card will be provided at time membership card is issued. This offer may not be combined with any other offer or promotion. Only one gift card per primary member. Gift card may not be used to pay for membership fee. Membership cards are non-transferable and are valid at all Sam’s Club locations worldwide. Walmart® and Sam’s Club associates are not eligible for this offer. Offer good only at your Harvey, LA, Kenner, LA and Metairie, LA clubs. Offer good through April 12, 2013.

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