A September to Remember

Ali in New Orleans
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Eric Craig
Multimedia Editor

It was a September to remember on Sept. 15, 1978, at the New Orleans Superdome arena. Muhammad Ali fought Leon Spinks for the second time in a 15-round bout. A few months earlier, Spinks stripped Ali of his heavyweight title he won two times before. At the end of the 15th round, Ali won the Heavyweight Championship for the third time in a row.

A Brief History

Born in Louisville, Kentucky, then Cassius Clay, began training for boxing at age 12 and at the age of 22, he won the World Heavy Weight Championship Title from Sonny Liston in 1964. Shortly after, Clay confirmed his belief in Islam, and was given the name Muhammad Ali.

Ali is recognized for his unorthodox fighting style in heavyweight boxing competitions and his decision to refuse to participate in the U.S. draft during the Vietnam War.

Throughout his history, Ali fought 61 matches in his boxing career. Of those fights, he won 56 and lost 5 by the time he retired in 1981.

In 1984, Ali was diagnosed with Parkinson disease which slowly impacted his motor skills. Despite his disease, Ali continued to remain in the spotlight, meeting Mourners worldwide will pay respects this week to “The Greatest” Muhammad Ali. Pictured above is an iconic image of a 22-year-old Ali, knocking down then Heavyweight Champ, Sonny Liston. The fight ended in six rounds with Ali scoring TKO, giving him the title, and as the youngest person to ever earn the title, it propelled him into superstardom and his well earned moniker, “The Greatest of All Time”.

Cover Story, Continued on next page.
with several political leaders and even representing the United Nations as a Messenger of Peace.

Before the turn of the century, Ali was named Sporting Personality of the Century by BBC in and Sportsman of the Century by Sports Illustrated. Ali died on June 3, 2016.

Don Hubbard Meets Ali

In recognition of Ali's success, Nola.com noted that Ali’s fight in September 1978 was the fifth most memorable event at the New Orleans Superdome. However, for one person it was the most memorable.

Don Hubbard was the energy behind bringing the Ali v. Spinks rematch to New Orleans, serving as the primary promoter.

Hubbard, who is now the owner of the Hubbard Mansion on St. Charles Avenue, and has a history in political activism, and his business took a chance to work with Ali.

Hubbard first saw Ali when he was invited to see the initial match between Ali and Spinks in Las Vegas in February 1978. When watching the fight, he was amazed at Ali's performance.

"I thought that a fight like this should be in New Orleans, and that I should promote it," Hubbard said.

"People took it as a joke because I never promoted a fight before in my life. But a couple of weeks later I heard that the fight would be in either Atlanta or South Africa," Hubbard said.

Destined to bring Ali to New Orleans, Hubbard flew out to Chicago to meet one-on-one with Ali. Hubbard convinced Ali that the Superdome would be the best place to host the fight.

Hubbard met with an official of Top Rank Boxing, the company in charge of boxing promotions, to discuss hosting a fight in New Orleans. Hubbard put up a $50,000 deposit to hold a spot at the Superdome, and had to deliver a well-attended show.

Hubbard said that the Superdome was a convincing choice to hold a fight at the time.

"The Superdome had a Super Bowl earlier that year, but the venue wasn’t known internationally. Not until Muhammad Ali was there," Hubbard said.

Hubbard recalls Ali asking how big the venue was.

"Ali said ‘Is it bigger than the astrodome?’ And I said, ‘You could fit the astrodome inside the Superdome and still have 40 feet of space all around,’" Hubbard said.

When Hubbard brought Ali to the building he remembers Ali commenting on accommodating fans.

"Ali said ‘You’re telling me the greatest can’t fill up this little building? There might not be enough room for everyone. It might be too small,’" Hubbard said.

Over 65,000 people attended the fight on Sept. 15, making it Hubbard’s most successful and only boxing promotion gig.

While Hubbard was the initial promoter for the fight, he knew Ali on a personal level.

Hubbard said when Ali came to New Orleans he wanted to see the City.

"Ali wanted to go into the neighborhoods, the rough neighborhoods. He wanted to make sure that he went everywhere, where people who couldn’t go to the fight were able to take pictures with him," Hubbard said.

The two, along with Ali’s modest entourage, went to the Children’s Hospital, the YMCA, Hunter’s Field and several other place that had people that might appreciate seeing him.

"Ali thought that life was to be happy about. A guy that was interested in making life fun. Life was to be enjoyed," he said.

One of the things that Hubbard appreciates most about Ali was his ability to stand for his beliefs.

"His image in history against the war in Vietnam, and not going into service, is something everyone knew," Hubbard said.

"He was a hero for a guy who stood up for what he believed in. He took a stand and gave up everything he had for three years until the Supreme Court said what they had done to him was wrong. His victory was for everyone who was against the wars and everyone who had a belief. Not just for himself but for everybody else," Hubbard said.

While knowing Ali first as a promoter, and then as a friend, Hubbard said that he misses Ali.

"I loved Ali, I loved him because he was an example on how God can take ordinary people to do extraordinary things," Hubbard said.

"He never, to me, appeared to take himself too serious. He decided that he would use this talent for the betterment of the world," Hubbard said.
Why We Celebrate Juneteenth

The Day Slaves Learned They Were Free

Data News Staff
Edited Report

The 19th of June is known as Juneteenth, an African-American holiday begun at the end of slavery days. Its origins are Texan, not Louisiana, but Juneteenth has long had strong roots in the South and has since spread all over the country as a time for African-Americans to commemorate their freedom and accomplishments. Today, it’s a holiday filled with parades, good food, and references to struggles of the past and present.

But why did this day, with an unusual name and specifically Texan roots, become the preeminent celebration of emancipation? President Lincoln announced the Emancipation Proclamation, which granted freedom to slaves in Confederate states, on New Year’s Day in 1863. Word didn’t reach the African-American slaves of Galveston, Texas, until June 19, 1865, when a force of two-thousand Union soldiers arrived and informed them of their freedom. Although news indeed did travel slowly in those days, two and a half years is a long time; historians suspect Texas slaveholders knew of the proclamation and chose not to free their slaves until they were forced to.

The African-Americans of Galveston began an annual observance of Juneteenth which over the years spread to other areas and grew in popularity. Early Juneteenth celebrations were picnics at churches and in rural areas with barbecues, horseback riding, fishing, and more. The early 20th century saw a weakening of the holiday’s observance due to African-American migration to urban centers, the national celebration of Independence Day just a few weeks later, and the preference of white historians to emphasize the Emancipation Proclamation over Juneteenth as a date to mark the end of slavery. Although some activists objected that holiday’s associations with slavery were too backward-looking, Juneteenth’s visibility rose again during the Civil Rights Era of the 1950s and 60s, and its resurgence continues all over the country.

Juneteenth retained its prominence in the Southern region over time. And as other Emancipation Day celebrations faded, Juneteenth endured. In 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s Poor People’s Campaign held a June Teenth Solidarity Day, connecting the civil rights struggle with the holiday. At the same time, parties like the Juneteenth Blues Spectacular showed up in popular culture, recasting the holiday as an opportunity to celebrate more contemporary black culture. That mix of social concern and celebration kept Juneteenth in the public eye (and things like Ralph Ellison’s posthumously published 1999 novel Juneteenth probably didn’t hurt).

In 1980, the Texas legislature made Juneteenth an official state holiday. From there, the holiday grew to be celebrated around the country — and today, one of the largest Juneteenth parades is held in Milwaukee.

Like elsewhere, in New Orleans African-Americans celebrate Juneteenth with barbecues and picnics, with family and church gatherings that strengthen community bonds. Other events include jazz concerts and speaking engagements emphasizing African-American empowerment, education, and achievement. To participate in Juneteenth festivities, check listings in local newspapers or online as the next June 19th approaches.
CELEBRATING JUNETEENTH
and those who continue to uphold the values
of freedom and justice in our community

louisianalottery.com
Ticket purchasers must be at least 21 years of age. If you or someone you
know has a gambling problem, call 1-877-770-7867.
Photos by Terry B. Jones

Even through the storm last Saturday night Kim Robinson’s friends and family came out to the Prime Example to celebrate her 50th birthday and Data was there.
Photos by Glenn Summers
Data News Weekly Contributor

One of New Orleans' premier music venues, Tipitinas & Daily Bread presented: Koan’s 504 Summer Jam Featuring Mystikal with special guests Koan, Dj Skratchmo, and PAAASKY. The event was hosted by Mark Caesar on June 3, 2016.

Visit www.ladatanews.com for more photos from these events
By Raynard Jackson
NNPA News Wire Columnist

Last week rapper Snoop Dogg put up an epic video rant on his Instagram. In the verbiage that only Snoop can conjugate, he said in no uncertain terms that people should not watch the 21st century remake of the epic TV miniseries Roots that aired on the History Channel last week.

I must say that I thoroughly agree with Snoop Dogg’s position one hundred percent, though I can do without the raw language.

Roots: The Saga of an American Family was a book written by famed author Alex Haley in 1976. In the book, Haley traced his ancestral roots back to The Gambia in West Africa. He was able to trace his family lineage all the way back Kunta Kinte.

Kinte was captured as a teenager in The Gambia and ultimately sold into slavery and brought to the U.S. The book was turned into a blockbuster TV miniseries back in 1977. The remaking is what led Snoop to do his now viral video on Instagram. His position was that he didn’t want to see any more movies about slavery. “Where are all the movies about Black success?” Snoop asked.

I totally agree with Snoop. I refused to watch the remake of Roots. I was watching my N.B.A. basketball playoffs. Following Snoop’s rant, TV personality Roland Martin addressed the subject on his news program on TV ONE. The one point that I do agree with Roland is that more Blacks need to step up and be willing to help finance the production of some of these movies about successful Blacks. That’s a legitimate challenge that Snoop should address.

Martin launched into this tirade about Jews “never” getting tired of movies about the Holocaust. He is way off base with his analysis.

Martin and those who agree with him are missing a few, very germane points. I mean can any one name a Black person who has financed, executed produced, produced, directed, or distributed a major movie or TV program about the Holocaust? You can’t, because it hasn’t happened.

But most movies about slavery have non-Blacks in major positions of control or power; even though there may be a Black producer or director attached to the project.

I am not aware of one movie about slavery where Blacks have had total control of the process from beginning to end.

The movie “Amistad” (1997) was written by David Franzoni, directed by Steven Spielberg and produced by Debbi Allen (Black), Steven Spielberg and Colin Wilson. John Williams composed the musical score.

“12 Years a Slave” (2013) was based on the life of former slave Solomon Northup and it was directed by Steve McQueen (Black) and produced by Brad Pitt, Dede Gardner, Jeremy Kleiner, Bill Pohlad, Steve McQueen (Black), Arnon Milchan, and Anthony Katagas. John Ridley (Black) wrote the screenplay and Fox Searchlight Pictures distributed the movie.

The 2016 version of “Roots” was written by Lawrence Konner, Mark Rosenthal, Alison McDonald (Black), and Charles Murray (Black). The four-part miniseries was directed by Bruce Beresford, Phillip Noyce, Thomas Carter (Black), and Mario Van Peebles (Black).

Now, let’s look at a few of the top Holocaust movies.

“The Diary of Anne Frank” (1959) was based on the writings of Anne Frank and directed by George Stevens and written by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett and distributed by Twentieth Century Fox.

“Schindler’s List” (1993) was written by Steven Zaillian and produced by Steven Spielberg, Gerald Molen, and Branko Lustig. Steven Spielberg also directed the movie and “Schindler’s List” was distributed by Universal Pictures.

“The Pianist” (2002) was based on the book by Władysław Szpilman and directed by Roman Polanski, who also earned production credits. Robert Benmussa and Alain Sarde were also producers on the movie and it was distributed by Focus Features.

Do you notice anything that stands out to you here? There are no Blacks in any position of control or authority in any of these movies. The Jewish community tells their history through their own eyes and through their own lenses.

The Many Delusions of Donald Trump

Bill Fletcher, Jr. is a talk show host, writer and activist. Follow him on Twitter, Facebook and at www.billfletcherjr.com.
Oliver Thomas is a name we know from his many years of service as an elected official on the New Orleans City Council, as well as being a stage actor and now as the host of the highly rated radio program The “Good Morning Show” on WBOK-1230 AM. Although his life has been filled with many ups and some downs, he has always maintained a positive attitude and stayed true to his commitment to serving and uplifting others.

He says he would have never gotten to where he is in life without the help of many others who saw in him the potential to do great things. “I am product of a lot of people who saw more in me than I saw in myself,” says Thomas. Continuing he says of those who spotted his early seeds of greatness, “I had great teachers and coaches, such as coach Lombard at Lawless High School and Roy Glaption, my coach and mentor until he died and of course Councilman Jim Singleton, who helped develop me into a young professional.” Also I cannot forget the prayers of the people of New Orleans and beyond; I live off them and feed off of them, I know it’s the reason I am successful.”

As an elected official Thomas led many efforts that were connected to helping the most vulnerable citizens of New Orleans. “I was the lead author of the City’s Domestic Violence Law. I thought it was important to protect women when I was part of the Domestic Violence Committee.” He also worked to preserve historic homes in African-American communities. “When I was a member of the Property Demolition Committee, I advocated to expand what were considered historic properties beyond just White neighborhoods or in the French Quarter and insisted that properties should be evaluated in all communities because our history is important as well.”

Thomas has always been an advocate for helping young African-Americans. It is something that he was involved in before, during and after his life in public office. Speaking of his work he says, “I worked with the Boys to Men Mentoring Program in the 1990’s, it was one of the most successful mentoring programs ever in the City.” He also speaks of his time working at Covenant House with homeless youth, “Stacy Koch, who was the Director found out I was home from prison and I went over there to volunteer and help with some of the homeless kids and she asked me if I was interested in working with them and it was a wonderful experience and great opportunity to get closer to what kids were going through especially homeless kids.”

Today, Thomas is hosting the top rated morning show on WBOK 1230-AM, where he engages his viewers with thoughtful insightful conversation helping them understand the issues that affect them. Speaking of how he became involved with the station he says, “I started guest hosting for Gerod Stevens, I’ve tried to use my experience in politics and public policy and a lot of the issues in the community and try to share information with the public because I have a lot of insider information. I know how to connect the dots and I try to do a good job of letting folks know how issues connect to their lives. It’s also been very rewarding, and I am also happy to say that not long ago we were recognized as the number one rated show on the station, and one of the most popular shows in the region.”

Speaking of why he feels his show resonates with listeners he says, “The information that I present I do my homework. I study, I do not say anything that I cannot back up. Also I am open to dialog and I am a good listener.” Continuing he says, “The biggest compliments we’ve gotten about the show is that the people we bring on to share information with the public they don’t get a lot of other places.”

Oliver Thomas has lived a stellar life, but it became unraveled right before our eyes a few years ago, as he went from perhaps ascending to the City’s highest elected office to being convicted of participating in a scheme to skim money connected to a City Parking Contract. But forever the optimist he turned lemons into lemonade and says it was a teachable moment for him and hopefully a lesson for others. Saying of what others could learn from his life he says, “That down doesn’t mean stay down. That in many cases it can be an opportunity to get better. And also that the success I’ve been afforded should be afforded to other men and women that’s been through something. There are other brothers and sisters just as talented as I am that deserve a second chance just like me. I am a reflection of them.”

Thomas’ words ring a chord of irredeemable truth, as all of us have had to deal with many of the trials and tribulations of life, but many of us have not had them play out in the public arena. Thomas says that he wants his life and its journey to inspire others. “Life doesn’t really get better until you are tested, but when you get tested you better be connected to your faith. You better believe in yourself and all the things that God gave you that made you special. And remember the most special people God put on this earth are the ones who have survived failure or the ones who have survived after being knocked down or being put down. Those are the people who can help save this world.”

Oliver Thomas

A Life Dedicated to Serving Others

by: Edwin Buggage
Xavier University Hosts Annual Mardi Gras Indian Camp

Kaelin Maloid
Data News Weekly Contributor

The Mardi Gras Indians Arts Summer Program is a summer camp for 11-15-year-olds that is designed for them to study the tradition of “masking” for the Mardi Gras Indians.

“The significance of the Mardi Gras Indian culture and grassroots culture in New Orleans in general is chaining—it brings communities together, it talks about survival of people,” said Xavier Arts Professor, Ron Bechet.

The summer program started in 2007, as an initiative of the Community Arts Program of the Department of Arts at Xavier University of Louisiana. The program last eight weeks and allows students to study both the “Downtown” and “Uptown” styles of their costumes. Big Chief Darryl Montana of the Yellow Pocahontas Mardi Gras Indians will represent the “Downtown” style, and Council Chief Walter Landry of the Golden Blades Mardi Gras Indian tribe will represent the “Uptown.”

“Each summer, we hold it for this particular age group because many people see Mardi Gras Indians and don’t know what it means, where it came from, and how important it is to bring community together,” Bechet said.

The camp is held at Xavier University of Louisiana, a significance not missed on Bechet.

“To have it here at Xavier, to promote this activity of what people have done for a lot of years to a new generation is really important,” Bechet said.

Having the camp at Xavier was not by accident. According to Montana, he wouldn’t want to have the camp at any other place.

Montana said that his relationship with Xavier went back “anywhere from 23 to 25 years” when he was working at a charter school. It was through the CAP Program in 1997 that Montana ended up having a relationship with Xavier. Prior to that, he didn’t know any other universities that accepted that program. He started working with the kids at the charter school first, and then when Xavier started a summer camp the kids could work at as well.

“Nowadays, I think most—a lot—of the universities want to jump on the bandwagon, but Xavier University was first,” Montana said.

Inside the art village, where the camp is located, the students watch videos, listen to lectures, and converse with guest speakers. Using a hands-on approach, the students will create an element of the Mardi Gras Indian costumes. The instructors will help the students develop the skill they need for designing, drawing, sewing and beading for their art forms. While learning these talents, the students will also rehearse songs and chants and learn about the tribal culture.

Taylor Sanders, a co-teacher at the camp and former camp participant, would say that the camp was “definitely successful.”

Sanders said that participating in the camp have given her a bigger appreciation for the City that she lived in and the culture she was a part of. Prior to the camp, she had never looked at the Mardi Gras Indians making as an art form, but, afterward, she understood that it was a real art and science that went into building their costumes.

She also added that she came back as a co-teacher because, “It feels familiar. It’s a happy environment. I want to work where it feels good, where I feel happy.”

At the end of the camp, the students will showcase their knowledge and skill with a showcase at Xavier University.

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7th Ward Embraces E-Warrant System

Delaney George
Data News Weekly Contributor

With all of the modern advances in technology these days, it comes as no surprise that New Orleans Police Department has recently hopped on the bandwagon with a new and more efficient way to control violence in the City.

The 7th Ward’s NOPD District began using the new Electronic Warrant System as of June 2016.

An app created by Cloud Gruel, a Metairie based technology studio, acts as a warrant system where a judge can approve warrants for officers digitally. Traditionally, officers had to leave the crime scene to physically pick up a warrant from a judge.

Magistrate Commissioner Jonathan Friedman said that the E-Warrant Systems prevent judges from being unnecessarily tethered to their court room, making the entire process more efficient.

“I can sign a warrant from anywhere, even when I am on the bench,” Friedman said.

The system aims to help officers save time on executing a warrant while still at the scene, saving them approximately forty minutes of wait time to get warrants approved.

Judges are not the only ones impressed with the software’s efficiency. NOPD Sergeant Wade Bowser is impressed with the new warrant system.

“I cannot say anything but great things about it since we started using it about a month ago, it’s gonna cut down on a lot of time,” Bowser said.

While this software is new to New Orleans, it has been use in several cities around the nation.

NOPD is far from first to benefit from the E-Warrant System. The system in the State of Hawaii has been effective since 2009 and officers have been pleased with the system ever since.
Gov. Edwards Signs Bill to End Medicaid Funding for Planned Parenthood

Data Staff Report

Gov. Edwards signed a bill on Thursday that, if it takes effect, could prevent more than 5,200 women, men and young people from accessing birth control, cancer screenings, STD testing and treatment, and other preventive care at Planned Parenthood through Medicaid. As the Governor signed, more than 50 Planned Parenthood supporter rallied across the street from the Governor’s mansion in protest.

On Monday, June 6, lawyers for Planned Parenthood and three of its patients presented oral argument before the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in a separate case against similar actions taken last year by Governor Bobby Jindal.

Cecile Richards, president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America said in a written statement: “Shame on you, Governor Edwards. No politician should be telling someone where they can or cannot go for health care, no matter who you are or where you live. Politicians in at least 24 states are threatening access to care at Planned Parenthood. If that happens, we are looking at huge swaths of this country where women will be unable to access birth control, cancer screenings, and other care. Worst of all, politicians are targeting this care all in the name of politics.”

Melanie A. Linton, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast in reaction to the actions of the Governor, “Every Louisianan should have access to care at the health care provider they know and trust. Adding insult to injury, this is a purely political move at the cost of Louisianans’ access to basic health care. One thing is certain: Our doors are open, and we will continue to fight for our patients.”

Governor Edward’s signature comes after the Obama Administration issued guidance to lawmakers in all fifty states, once again making it clear that recent politically motivated efforts to block Planned Parenthood patients from accessing care through Medicaid violate long-standing federal law. Over the past nine months, politicians in at least 24 states are threatening to end access to care at Planned Parenthood. According to the Congressional Budget Office, if patients who rely on public health programs are blocked from coming to Planned Parenthood, up to 650,000 people would face decreased access to health care.

Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast plays a particularly important role in ensuring women have access to family planning care in Baton Rouge, where Governor Jindal’s health care policies forced LSU Earl K. Long Medical Center and the Baton Rouge General Medical Center-Mid City emergency room to close. A new health center in New Orleans will begin serving patients in later in June. Both of these locations provide care in Health Professional Shortage Areas.

According to 2010 research from the Guttmacher Institute, Planned Parenthood served nearly 60 percent of the total number of female contraceptive clients seen at publicly funded clinics in East Baton Rouge parish. In Orleans Parish, Planned Parenthood cared for three in 10 of them.

E-Warrant, Continued from page 10.

The Hawaii Police Department’s Chief Boisse Correa is pleased with the E-Warrant System.

“E-Warrants are saving our officers money and time,” Chief Correa said, according to the Hawaii Police Department official press release.

Other law enforcements in places such as Florida, Utah, Kentucky and even Canada have effectively been using the E-Warrant System for quite some time and have no intentions on stopping.

The 7th Ward’s NOPD District will continue to use and test out the E-Warrant System throughout the remainder of the year and many officers of other NOPD districts around the City may incorporate the new system after the pilot run.

Commentary, Continued from page 8.

from their own perspective.

Remember, the Chinese sculptor of the statue of Dr. Martin Luther King on the National Mall in Washington, DC, Lei Yixin, was forced “to redo the statute because some felt that the original rendering made King seem too ‘confrontational.’”

Confrontational to whom? To this day, I have refused to visit King’s statue on the Mall.

Yixin was chosen at the expense of very capable American sculptors, both Black and White. The U.S. government also allowed Yixin to bring Chinese workers into the country to assemble the sculpture. They were literally paid slave wages, but I digress.

The U.S. government spent over $120 million on the King sculptor and the money went to China and Chinese workers.

The Jewish community would never allow something like this to happen to anything dealing with their own community.

So, to Roland Martin and his supporters, let’s stop being a slave to slavery.

Raynard Jackson is founder and chairman of Black Americans for a Better Future (BABF), a federally registered 527 Super PAC established to get more Blacks involved in the Republican Party. Follow Raynard on Twitter @raynard1223.
“HE JUST NEEDS TO GET OVER IT”

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