

Lighting The Road To Freedom

New Orleans

Data

News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

Page 12

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Goodbye Godfather

December 30, 2006

40th Year

Volume 36

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The Soul of New Orleans

What a Year!

2006, the year in review

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**Celebrating the New
Year New Orleans Style**

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COVER STORY

2006, What a Year!

Cheryl Mainor
Managing Editor

As history will determine, 2006 may go down as one of the most bizarre, and scandalous in the short period that these United States have been recognized as a nation.

Throughout the entire year, mainstream daily news was dominated by the ongoing War in Iraq as Americans began to change their perspective on the conflict and support for President Bush and his administration dropped to almost single digits. The "Battle for Hearts and Minds" and "The War on Terror" has become a bloody "Civil War" in which there is no clear way for the conflict to end.

Scandal in the US Congress, threatened to destroy our democracy, and in retaliation, US voters voiced their disgust in mass, and overturned the status quo, opting instead for change. The Republican majority fell to new Democrats, many of them completely new to the national political scene. The House and Senate were cleaned, and many new faces will hold the seats in both Houses of Congress. Demanding change the people spoke, the outcomes remain to be seen.

But in New Orleans, news centered around the rebuilding process following the aftermath of the great and horrible storm, Katrina and the failing of the

levees. Programs which promised relief and results, which were implemented by various federal, state and local agencies, all have been mired in problems, which have yielded little in the way of relief, resulting in the majority of the former population still unable to return home. Infrastructure is slow moving, schools are not adequate, basic services are still elusive for much of the 9th Ward.

But bright spots have come as well. Historically, the Mayoral election had more New Orleanians participate than any other election in history, the right to vote, galvanized the people, from across the

Continued next page.



New Orleans the Road to Recovery (August 12, 2006)

This issue looked at the status of recovery as the 1 year anniversary of the storm approached. The Circle Food Store which was highlighted in newspapers across the country and in film and TV news, once showed bodies floating in front of it, still stands as evidence of progress. But for many homeowners, desolation is still the order of the day.



Data News Weekly 40th Anniversary (August 29, 2006)

Data News Weekly celebrated its 40th Anniversary in August with a party at the African American Museum. A crowd of about 300 attended the event, which featured Kermit Ruffins and the Barbeque Swingers. The event netted \$30,000 for the JMJ Continuing Education Fund which provides scholarships to deserving college students around New Orleans.

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COVER STORY



A Long Road Home (October 7, 2006)

The newly formed Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) began implementing its main program The Louisiana Road Home, which has come under tremendous criticism by the people it is designed to help. Some infrastructure and mechanisms of the program were not working as planned but the LRA and Gov. Blanco have promised that the program will work through the kinks and be good for New Orleans. Hopes that the program will yield much needed help for residents who desperately need assistance to rebuild remain, and 2007 will tell if the program will work.



100 Days and Counting (September 23, 2006)

Mayor C. Ray Nagin gave a candid interview with Data News Weekly on his approaching 100 day benchmark, and the rebuilding process for New Orleans. Great pressure surrounded the mayor, as every resident waited to see if he would indeed live up to the promises he made during his battle to hold his post as the leader of the City.



A Tale of Two Cities (March 11, 2006)

As the rebuilding process was beginning around the Greater New Orleans area, it became obvious to most that much of what was being called rhetoric, by many was infact becoming the truth, as the wealthy and predominately white areas of the city, and businesses, were able to rebuild, and receiving services at a faster pace, than were the poorer or predominately black areas. It was becoming obvious that the worst fears of Blacks that rebuilding New Orleans would be a tale of two cities was coming to pass.



Remembering Katrina (September 9, 2006)

Many around New Orleans, and the Gulf Region, observed the Anniversary of the devastating storms which battered and destroyed much of the entire region. Church services, discussions, seminars, and other events were held in weekend long observance of the storm event.



NO Vs. Houston (July 1, 2006)

Essence Music Festival was held in Houston Texas. This staple for New Orleans, will be returning in 2007, as will the crowds which travel from across the country to participate. Many festival goers commented that the festival was good, but it wasn't the same as it is in New Orleans, and they looked forward to it returning home. Logistics in Houston, made it difficult to attend all the various events that make up the festival.



Bayou Classic Returns to New Orleans (November 18, 2006)

This Thanksgiving season saw the return of the State Farm Bayou Classic, which had to move in 2005 to the Houston Astrodome due to the flood. The Bayou Classic is a perennial favorite event in New Orleans, which matches the Classic Rivals, the Grambling Tigers vs. the Southern University Jaguars.



Ray Nagin Wins! (June 6, 2006)

In a race that most thought he would certainly lose, Ray Nagin pulled off an upset, against his challenger Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu to hold his seat as Mayor of New Orleans. Nagin, who was greatly under-funded compared to his rival, faced a firestorm of unfortunate publicity, from many sources which included Gov. Blanco, yet managed to galvanize the people of New Orleans to hold off Landrieu in a surprise victory.



Remembering Coretta Scott King (February 11, 2006)

The King's Queen, Coretta Scott King was remembered in this special Black History Month edition. Mrs. King, who succumbed to a long term illness, was a stalwart in the ongoing struggle for Blacks to realize full equality and justice in this country. Carrying the torch for her slain husband, Mrs. King founded the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Change in Atlanta, GA



Jefferson Returns to Washington (December 16, 2006)

Congressman William Jefferson in a bloody battle for his seat in the US House of Representatives, was able to head off challengers and an eventual run-off contest against State Rep., Karen Carter to hold on to his seat. The battle, if lost would have made Jefferson become the only Democrat in the country to lose his seat in the 2006 Election with the Democrats taking over majority control of the House and the Senate.



The Right to Return (April 8, 2006)

This issue was packed with historic events which took place surrounding the 2006 Mayoral and Municipal Elections in New Orleans in April. On the line was the right to vote or disenfranchisement for New Orleanians, who because of their displacement, faced an uncertain future. The right of every American to self-determination was never more front and center than it was for residents of New Orleans this spring.

Cover Story, Continued from previous page.

country and the collective voice of New Orleans was heard. Two incumbent candidates whose political futures seemed almost destined to be cast to the graveyard, rose up against the odds and gathered their supporters and turned out their vote, resulting in victory for Mayor C. Ray Nagin, and Congressman William Jefferson. The 2006 Bayou Classic, The New Orleans Saints and the Hornets have all returned home,

and Essence Magazine announced that in 2007 the Essence Music Festival will return as well, bringing back much needed revenue and a piece of normal life to this place. Data News Weekly, celebrated it's 40th year of publishing, which was no small feat, in light of the circumstances. Mardi Gras was held, in spite of low resources and a smaller turnout.

Yes, 2006 will go down for us, as possibly the most challenging year in our history. Full of worry, and heartbreak, but also full of hope. And through it all, we have found that what we always suspected is true: that The spirit of New Orleans cannot be broken. 2006 showed the world that the "Spirit of New Orleans" lives on, for New Orleans, is not just one thing, it is bigger than a flood. It is the people, who live and who

have lived here, the fragrance of their spirits permeates the land. New Orleans has survived, battered but not broken. Tattered but not torn. New Orleans is still here, and New Orleans always will be.

To read the following stories, visit our website www.ladatanews.com, and click on issues, then archives. The stories below can be downloaded in their entirety.

Calvin Mackie coming to Data in 2007



Many will agree that our children need and will prosper from mentoring. However, we have to understand exactly what mentoring is and isn't. Mentoring is a process of building a mutually

Professor, Speaker, Author and Inventor. Dr. Mackie is an internationally renown speaker, Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Tulane University and a graduate of McDonough #35 High School. A member of the Phi Beta Kappa and the 100 Black Men of Metro New Orleans,

Look for Dr. Mackie's columns
to begin on January 13, 2007.



Calvin Mackie, Ph.D.

Talk Back! It's your chance!

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NEWSMAKER

Packer Retires as Entergy New Orleans President and CEO

Maintains Chairman Position; West Named ENO President and CEO

Entergy New Orleans announced last week that Daniel F. Packer, its president and chief executive officer since 1996, is retiring effective Jan. 1, 2007. Packer will continue to serve as Entergy New Orleans' chairman until an undetermined date after the company exits bankruptcy.

Roderick K. West, currently ENO's director of Metro Distribution Operations, will assume Packer's position as president and CEO.

"Dan has been an extraordinary leader for the city and for Entergy New Orleans over the last 10 years and particularly during the company's most challenging chapter following Hurricane Katrina," said J. Wayne Leonard, Entergy Corporation's chairman and chief executive officer. "He has worked steadfastly in the best interest of customers through a hands-on effort, contributing to the rebirth of the city and the restoration and rebuilding of electric and gas service, laying the groundwork for a financially viable utility critical to meeting the city's needs and by securing federal funding through state officials to protect customers from large rate increases."

Leonard said, "Challenges remain but there is no one more capable than New Orleans' own Rod West to guide Entergy New Orleans into the future. Rod is a proven leader who is as prepared for this position as anyone I have ever seen. I expect we will see great things from Rod, and he always seems to exceed all expectations."

In addition to his ENO responsibilities, Packer is chairman of the New Orleans Aviation Board that oversees Louis Armstrong International Airport and a member of the Board of Trustees for Loyola University New Orleans. He serves on the board of Louisiana Community and Technical College System, Keystone Energy Board, New Orleans Jazz Orchestra and the Fore!Kids Foundation. He also is a former national chairman of the American Association of Blacks in Energy.

In 2005, Packer was honored as one of the "Most Powerful African American Executives in Corporate America" by Black

Enterprise, a leading business and investment publication for the African American community. He was the first African American to hold the position of chairman of the New Orleans Regional Chamber of Commerce in 2001.

Packer's career with Entergy began in 1982 as Waterford 3 Nuclear Plant training manager. He later served as Waterford's plant manager, becoming the first African American in the United States to manage a nuclear plant. He was named Entergy New Orleans' president in 1996 and ENO's CEO in 1998. Prior to joining Entergy, Packer was a senior engineer with General Physics Corp. and worked as a training coordinator with Connecticut Yankee Atomic Power Company. He served in the U.S. Nuclear Navy Program from 1969 to 1975.

Packer, 59, is a native of Mobile, Ala. He holds a bachelor of arts degree in business studies from Charter Oak College and a master of business administration degree from Tulane University.

West, 38, Packer's successor as president and CEO, has served as director of Entergy New Orleans' Metro Distribution Operations since December 2003, and previously served as ENO director of Regulatory Affairs. West's primary responsibility during the last year was restoring New Orleans' electric distribution system after the devastation brought by Hurricane Katrina. Prior to joining Entergy Corp. in April 1999 as senior regulatory counsel, West was senior attorney in the New Orleans office of Vial, Hamilton, Koch and Knox, L.L.P., having previously spent five years with the New Orleans-based firm of Jones, Walker, Waechter, Poitevent, Carrere and Denegre, L.L.P.

West has extensive roots in New Orleans and is a dedicated civic leader for the community. He currently serves as chairman of the Louisiana State University System's Board of Supervisors, vice president of the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center Board of Commissioners, commissioner of the New Orleans Public Belt Railroad and is a past chairman of New Orleans Regional Leadership Institute. He is a board member of the Allstate Sugar Bowl and



Dan Packer President and CEO of Entergy New Orleans is retiring on Jan 1, 2007 but will remain on as Chairman.

Greater New Orleans Inc., and a former board member of the Louisiana Recovery Authority. West holds a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Notre Dame, a juris doctorate degree from Tulane University and a master of business

administration degree from the Tulane University Freeman School of Business. A prep standout at Brother Martin High School in New Orleans, West lettered three years at outside linebacker and tight end for Lou Holtz and the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame, including playing on the 1988

National Championship team.

"I'm committed to building upon the excellent groundwork laid by Dan Packer for successfully guiding the company out of bankruptcy, as well as fortifying the electric and gas distribution systems serving our customers in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina," said West.

Continued page 11.

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DATA ZONE

Data Around Town

It's the Holiday season, and all around town, folk can be found celebrating the joy of the season. Here are some highlights.

Photos by Glenn Jones



Party goes at the Broadmoor Improvement Association's Annual Christmas party



Wayne Wright, Tanzie Jones of Rainbow PUSH Coalition and Paul Sylvester, Owner Sweet Lorraine's

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More scenes from the Broadmoor Improvement Association's Annual Christmas party



Broadmoor improvement Association Annual Christmas party on Dec. 15 hosted by Latoya and Jason Cantrell

DATA ZONE



Cleveland and friends at Data News Weekly and Velvet Rope weekly Wednesday night mixer at King Bolden's



The Houka entertains party goers at King Bolden's



Regina Bartholomew and Robert Pagnet of Eric Hill Nissan at Zea's on St. Charles



Party goers of Broadmoor Improvement Association's Annual Christmas party



JMJ Continuing Education Fund President Kim Brown celebrates with her sons Keith Brown, Seth Brown and mother, Mrs. Agatha Jones at Kieth's graduation. Brown earned an AA degree in Computer Automated Design (CAD).



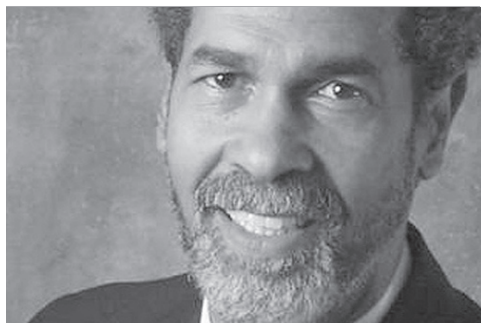
Adonis Expose' marches in with the Pinstripe Brass Band at his birthday celebration



Toys are collected by Agenda For Children. Over 200 toys were collected at the Expose' birthday event.

OPINION

Water In The Well



The Love Dr.
Data Columnist

Had the flu this week. Had to work anyway. (That's what happens when you work for yourself.) However, in between task, I did my best to get in bed and rest. Boo was wonderful. She made sure I ate, had my fluids and then did some of the work that I usually do. Actually, I was thanking God for Boo, a few minutes ago, when her kindness reminded me of a friend's situation and how he would be a great example for this week's Love Doctor column.

I know, you single guys think you have it made and many of you are avoiding family life like the plague. At a wedding, recently, the groom couldn't get any of the single men to line up to catch the garter (you know, like the ladies catch the bouquet). It was disgusting. It seems that many of you are unaware of the fact that you are in the cycle of life and one day your situation will change. You have go from "needing and taking" as a child to what should be "providing for needs" in prime of your adulthood to "needing" again, eventually, in old age.

(Ever wonder why you see more old men sleeping on the street than old women. (Hmmm...) I always wonder how many have no children, or children for whom they've done little.)

There's an old song that goes, "You don't miss your water, 'till the well runs dry.", but I have a dear friend whose situation has made me turn those words around to reflect a positive rather than negative situation. One day someone should write a happy song that goes, "When your mouth is dry and you need a sip, if you built a well all you do is dip." Such was the case for my friend.

This week's column is intended to congratulate those men readers who have managed to keep things together in their families, and to warn those who, so far, have found themselves unable to submerge themselves in the responsibilities of family life. Come on, don't stop reading now! The column may open your eyes to benefits of the family lifestyle of which you were unaware.

Unfortunately, in our society, the value of the family lifestyle seems to have been thrown out in the sixties with the Vietnam war. We've gotten into this "do your own

thing" attitude, in which some folks actually believe that they can face the world alone. Its easy to understand since television and movies have portrayed the family as a stone around one's neck. After all, people without families don't have to buy food and clothes for kids or provide housing, medical care and education. No one spills ice cream on the seat of their BMWs (or Hondas) and they never have to go to a parent teacher meeting.

The problem is aggravated by the fact that people in the family forming years of their lives often have a mistaken sense of invulnerability, a feeling that they will always be able to do everything that they do now. That's understandable for they have no personal evidence to the contrary... everything still works. During this period of our lives we have very few needs that we cannot fulfil ourselves (or with another consenting adult).

Lets get back to my friend. Here he is... mid forties, well educated, in great physical condition, good job, and reasonably good looking (OK, what do you want me to say, the dude is my friend.) What makes his story relevant is the fact that he was a "well builder", one who accepted the responsibilities of a family. He wasn't one of those "lone rangers", men unattached or only loosely attached to a family. Friend is a Family Man (note the capital letters).

Friend had no way of knowing that in the peak of his years he was about to find himself vulnerable and in a position of temporary "Need" long before the anticipated arrival of old age.

After a nearly fatal auto accident on the night he and his wife celebrated their anniversary, Friend found himself temporarily disabled. Unable to do almost anything for himself, he needed help to do everything. If ever a man found himself suddenly thirsting for human kindness and support, Friend was that man. Fate had thrown him a curve which had turned his life upside down. He would have to go to his well, his family, and depend on what ever he found there. What he found was a well overflowing with the quenching coolness that springs from the Oasis of a family that loved and respected its husband and father. (Boy isn't that poetic)

As we acknowledge the goodness of Friend's support team (which includes his mother in law despite the television stereotypes), let's consider how different things might have been if Friend had not been a solid Family Man. What if Friend had chosen not to have a family at all? What if he had deserted the wife and kids to enjoy the pleasures of the "free life"? Somehow, under different circumstances, I don't really believe that I would be able to have pleasant visits with a guy gaining

Continued on page 11.

Media Honeymoon Ends for Barack Hussein Obama



George C. Curry
NNPA

After peering from the cover of Time magazine, making the round of TV Sunday talk shows and being urged by newspaper columnists and editorial writers to make a run for president in 2008, Barack Obama's honeymoon with the media is over. Generally, overly favorable news coverage ends the moment a candidate declares for office. However, for Obama, who is still considering whether to run, the tide has already turned.

According to mediamatters.org, a media monitoring site, Republican operatives and conservative talk show hosts launched a not-so-subtle attack on Obama's middle name – Hussein.

"In late November, Republican strategist Ed Rogers began pointedly referring to 'Barack Hussein Obama,' using the senator and potential Democratic presidential candidate's middle name," MediaMatters reported. "Soon, the utterly meaningless – but eminently mockable – fact that Obama's middle name is 'Hussein' was everywhere. NBC's Mike Viqueira announced 'a man named Barack Obama, whose middle name, incidentally, is Hussein, running for president.' On the December 5 edition of Fox News' Special Report with Brit Hume, Carl Cameron told viewers, 'Though he's written two books about himself already, most people know very little about Barack Hussein Obama Junior's uncommonly privileged life.' In case you're wondering: No, 'John Sidney McCain' does not appear in any Fox News stories available on Nexis."

Chris Matthews interviewed Ed Rogers on his show and teased him about mocking Obama's middle name on the program while the regular host was away.

MATTHEWS: Ed, you made some news here the other night. Let's take a look at the tape of what you said.

ROGERS: Oh, come on.

MATTHEWS: No, no – of what you said in my absence. When the cat's away, the mouse will play.

ROGERS: Where were you? Where were you?

MATTHEWS: Let's take a look at what you said.

ROGERS [video clip] Held me down as somebody that underestimates Barack Hussein Obama, please.

MATTHEWS: Well, you know in an American

life, the only time we start using three names for a person is when they're an assassin – you know, John Henry –

ROGERS: There's some truth to that.

MATTHEWS: Lee Harvey Oswald. Why did you invoke the middle name of Barack Obama out of nowhere? What are you up to, sir?

ROGERS: Mostly teasing him as a lightweight and somebody that's just not ready...But I hope he runs. I want him to run. There's more –

Yes, there is more. Matthews, a former Republican staffer, pretended that Rogers "made some news" in his absence when it was Matthews who had been the culprit.

According to the monitoring group, "On the November 7 edition of Hardball – three full weeks before Rogers' comment – Matthews said: 'You know, it's interesting that Barack Obama's middle name is Hussein. That will be interesting down the road, won't it?'"

CNN's Jeff Greenfield was no better than his conservative counterparts.

Referring to Obama, the journalist said: "...He may be walking around with a sartorial time bomb. Ask yourself: Is there any other major public figure who dresses the way he does? Why, yes. It is Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who, unlike most of his predecessors, seem to have skipped through enough copies of GQ to find the jacket-and-no-tie look agreeable. And maybe that's not the comparison a possible presidential contender really wants to evoke."

Since when did not wearing a tie with a suit equate to being a terrorist sympathizer?

But Greenfield did not stop there. "Now, it is one thing to have a last name that sounds like Osama and a middle name, Hussein, that is probably less than helpful. But an outfit that reminds people of a charter member of the Axis of Evil? Why, this could leave his presidential hopes hanging by a thread. Or is that threads?"

New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd had written a column saying that Obama's "ears stick out." When Obama saw Dowd, he teased her about her description of him, saying, "You talked about my ears. I just want to put you on notice: I'm very sensitive ... I was teased relentlessly when I was a kid about my big ears."

That joking exchange was blown out of proportion by Rush Limbaugh. He said, "...If the guy is sensitive about his big ears, we need to give him a new name, like Dumbo, but that doesn't quite get it. You know, just calling him – calling him – that just doesn't – how about Barack Hussein Odumbo?"

Obama was named after his father, who was born in Kenya, not Kennebunkport. To focus on his name, his big ears or whether he wears a tie shows just how small-minded and vicious some opinionated talking heads can be.

George E. Curry is editor-in-chief of the NNPA News Service and BlackPressUSA.com.

STATE & LOCAL NEWS

83,000 voters to be taken off Louisiana's registration rolls

*Voter purge to take
place the day after
Christmas*

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — More than 83,700 voters will be dropped off Louisiana's voter rolls next week, inactive voters whose addresses can't be confirmed and who haven't voted in at least two years, according to Secretary of State Jay Dardenne.

Nearly 3 percent of Louisiana's 2.9 million registered voters will have their registrations canceled on Dec. 26, as required by state law, Dardenne said in a news release Wednesday.

"The affected individuals have not voted in the past two years and have not responded to canvassing efforts or other attempts to confirm their registration address," Dardenne said.

Anyone dropped off the voter rolls can reregister with their parish registrar of voters and a valid address

Less Than a Cup of Water Can Cause a Gas Outage.



After Hurricane Katrina flooded New Orleans, more than four million gallons of salt water inundated 800 miles of the Entergy New Orleans natural gas pipelines. It took months to pump out and restore gas service to our customers.

Of our post-Hurricane Katrina gas customer base, approximately 98% of Entergy New Orleans gas customers enjoy reliable service. Unfortunately Hurricane Katrina's damage still lingers.

It can take less than a cup of water to cause a gas outage, and small amounts of water remain in the system's low spots, causing gas service disruptions for some customers.



To address the problem, Entergy New Orleans has increased the number of field workers by shifting employees from the Entergy Gulf States Baton Rouge gas business and by securing specially trained contractors. We are also working seven days a week to restore service and repair the system. We are confident we can address most of our customer outages within 48 hours of the initial call to 1-800-ENTERGY.

The water-related gas system impact from Hurricane Katrina could linger with Entergy New Orleans for some time. But, we will continue to work hard along with the New Orleans City Council to reduce the impact on our customers and provide reliable gas service.

If your home was flooded, please have a licensed plumber inspect your gas heater, appliances and all gas lines to ensure everything is working properly. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to repair the gas system.

**For more information on gas safety go to
entergy-neworleans.com.**



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General Safety Rules:

- If you smell gas, leave the building immediately and call 1-800-ENTERGY.
- NEVER use your gas range to heat your home or apartment.
- Follow directions from the manufacturer for using and taking care of gas appliances.
- Have a qualified professional inspect your heater each year.
- Keep papers, gasoline, fluids, paints, curtains and rags away from gas furnaces, water heaters, ranges and dryers.
- Always make sure gas appliances are vented to the outside of the building.
- Before lighting fireplaces, make sure they are properly ventilated, and have flue pipes and chimneys checked to make sure they are not blocked with debris.
- Keep pilot lights lit on your gas range. If you put them out to save energy, a dangerous gas build-up can occur if someone turns on the range.
- Keep a fire extinguisher near gas appliances at all times. Use a CO2 or dry-chemical extinguisher for the kitchen. It's a good idea to install at least one CO (carbon monoxide) detector in your home. The alarm sounds before dangerous levels of CO can build up. CO has no smell.
- Inspect burner flames on gas appliances. The flame should be a clear blue color. A yellow flame may indicate that the burner is not operating properly.

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STATE & LOCAL NEWS

Marchand ends Capitol campout after meeting with Blanco, others



Rep. Charmaine Marchand, D-New Orleans staged a protest by pitching a tent on the Capitol lawn to highlight problems in the housing assistance program

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — A state lawmaker ended her protest over post-hurricane housing efforts in New Orleans last Wednesday after a three- hour meeting with Gov. Kathleen Blanco and other top officials.

Rep. Charmaine Marchand, D-New Orleans, and Blanco said after a closed-door session that the group made substantial progress toward improving Louisiana’s \$7.5 billion Road Home program so she will end her vigil outside the State Capitol.

Marchand pitched a tent last week on the Capitol grounds to protest problems in the housing assistance program, which is designed to help residents whose homes were damaged or destroyed by hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Marchand said she would remain in the tent until problems were worked out with ICF International Inc., the contractor hired by Gov. Kathleen Blanco’s administration to run



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Blanco Announces Road Home Changes

BATON ROUGE - Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco announced three policy changes aimed at speeding up and simplifying the Road Home program. Gov. Blanco has continually pressed ICF, the contractor administering the Road Home, to maintain an increasing momentum and improve processes along the way to ensure homeowners get the assistance they need as soon as possible.

“I am pleased to announce these changes in determining awards for homeowners,” Gov. Blanco said. “By accepting pre-storm home appraisals and incorporating the most up-to-date values from Louisiana licensed appraisers and agencies, homeowners can be sure they are getting the most accurate pre-storm value available. I want to thank all legislators who continue to join me to work for solutions to bring our people home, and



Gov. Kathleen Blanco announced improvements to the LA Road Home Program, which she says will streamline the process.

in particular Sen. Ann Duplessis for her help in crafting these changes. With her background in the banking industry she brings a wealth of information and ideas to the table. The Road Home program is an historic undertaking, and we are always striving to improve the methods used to ensure

homeowners can get the help they need to rebuild their lives.”

The Road Home Program will now utilize more tools to determine an accurate pre-storm value of homes. The program has always accepted pre-storm appraisals for determining pre-storm value. These new policies will no longer use the Automated Value Method (AVM) for the City of New Orleans. This nationally-recognized, reliable, computer model system compiles data on home values neighborhood- by-neighborhood. However, this model did not always reflect the most appropriate pre-storm value for all homes in New Orleans. The Road Home will make the following changes to more reliably reflect the specific values in the disaster area.

Continued page 11.

Talk Back!

Data News Weekly wants to know what you think!

Each week, Data News Weekly brings you the information we think you want to know. In an effort to better reflect the thoughts of the community, we are offering you Talk Back. Take this opportunity to let your community, government officials and our editor know what your opinions are on the subject. Selected submissions will be published in the Data News Weekly Talk Back section and a compilation version will be sent to the candidates for Mayor for the City of New Orleans.

This week’s question:

- What has your experience been with the LRA and the LA Road Home Program?
- Have you received any compensation yet?
- Was it enough to cover your rebuilding costs?
- How was your experience working with their representatives?
- Is there too much red tape?

Go to www.ladatanews.com and click on Talk Back and let your voice be heard.

NEWS

Newsmaker, Continued from page 5.

"I accept the challenges of continuing to pursue ways to provide customers with safe, reliable and affordable energy through innovative fuel purchases, carrying out the conservation component of our rate agreement and by partnering with local and state leadership to secure additional federal assistance for the recovery efforts. And, as always, Entergy New Orleans will be an outspoken proponent of the renaissance of New Orleans by supporting our local institutions as we rebuild our community."

Dan and Entergy have been a friend to Data News Weekly, and it's foundation, JMJ Continuing Education fund for many years, providing valuable dollars to assist in the continuing education of New Orleans college students. Data News Weekly wishes him well in his retirement.



Rod West, ENO's director of Metro Distribution Operations, will assume Packer's position as president and CEO

It's your vision for
NEW ORLEANS.
 Make sure it stays that way.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT ORGANIZATION MEETINGS: Keep up on the planning process.

New Orleans is your home. As the city rebuilds it's important to stay involved every step of the way—for instance, by attending the Community Support Organization (CSO) meetings at the New Orleans City Council Chamber.

The CSO is the committee responsible for overseeing the progress of the Unified New Orleans Plan (UNOP), the city's unified rebuilding effort. Comprised of representatives from the Mayor's office, City Council, the City Planning Commission, the Greater New Orleans Foundation and a resident from each of the city's five voting districts, the CSO is in place to keep you informed as the planning process continues.



CSO MEETING
THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 2007
FROM 5:30 PM TO 7:30 PM
NEW ORLEANS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER



For more information about UNOP, please visit
www.unifiedneworleansplan.org or
 call **Louisiana Rebuilds** toll-free at **877-527-3284**.

The Unified New Orleans Plan is funded by grants from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Greater New Orleans Foundation and the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund.

Blanco, Continued from page 10.

The Road Home Program will now:

- Accept post-storm appraisals for pre-storm value.
- Incorporate file data from Louisiana licensed appraisers in the storm zone who have the most up-to-date information on home values.
- Obtain appraisals performed in the storm areas from Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, the Federal Housing Administration, and other agencies that have up-to-date home values on file.

"These policy changes are the work of many people coming together over the past few weeks to enhance this program," Sen. Ann Duplessis said. "The changes make sense when you consider how diverse the New Orleans housing market is. We have an entire team of local professionals dedicated to the real estate and housing industry, and they will now play a vital role in making the Road Home program work better for our people."

While it is recognized that a limited number of award letters are not accurately valued by AVM, it is expected that the majority of the letters sent out will reflect a fair pre-storm value. As always if a homeowner feels the pre-storm value is not accurate, they can call 1-888-ROAD2LA to ask for a review of their appraisal. ICF will continue to perform a broker's price opinion on every house prior to closing.

Love Doctor, Continued from page 8.

weight from the home cooking prepared by his mother in law, joking his way past the pains caused by the pins in his leg, feeling warm and secure in the knowledge that whenever he is thirsty he can get a drink. It's nice to have a full well.

Other things come from that well, the pride in children who seek to live up to your expectations, the warmth of father's day breakfast in bed, the getting older and having someone who doesn't see your age. A good well fills up with memories of wide eyes seeing things never seen before on the vacations made possible only by well builders. It's pleasant work building a good solid and deep well and you'll never know when you might need a drink.

NATIONAL NEWS

Legendary singer James Brown dies

By: Glenn Gamboa

James Brown, the “Godfather of Soul,” the pioneer of funk and the rhythmic backbone of hip-hop, has been swaddled in his signature bejeweled fur cape for the final time.

Brown, known for his raucous stage shows as much as his bold hits “Sex Machine,” “I Got You (I Feel Good)” and “Papa’s Got a Brand New Bag,” died Monday morning at Emory Crawford Long Hospital in Atlanta, where he had been hospitalized Sunday with pneumonia. He was 73.

“James Brown changed music,” said the Rev. Al Sharpton, who was part of Brown’s tour entourage in the 1970s. “He made soul music a world music. What James Brown was to music in terms of soul and hip-hop, rap, all of that, is what Bach was to classical music. This is a guy who literally changed the music industry. He put everybody on a different beat, a different style of music. He pioneered it.”

Concerts from the self-proclaimed “Hardest working man in show business” are the stuff of legend – from his multiple spins, his swiveling hips and constantly twitching feet to the traditional ending, where Brown swoons from exhaustion, only to bounce back again.

Those performances mirrored his

tumultuous life. Born in Barnwell, S.C., in 1933, Brown was only 4 when he was abandoned by his parents. As a teenager, he spent more than three years in reform school for breaking into cars. However, it was at the Toccoa, Ga., school that he met Bobby Byrd, who brought Brown into a group that became known as the Famous Flames.

The band landed a record deal in 1956 with King Records in Cincinnati, and soon after that had a hit with the dramatic rhythm and blues ballad “Please, Please, Please.”

Brown then developed the James Brown Revue – the J.B.’s for short – which created a brand-new style of soul, punctuated with staccato horn blasts and intricate rhythms generated by two drummers.

“To explain the fever pitch that James Brown records set ... it would take using words still not invented,” Public Enemy’s Chuck D wrote in 2002. “Today, hip-hop seems a far distance from the mighty funk the man set upon all of us.”

A growing consciousness

However, Brown’s new ideas extended well beyond music. His song “Say It Loud – I’m Black and I’m Proud,” released in the racially charged times of 1968, after the murder of the Rev. Martin Luther King, became an instant anthem.

“James Brown single-handedly took a lost and confused musical nation of people and bonded them with a fix of words, music and attitude,” Chuck D. wrote in the liner notes for the reissue of Brown’s “Say It Live and Loud” album. “After a hot summer of baseball camp, summer lunches and barbecues, ‘Say It Loud – I’m Black and I’m Proud’ was the catch phrase that prepared me for the third grade, 1969, and the rest of my life. ‘Black’ now signified where we were at, a new discovery of our bad self.”

Between his grueling tour schedule and a string of R&B hits, Brown’s influence grew throughout the ‘70s and ‘80s. He was part of the inaugural class of inductees in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1986, alongside Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry and Little Richard. He won his second Grammy in 1987 for best male R&B vocal performance for “Living in America” – a best R&B recording Grammy in 1965 for “Papa’s Got a Brand New Bag” was his first. In 1992, he received a lifetime achievement Grammy.

Brown gained such respect from his fellow artists that it wasn’t unusual for him to get name-checked in songs (Tom Tom Club’s “Genius of Love,” for example) or have his music



James Brown, American funk soul singer, songwriter and producer, performing at the Montreux Jazz Festival. James Brown, known as the “Godfather of Soul,” has died on December 25, 2006 after being treated for pneumonia, at the age of 73, in Atlanta. (Hulton Archive/Getty Images)

sampled in a hip-hop song. Hip-hop DJs would simply pick one of Brown’s distinctive drum breaks and loop it, allowing rappers to deliver their rhymes over Brown’s foundation.

“He was an innovator, he was an emancipator, he was an originator,” Little Richard told MSNBC. “Rap music, all that stuff, came from James Brown.”

Even those rebelling against R&B and hip-hop recognized his influence. In 1992, fans of techno rallied around L.A. Style’s hit “James Brown Is Dead” as a statement that this new brand of electronic-driven dance songs didn’t need his sense of rhythm or soul.

Of course, Brown outlived techno’s heyday.

Personal struggles

He also rebounded from a drug-fueled confrontation with police in 1988 that ended in an interstate car chase through Georgia and South Carolina. Brown spent more than two years in prison for aggravated assault and failing to stop for a police officer, but when he was released, he returned to performing with a pay-per-view concert.

“Even though he had his legal difficulties, no one stopped giving him respect,” Sharpton said.

In recent years, he resumed his busy touring schedule. (Brown was set to perform at B.B. King Blues Club in Times Square on New Year’s Eve.) And he also began recording with some of today’s hitmakers, including a collaboration with the Black Eyed Peas last year on “They Don’t Want Music.”

Brown is survived by his wife, Tomi Raye Hynie, who was also one of his backup singers, and their son, James Jr. He has four other children, two daughters and sons Daryl and James Brown II, according to his agent, Frank Copsidas of Intrigue Music. Memorial services have not been finalized.

“He was dramatic to the end, dying on Christmas Day,” said the Rev. Jesse Jackson, a friend of Brown’s since 1955.



In a file photo singer James Brown, left, walks with his agent Rev. Al Sharpton from the White House in Washington, D.C. on Jan. 15, 1982. They met with President Reagan to advocate making Martin Luther King’s birthday a national holiday. Brown, the dynamic, pompadoured “Godfather of Soul,” whose rasping vocals and revolutionary rhythms made him a founder of rap, funk and disco as well, died early Monday, Dec. 25, 2006, his agent said. He was 73. (AP File Photo/Scott Applewhite)