

Lighting The Road To The Future

New Orleans

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# City's Planning Commission Explores the Future of New Orleans



**Brittany Odom**  
Data News Weekly Intern

The New Orleans City Planning Commission has teamed up with the Goody Clancy Consultant team to create New Orleans 2030 – A Master Plan for the 21st Century and revealed their working draft of the Plan to the public on March 20.

The City Planning Commission is required to draft a long-term master plan for New Orleans and with the help of Goody Clancy, and even residents, a 20-year plan has been developed.

In addition to New Orleans 2030, the City Planning Commission is also revising the city's zoning ordinance, which has not been comprehensively revised since the 1970s. Though the

Commission attempted to make changes to the ordinance in 2002, the draft was rejected.

The new Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance (CZO) will be developed concurrently with the Master Plan and the new CZO will be more precise, organized, and will fit the standards of 21st century city living.

The Master Plan and the new CZO, provides residents with information about goals the

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Commission has set for the city of New Orleans, such as, added routes to the RTA system, community gardens across the city and future land use plans.

The plan consists of five parts: Part one, "A Plan for 21st Century New Orleans" consists of reviewing current trends, public opinions and establishing as visions for 2030 New Orleans.

Part two examines New Orleans living, including neighborhoods, recreation and services. The Plan will focus on repairing blighted houses and filling in vacant lots. The "How We Live" portion of the Plan will also revitalize neighborhoods and improve neighborhood qualities. According to the project, "market demand could support 20-30 blocks of walkable 'Main Street' shopping."

In part three, "How We Prosper", economics of the city will be examined, including housing plans and how to encourage growth in the workforce. Housing has increased since Hurricane Katrina, but as part of the Master Plan, more affordable housing will be created without making the city "poorer" and stronger enforcements against "nuisance businesses and slum landlords" will be established. The Plan will also aim to increase tourism. The Plan projects that the population will grow "from roughly 335,000 today to slightly more than 400,000 in 2030, but that the number of households will grow by 25% to 35%." The number of jobs should also increase by that same percent by 2030.

Part four, "Sustainable Systems" examines plans for infrastructure, transportation and environmental protection in the city. The Plan promises that New Orleans will be structurally "safer" by 2011. It also details the proposed "Green Infrastructure." Part of the city's attempts to "go green" will include conservation solutions for the wetlands, a park within walking distance of every resident and year-round youth-oriented activities.

The overall vision for New Orleans 2030 is explained in part five, "From Plan to Action", which includes a plan for community and citizen involvement through organizations and forums, and a future land use plan. This part of the plan also aims to establish stronger and more effective local government, as well as create new state and federal partnerships.

An explanation of the parts of the Plan states that, "each of the Master Plan elements will include an implementation and action plan identifying WHAT should be done, HOW it should be done, WHO should do it, WHEN it should be done, and WHERE the funding could come from."

According to a press release from the Goody Clancy team, the overall purpose of the plan is to "encourage economic growth, use new growth to bring New Orleanians back from the diaspora to and good quality of life and draw new residents to the city, bringing new investment and jobs."

An article about the Master Plan from the official website states that the Plan will:

- Provide vision, goals, policy and strategic guidance, and an action plan for the future physical development of the city.
- Guide the city to actively seek positive change and deflect negative change, rather than simply react after change has occurred.
- Provide predictability for residents, businesses, and developers.

- Help the city save money because it plans for orderly investment in services, facilities and infrastructure.
- Help New Orleans preserve the sense of place and identity that make it unique.

Meetings were held last fall to create the Plan, based on the concerns, needs and ideas of New Orleans residents. In an effort to continue allowing citizen involvement, Goody Clancy and City

forehand. The office is located at 1340 Poydras St. on the 9th floor.

A hard copy of the plan is also on display at multiple areas across the city, including Algiers Regional Branch Library, Alvar Branch Library, Lakeview Branch Library, Mid-City Branch Library and Non-Profit Central.

The Commission has stated that New Orleans 2030 will not interfere with any other planning al-



Illustrations: [www.nolamasterplan.org](http://www.nolamasterplan.org)

Planning plans to contact citizens for a public opinion survey and hold numerous more public meetings and forums. The second round of meetings will take place later this month.

The Commission has also launched a website for the New Orleans Master Plan and Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance project.

The site gives information about the Master Plan, the planning committee and allows visitors to offer feedback on New Orleans 2030. Visitors to the site can also read the comprehensive plan, which will be updated regularly.

For anyone interested, the New Orleans City Planning Commission can create a disc of chapters of the Plan, but asks that they call 504-658-7033 be-

ready in action and that post-Katrina planning was focused on rebuilding while New Orleans 2030 aims to encourage long-term growth in the city with recovery efforts as a framework.

Goody Clancy and City Planning aim to complete the final draft of the Master Plan and the new CZO by July 2009.

For more information on the New Orleans Master Plan and Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance project, including a more detailed listing of locations to obtain a copy of the Master Plan and a full schedule of public meetings, see <http://www.nolamasterplan.org>.



# Local Developer Faces Obstacles As He Tries to Rebuild His Community

**Edwin Buggage**  
Editor-in-Chief

As the city fights to resuscitate itself in the face of recovery, a battle has been brewing throughout New Orleans about how and what needs to be rebuilt. Many questions focus on what the city's footprint should look like. After the storm, neighborhoods that were once viable now resemble something from a science fiction movie that could be called "Apocalypse 504."

New Orleans prior to Hurricane Katrina was already a place where

blight was quite prevalent, and the storm and its aftermath has expedited this troubling trend. One area that has experienced blight is the 7th Ward, an African-American and Creole community. Today, St. Bernard Avenue has been experiencing a renaissance as a commercial hub with a burgeoning night life.

St. Bernard Avenue was one of the several centers of commerce where African-Americans came to shop pre-integration. During this time, North Claiborne Avenue was a grand street rivaling St. Charles Avenue with its large



This property was redeveloped by Amedee in the 7th Ward community. It is now the Wisdom Hall. Photo: Glenn Summers

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neutral grounds and tree-lined streets. After the construction of the interstate highway, much of the luster of the street was lost. But today, the area is on the verge of a comeback anchored by many small business owners on St. Bernard Avenue, including renowned trumpeter Kermit Ruffins. One of the most visible signs of recovery

have their special events.

Developer Glenn Amedee wants to expand on his vision with the renovation of what was formerly a hardware store on the corner of North Robertson and St. Bernard Avenue. He intends to transform this space into an entertainment center that will include a reception hall with a 600

the community. He also plans for programs that are aimed at giving young people opportunities for employment and life skills training through mentoring programs.

Amedee is fighting to get a zoning change to see his vision to fruition, but he is facing an obstacle with some of the newer residents of the community who feel his



In some parts of the 7th Ward, blight is still a problem. Photo: Glenn Summers



This was once a thriving facility opened for business prior to Hurricane Katrina. Photo: Glenn Summers

is the Wisdom Hall owned by the Amedee family.

The Amedee family is one that has been at the forefront of the struggle for civil rights in addition to being a beacon light for hope in a distressed community. The Wisdom Hall and the adjacent Perfect Fit Lounge, also owned by the Amedees, have both become top destinations for African-American professionals who are looking for a place to have a good time or to

seating capacity, a theater facility for concerts, a music venue, and retail space, which will include an art gallery, coffee shop, and restaurants. The development will provide a boost that will offer job opportunities while also preserving the culture of such a historical street.

Amedee has enlisted the help of the non-profit organization Black Men of Labor to assist with keeping the culture alive in

project should not move forward. For those who support the initiative, they say what is happening is that people are not understanding the cultural traditions of the community. As evidenced in Tremé, the oldest continuing African-American community in the U.S., a demographic shift has caused a rift between newly arrived white residents and African-American residents. Many believe this rift is the cause of Amedee's problems.



## New Orleans Native and Political Strategist Donna Brazile to Address Xavier Graduates at May 9 Commencement

*Actor-Director Forest Whitaker  
to receive Honorary Degree*

(New Orleans, LA) - National political strategist Donna Brazile will deliver the keynote address and receive an Honorary Degree, and award winning actor-director-producer Forest Whitaker will receive another honorary degree, when Xavier University of Louisiana holds its 82nd annual Commencement on Saturday morning May 9, 10:00 a.m. in the Kiefer Lakefront Arena.

Brazile, one of the best known and most influential women in modern American politics, will address more than 450 graduates of the College of Arts and Sciences, the College

of Pharmacy and the Graduate School and their families at the graduation ceremony. She will also be awarded an honorary degree.

Brazile made history as the first African American woman to lead a major presidential campaign when she served as campaign manager for Gore-Lieberman 2000. Prior to joining the Gore campaign, Brazile served as chief of staff and press secretary to Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton of the District of Columbia, where she helped guide the District's budget and local legislation on Capitol Hill. A veteran of numerous national and statewide campaigns, Brazile had previously worked on



Donna Brazile



Forrest Whitaker

the Democratic presidential campaigns of Jimmy Carter, the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Walter Mondale, Dick Gephardt, Michael Dukakis and Bill Clinton.

Brazile, who earned her undergraduate degree from LSU-Baton Rouge in 1981, served on the board of directors of the Louisiana Recovery Authority at the bequest of former La. Governor Kathleen Blanco.

Also receiving an honorary degree will be Academy Award-winning actor/director/producer Forest Whitaker, not only for his contributions to the arts but also for his humanitarian efforts around the world.

Whitaker is one of Hollywood's most accomplished actors/director/producers who has showcased his talents in a multitude of demanding and diverse roles. He is the fourth African American male to win an Academy Award for Best Actor, and he has also received a Golden Globe and other honors.

He has done extensive humanitarian work for organizations like Penny Lane, providing assistance to abused teenagers. During the last few years, he has also become a spokesperson for Hope North Ugandan orphanage and Human Rights Watch.

## Total Sentencing Alternative Program Forms Partnerships to Provide For A Safer Community

(New Orleans)—The Total Sentencing Alternative Program (TSAP), an electronic monitoring program, is partnering with local faith based Family Center of Hope, Inc., and nationally known re-entry specialist, the Rev. Khalil Osiris, to build a safer and stronger New Orleans. Under the new titled Project RESTORE, these three entities, which represent more than 50 years of crime prevention, re-entry and case management experience, will attempt to halt the vicious cycle of crime in this community.

TSAP currently monitors the whereabouts of nearly 400 non-violent and pre-trial clients.

Through Project RESTORE, electronic monitoring will be expanded into a more comprehensive approach. This approach is guided by best practices and is consistent with the recommendation of the city council's criminal justice consultant of the Vera Institute of Justice of New York City.

The Family Center of Hope, Inc., led by Pastors Tom and Pat Watson, will provide the clients with intensive case management that assesses clients and family history, the root causes of negative behaviour, as well as offers faith-based support for clients and their families. The FCH has provided creative programmatic

interventions to include rites of passage models along with ongoing individual group and family counselling for many years in our community.

Khalil Osiris will provide evidence-based programming designed to improve and encourage TSAP clients to take responsibility for their successful re-entry. Osiris is an author, college professor and re-entry expert who spent 20 years in prison. While incarcerated, he earned a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from Boston University.

TSAP has a mission to build a safer, stronger New Orleans.

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# Tommye Myrick Directs "The Women of Brewster Place the Musical" at ABCT on April 17

At Last. The two have merged. Yes, the city's best known African American theatre companies have joined forces to produce the New Orleans Premiere of the award-winning Gloria Naylor's stage production of "The Women of Brewster's Place". Anthony Bean Community Theatre Company (ABCT) and Tom-

mye Myrick's Voices in the Dark Repertory Theatre and Production Company are co-producing the New Orleans premiere of the Tim Acito stage adaptation of Ms. Naylor's award winning novel. Performances are April 17-19, 24-26, May 1-3, & 8-10. On Friday and Saturday at 8:00 pm. and Sunday matinee at 3:00 pm.

Special note: May 3, Sunday's performance will be at 8:00 pm. ONLY! Tickets are \$20.00 for adults, \$17.00 for students and seniors, and are available by calling the Box Office at (504) 862-7529. (Box Office Hours are Tuesday-Saturday, 2-6 pm. and two hours before performances.) You may also charge by phone or charge



The cast of Brewster Place

**THE NEVILLE BROTHERS**  
**WILCO**  
**IRMA THOMAS**  
**BONNIE RAITT**  
**ETTA JAMES**  
**THE O'JAYS**  
**MAVIS STAPLES**  
**ALLEN TOUSSAINT**  
**SOLOMON BURKE**  
**ERYKAH BADU**  
**SHARON JONES & THE DAP KINGS**  
**PETE SEEGER**  
**EMMYLOU HARRIS**  
**THIRD WORLD**  
**MUSIQ SOULCHILD**  
**BON JOVI**  
**DAVE MATTHEWS BAND**  
**JAMES TAYLOR**  
**EARTH, WIND AND FIRE**  
**JOE COCKER**  
**KINGS OF LEON**

**DR. JOHN**  
**JOHNNY WINTER**  
**SPOON • BUDDY GUY**  
**HUGH MASEKELA**  
**DOC WATSON • JAKOB DYLAN**  
**LOS LOBOS • ROBERT CRAY**  
**MAZE FEAT. FRANKIE BEVERLY**  
**THE WHISPERS**  
**JOHN MAYALL**  
**DRIVE-BY TRUCKERS**  
**FEAT. BOOKER T.**  
**BETTER THAN EZRA**  
**KURT ELLING**  
**MARC BROUSSARD**  
**ROY HAYNES**  
**MARCIA BALL**  
**AVETT BROTHERS**  
**GALACTIC • KINKY**  
**PATY GRIFFIN**  
**PETE FOUNTAIN**  
**ZIG, GEORGE & LEO**  
**METERMEN: CHUCK BROWN**  
**WYNTON MARSALIS**  
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For years the two well-known and respected directors have worked independently of one another until now. Myrick, who has won several "Big Easy Awards", including best director for August Wilson's "Fences" at Le Petit and "FlyinWest" written by Pearl Cleage at Southern Repertory Theatre is delighted with the collaboration. "This is just the beginning, I hope" she said. "It is a wonderful space", she continues "... that is intimate and comfortable". "I am honored to be working with Anthony".

Bean is also very well known, respected and revered in the community. ABCT has also been nominated for several awards and was the winner of a Big Easy honor in 2003 for its production of John Henry Redwood's "No Niggers, No Jews, No Dogs" as Best Drama, directed by its founder, Anthony Bean. "It's a wonderful union", says Bean. "No muss and no fuss". "Tommye is quite the professional. I am very pleased with our collaboration".

Tim Acito's music and lyrics are poignant and revealing – the show delivers. The Musical Director of this production is organist, songwriter, producer and arranger Joel Britton. Currently, Britton serves as the Musical Director of BET's nationally syndicated television show – Sunday Best. The show is choreographed by Keshia McKey. Keshia has choreographed for both stage and film.

This production brings to-

gether three directors as a team. Award – winning director, producer and stage designer, John Grimsley also joins Myrick and Bean as the show's set and light designer. Joining this team of talent is Phyllis Johnson as Production Coordinator and Michelle Briscoe-Long as stage manager.

First written in 1982, The Women of Brewster Place – the novel, was adapted into a miniseries starring Oprah Winfrey in 1990. The novel addresses the lives of several women all trapped inside an urban city in a small community called Brewster Place. It examines the lives and relationships developed between African American women. It explores unwedded motherhood, single parenthood, unrequited love, friendships and homosexuality.

The cast is also compiled of some of New Orleans' finest actresses, singers and dancers. All women, the cast is led by Pastor Fran Love – first lady and pastor of Greater Antioch Church – The City of Love. Fran plays the matriarch of this community of women – Mattie Michaels. This is her acting debut.

Nicole James-Francois plays the sultry seductress and Mattie's best friend – Etta Mae. Award winning actress and singer Idella Johnson portrays the role of Kiswana Brown – the revolutionary and community activist. Idella won the Big Easy Award and the Ambie as best actress in a musical for her portrayal of Lutiebelle Gussie Mae Jenkins in Ossie Davis' play Purlie directed by Tommye Myrick. Cora Lee,

Continued next page.



# Local Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Hosts Annual Cotillion



The 2009 Omicron Lambda Omega Cotillion Court. Photo Courtesy of JWP Studio.

Omicron Lambda Omega's 2009 Cotillion Season came to an end on Saturday, March 28 with the 5th Annual Cotillion Ball held at the Convention Center Marriott in the Blaine Kern Ballroom. The Cotillion showcased five debutantes and nine princesses.

Baron Ed Marshall served as the Master of Ceremonies for this magnificent event. The stage was adorned with four large pink floral arrangements and Omicron Lambda Omega's Cotillion logo was shining on the black drape behind the stage. The beautiful debutantes were dressed in gorgeous white shimmering gowns, and the cute princesses were pretty in pink gowns.

The court and guests were entertained like true royalty by the graceful dancing of the Kelly School of Dance and a beau-

tiful solo dance performance by Kelly dance instructor Catherine Caldwell along with the melodious vocals of Tione Janae Johnson. The highlight of the ball was the debutantes dancing with their proud fathers followed by a dance with their charming beaus. These dances were beautifully choreographed by LaShanda Krystal Prevost. The night concluded with plenty of photographs, cake and punch.

The entire Cotillion Season was packed full of events starting with an informative orientation followed by the Court Bowling Activity, which was an enjoyable event for those bowling along with those cheering and watching. In addition, Omicron Lambda Omega also hosted two informative and lively workshops, which both were attended by all five debutantes.

Everyone involved with the

Cotillion participated in numerous rehearsals where the court was taught the graceful movements for the Cotillion Ball. There also was a fun etiquette workshop for the nine adorable princesses. The debutantes chose to do a community service project at the Landing Senior Center in Algiers where they conducted a computer workshop for the residents and interviewed several of them.

The activities for the season also included a beautiful and sophisticated high tea held at the Ritz Carlton Hotel on Sunday, March 8, 2009. The debutantes, princesses, beaus, family members, and sorors that attended truly enjoyed themselves at this elegant affair. During the tea, Omicron Lambda Omega's advertisement award winners Miss Pearl, Miss Pride and Miss Promise were announced.

## 2009 Debutantes

Debutantes	Parents
Miss Pearl Darion Monique Davis	Mr. & Mrs. Kristofer Davis, Sr.
Miss Pride Alyssa Chantel Lee	Allison & Willie Lee, Jr.
Miss Promise Ashley Mary Teamer	Charles Carl Teamer, Jr. & Karen Trass Teamer
Debutante Kendra Nichelle Emilian Palmer	Erin Allen Palmer & Gregory Vaughn Stafford
Debutante Brione Janell Walker	Robert Walker & Shannon Redd

## 2009 Beaus

Beaus	Parents
Beau Mack Coy McGinnis, III	Mack Coy McGinnis and Cheryl M. McGinnis
Beau Charles Martin Farve, II	Charles M Farve, Sr. and Karla Henry
Beau Alex Hackett Antrum	Charles A. Antrum and Toni Hackett Antrum
Beau Samuel Joseph Myers	Eric Brown (Godfather) and Nicole Marie Myers
Beau Nicholas Anthony Joseph	Nathaniel Raymond Joseph II and Kecia Tranice Joseph

## 2009 Princesses

Princesses	Parents
Nina Maya Blue	Freddie Blue & Shannon Blue
Alyssa Karin Brown	Mr. Maurice Brown and Dr. Carmen LaBrie-Brown
Chelsey Elizabeth Davillier	John & Tracey Flemings-Davillier
Dominique Fontenette Davillier	Daniel & Germaine Fontenette Davillier
Jordan Carmichael McFarland	Stephanie Hawkins
Niahri Tene' Morris	Paul Morris & Nia Clarke
Alaina Marie Randolph	Austin & Pedra Randolph
Rachel Eliza Singleton	Commander Damon Singleton and Dr. Tami Singleton
Tia Alicia Teamer	Roderic & Dr. Toya Teamer

The last event before the ball was the etiquette luncheon held at Zea Rotisserie & Grill on St. Charles Ave. The debutantes and the princesses had a chance

to practice the etiquette skills they learned at their workshops and everyone feasted on a superb buffet.

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Saturday & Sunday - 8:00 A.M.

*Brewster Place continued from previous page*

the unwed mother of 7 children, is played by another award winning actress and singer and nominee - Brittany James. Samantha Beaulieu plays the role of the young mother waiting for her wandering husband to return to Brewster Place.

Well known jazz vocalist Michaela Harrison and Chase Kamata (daughter of famed jazz vocalist Leah Case and granddaughter of restaurateur Leah Chase Senior - owner and master chef of

Dooky Chase) play the lesbian couple committed to pursuing a life of contentment and happiness within the walls of Brewster Place. Tomeka Bob as Sophie is the nosey, nasty neighbor and her inquisitive posse is played by Kirsten Charbonnet as Mavis and Cherlyn Rainey-Luna as Wanda.

The Women of Brewster Place certainly receives a passionate portrayal from these New Orleans ladies.

## GMc+Company Advertising Wins Record Seven ADDY® Awards

NEW ORLEANS – GMc+Company Inc. took home seven awards from the recent 2008-09 ADDY® Award Show, including the prestigious Mosaic Award for excellence in multicultural advertising and the coveted Judges Award for Outstanding Copy. The number of awards represents a record for the boutique agency, now celebrating its twenty-second year in business. Both the Mosaic Award and the Judges Award—as well as a Gold Award for Sound Design—were given in recognition of a series of narrative vignettes featuring Academy Award-winning actor Louis Gos-

sett, Jr. GMc+Company created, wrote and directed the series as part of a multimedia campaign to promote Louisiana's African American Heritage Trail, a project of the Office of the Lieutenant Governor and the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism (<http://www.LouisianaTravel.com/AfricanAmericanHeritageTrail>).

"We're a small agency, so it's exciting to win such a variety of awards, including two at the 'best-of-show' level," said Glenda English, agency principal. "These awards recognize the true breadth of our capabilities

and the quality of ideas we bring to large and small clients alike." GMc+Company took home a Gold Award for Consumer Flash Website for its work on the New Orleans Multicultural Tourism Network's website (<http://www.soulofneworleans.com>), and another Gold Award for Micro or Mini Sites for a microsite created for the same client. "When your website is called 'Soul of New Orleans' it had better live up to its name," said Toni Rice, executive director of the New Orleans Multicultural Tourism Network. "GMc+Company captured the spirit, grit and swing of the city

and translated it into a powerful website to attract visitors. The awards are well deserved."

A fourth Gold Award was awarded to the agency for its logo design for the Louisiana Dairy Industry Promotion Board. GMc+Company also received a Silver Award for a black-and-white photographic element used in its campaign to promote Louisiana's African American Heritage Trail. Founded in 1987, GMc+Company Inc. offers strategic integration and execution of innovative general-market and multicultural marketing programs for diverse business categories. The agency

represents local, regional and national clients including the Louisiana Office of Tourism, New Orleans Multicultural Tourism Network, New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation, Louisiana Dairy Industry Promotion Board, Nutress Hair Care and others. The ADDY® Awards are presented by the Advertising Club of New Orleans to recognize the best ads in the city as judged by a panel of out-of-state advertising professionals. The 2008-09 ADDY® Award Show took place on Friday, March 13, 2009, at Pat O's On The River.

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## African Americans Face Progress and Challenges in Cancer Fight

*National Minority Cancer Awareness Week is April 19-25*

(New Orleans, LA) – While death rates from cancer continue to drop among African Americans, the group continues to be diagnosed at more advanced stages and have lower survival rates at each stage of diagnosis compared to whites for most cancer sites. The findings come from Cancer Facts & Figures for African Americans 2009-2010, the latest edition of a report produced every two years by the American Cancer Society.

The report says death rates for all cancers combined have decreased faster in African-American men than white men, primarily because of rapid declines in the death rates from lung and prostate cancers. While overall cancer death rates have also decreased among African-American women, they are dropping at a slower rate than among white women. The slower decline in African-American women is largely due to smaller decreases in breast and colorectal cancer death rates.

The report estimates that among African Americans in 2009, there will be about 150,090 new cases of invasive cancer diagnosed and about 63,360 cancer deaths. The most commonly diagnosed cancers among African-American men will be prostate (34 percent), lung (16 percent), and colon and rectum (10 percent). Among African-American women, the most common cancers will be breast (25 percent),

lung (12 percent), and colon and rectum (11 percent). Cancer of the lung will be the most common cause of cancer death in both African-American men (31 percent) and women (23 percent), followed by prostate cancer in men (12 percent) and breast cancer in women (19 percent). Cancer of the colon and rectum and cancer of the pancreas are expected to be the third and fourth most common causes of cancer death in both men and women.

"African Americans have the highest death rate of any racial and ethnic group in the U.S. for most cancers," said Otis W. Brawley, M.D., American Cancer Society chief medical officer. "As this report points out, the causes of these disparities are complex and likely reflect social and economic disparities, not biologic differences. African Americans face inequalities in income, education, and standard of living, as well as barriers to accessing high-quality health care. And while it is discouraging that these differences still exist, we absolutely must face them and continue to enact policies to address them."

The American Cancer Society is working to eliminate cancer disparities among all minority populations and the medically underserved, a fact underscored by National Minority Cancer Awareness Week (NMCaw), which is April 19-25.

The report includes highlights of American Cancer Society ef-

forts to save lives and eliminate disparities in cancer morbidity and mortality. Since 1999, the American Cancer Society has funded 106 studies totaling \$87 million devoted to the poor and medically underserved. Forty-two percent of this research focuses on the African-American population, encompassing the cancer continuum from helping people stay well through prevention efforts to helping people get well through programs and hands-on support for survivors. In addition, the Society's internal research departments focus substantial resources on disparities research.

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN), the Society's advocacy affiliate, is also working to address these issues by encouraging elected officials and candidates to make cancer a top national priority. ACS CAN helps to create, change, and influence public policies that can have a significant impact on reducing cancer disparities in this country.

The American Cancer Society is dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by saving lives, diminishing suffering and preventing cancer through research, education, advocacy and service. For more information anytime, call toll free 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org).



# Will History Be Kind to Mayor Nagin?



Shaniece B. Bickham, Ph.D.  
Data News Managing Editor

As former President George W. Bush's term as Commander-in-Chief approached its end, the buzz on broadcast media, the Internet, and print publications focused on his eventual legacy. What will be written about President Bush in history books? What would historians have to say in their personal accounts of his tenure as they interpret it? What will future scholars find through their research on the U.S. Presidency between 2000-2008?

Well, it seems as though the longer New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin remains in office, the more likely these sort of questions will be asked about him. It also seems as though his reputation is getting worse. In a recent radio interview with musician Irvin Mayfield, Mayor Nagin described himself as "misunderstood." I would have to agree—to an extent. I wouldn't say he is completely misunderstood, but I would say that even though he may be genuinely concerned about the well-being of the city of New Orleans, he is not doing a good job at effectively expressing his concern.

As a public relations professor, I understand the importance of a public figure's image, and I also understand that you have to establish mutually beneficial relationships with the people you are serving. Someone should be at the helm with Mayor Nagin helping to assist with the development of these relationships and making sure that he is not "misunderstood."

After Mayor Nagin's "Chocolate City" speech, he often began his speeches with a disclaimer that he was deviating from the planned speech that his communication

officials were responsible for. However, I truly believe that better advisement from his communication staff would make way for Mayor Nagin to say just what he means without being offensive or, again, "misunderstood." After all, that is one key role of a communications professional—to assist executives and others they work for with carefully and effectively articulating messages that will resonate with the public.

A UNO poll released earlier this week showed that most surveyed were dissatisfied with Mayor Nagin's work. Only 24 percent of the respondents said that they liked the job that the Mayor was doing. Even more disheartening is the fact that Nagin's approval rating was the lowest the survey has ever recorded for a mayor since the survey first began in 1986. Though Mayor Nagin has had his share of mistakes, he certainly has done some good for the city. The low approval rating proves that the image that is displayed in the media of his downfalls is overshadowing any recognition of his accomplishments.

Is the media partially responsible for this? Of course. The mainstream media

has played hardball with Mayor Nagin. The exclusive investigative stories in the mainstream newspaper and major television news shows all focus on ill happenings in city government. But my question is, what is the Mayor's communication team doing to combat these reports or communicate the Mayor's commitments to the public? Proactive strategies are needed; and now that everything is so out-of-hand, effective reactive strategies from the Mayor's office are pertinent if there is any chance of saving Mayor Nagin's image and the eventual historical documentation of his tenure as Mayor.

Former President Bush's image suffered so badly until people at President Obama's Inauguration booed him as he was introduced. Regardless of personal opinions or Bush's mistakes, that is no way for a President's last entrance to be remembered. Mayor Nagin's term ends next year. Something needs to change quickly in regards to his portrayal in the media if he stands any chance of salvaging his reputation and relationship with his constituents.

## Letter to the Editor: Reader Discusses Facts on Claude Tremé

Dear Sir:

Dionne Character's article "The Tradition of Zulu" (February 28 2009, p. 8) contains a gross error. In writing about African American parading traditions, she states "Claude Tremé bought and sold property in hopes of strengthening the community" and "[H]is spirit will continue to represent 'free people of color'."

Claude Tremé was neither African American nor a free person of color. Nor was he interested in strengthening the African Ameri-

can or any other New Orleans community. Tremé was a poor white French immigrant who had been jailed for unpaid debts. Ironically, in 1787, he was also sentenced to five years in prison for the murder of the slave Alejo. In 1793, he married into a local white landowning family.

Using original documents from the French and Spanish colonial period, I have researched and recorded the history of Faubourg Tremé for many years. The initial results of that study were pub-

lished in 1990 – 91 as a continuing series in the New Orleans Tribune entitled "Faubourg Tremé: Community in Transition." The articles cover the history of the community from its settlement by free blacks in the 1710s and 20's – long before Tremé – through the construction of the Claiborne I-10 extension.

Through marriage into to Morand-Moreau-Moro family in 1793, Tremé obtained control of their land and, in 1798, divided it into plots for sale on a first-come

first-serve basis. The majority of the initial buyers were free Blacks. This was due simply to the large numbers of free blacks in New Orleans with sufficient wealth to buy and sell land.

Faubourg Tremé bears his name only because he negotiated the later sale of the remaining land to the City of New Orleans in 1810. In reality, Tremé may be one of the city's earliest examples of white flight. Shortly after the sale, the Tremés moved to a plantation two miles outside the city.

Excerpts from "Faubourg Tremé: Community in Transition" are available at <http://osbey.com>.

Sincerely,  
Brenda Marie Osbey

Professional-in-Residence  
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<http://osbey.com>

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# The Truth Behind The Music:

## *An Introduction*



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Dionne Character  
Data News Weekly Columnist

Recently, I received a letter from Ms. Brenda Marie Osbey, a Professional-in-Residence at LSU, who critically commented on an article that I had written entitled "The Tradition of Zulu," dated Feb. 28, 2009.

Usually, I write articles giving attention to the more "artsier" side of life here in New Orleans, but for a matter of record, it is necessary to clarify to readers my intentions for the matter of proper edification.

I must admit, I was slightly flattered by

such collegian attention. Nevertheless, Ms. Osbey stated in her letter that my article "contains a gross error". Ms. Osbey proceeded to quote and dispute my written comments that "Claude Treme' bought and sold property in the hopes of strengthening the community and his (Claude Treme') spirit will continue to represent free people of color." She goes further to elaborate and note in a brief history lesson, that Claude Treme' "was neither African American nor a free man of color."

First, I'd like to thank Ms. Osbey for her comments and history lesson. Second, let me reiterate that my specialty leans to the more artistic side of life, and Ms. Osbey seems to specialize in history and linguistics. Unfortunately her "gross error" comments are in itself an error in context.

It is well known for both blacks and whites who live in New Orleans and else where that Claude Treme' was neither Amerikan-Afrikan nor a free person of color. To the contrary, it is not well known amongst the lay people of color today that many white people helped their fellow black countrymen during the days of slavery and still help black people today. Further, it is speculative to suggest Treme'

was not interested in strengthening the black community of New Orleans.

Claude Treme's wife, Julie Moreau, a freed slave, was definitely a black woman who caught Treme's interest. For example, who's to say Mrs. Moreau did not have her husband's ear? Just as Eleanor Roosevelt had her husband's (U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt) ear in matters concerning black folks, and thus the Tuskegee Airmen were born to fly. Certainly, no objective scholar today can say for sure Treme' had no interest in the black community. Therefore, I will consider Ms. Osbey's comment as a matter of personal opinion.

It was not necessary or relevant for me to comment on Claude Treme's race, color, or creed, in the festival context for which the article in question was written, but rather on the spirit of those who love justice and righteousness that has no color barrier.

If Amerikan-Afrikans allow personal prejudices to cloud and distort historical facts or scientific reasoning, I submit that we would be no better than our oppressors who write us out of true history in order to create His-story.

In conclusion, this brings me to a valid

point and the reasoning behind my response. I'd like to comment to all my fellow readers that I am a grass-rooted, educated woman fully in touch with my feminine side. I am in love with my fellow man as well as mankind. I am also a fellow New Orleanian of the Black Creole Nation who holds no elitist attitude toward my fellow Americans based on accolades acquired.

Finally, in the spirit of womanhood and togetherness, I'd like to quote our First Lady Michelle Obama, in contrast, who also has a certain man's ear in saying. "The women we honor today teach us three very important lessons. One, that as women, we must stand up for ourselves. The second, as women, we must stand up for each other. And finally, as women, we must stand up for justice for all."

Please do note that neither the First Lady nor I considered "colour" as a factor in the context of our message.

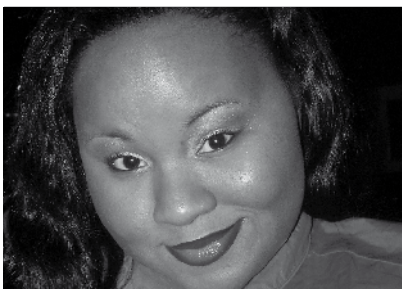
I remain,

Dionne "Diva" Character

If you have any comments, questions or upcoming events, please email me at dasolediva@yahoo.com. Visit [www.dionnecharacter.com](http://www.dionnecharacter.com).

## Pissed Off Weekly

### P.O.W. #127 What pisses you off about your roommate?



Thais Mills  
Data News Columnist

Sometimes living alone isn't what's for dinner and you find yourself living with someone else. It's a clear money saver and we all need to do that, right? So it's settled; a roommate you are. The bathroom and fridge become public ground and that's just the tip of the iceberg. Whether it's a couple, best friends or dorm room buds, there's something that ticks you off about it all. I went out to find out whether I am alone in having roommate drama.... ?

What really pisses you off about your roommate?

"She is so dayum selfish !!! When you don't buy all the food, don't EAT all the food. That pisses me off !"

- The Private Hungry Chick  
in New Orleans East

"I come home from work and there's my roommate's company in the front room. The agreement is no company after 2am. I get off at 3:30am—GET A CLOCK !!"

- Mystery Mike in Gentilly

"My roommate lets her ugly azz dog prance all through the house and even in my ROOM!! That pisses me off!"

- Raynice knows NO  
peace in New Orleans

Wow, well there you go guys... The next time you are having problems with your roommate, know that you are NOT alone. Love you all..

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# Michelle Obama Wows Londoners

Dorothy Rowley

(NNPA) - Stylish hair, clothes and shoes. Buffed arms and an unmistakable air of grace, beauty and poise.

They're all synonymous with first lady Michelle Obama who continues to wow crowds everywhere she goes - and her trip this week to the United Kingdom along with President Barack Obama has been no different.

While the president dove right into the serious business of the G20 economic summit, the first lady was becoming the toast of the town, cosying up with the Queen of England, sitting for tea, visiting an inner city all-girls school, and touring a cancer ward.

"She's a real breath of fresh air," CBS anchor Katie Couric was quoted as saying by phone on Thursday from London. Meredith Vieira from NBC's Today show gushed that "Everybody in Europe is enthralled with her."

Both women, no doubt, were



First Lady Michelle Obama

echoing the sentiments of many who said Mrs. Obama had acquired a powerful presence in London.

During her visit to the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School which enrolls about 1,000 girls ages 11-17, the students were in awe.

"The amazement and adoration on the face of the girls and the authentic way Obama reacted to them was just wonderful thing to watch," London's Daily Mirror reported.

The paper also noted that about 300 students and resi-

dents had shrieked, "We love you!" as the first lady arrived at the school in Islington, North London.

Greeted by 100 students, Mrs. Obama applauded enthusiastically after they regaled her with a string of stirring performances, and in a show of the informal style that has endeared her to millions around the world, she high-fived one of the solo singers and hugged students, according to the Daily Mirror.

"Wow! I can't follow that. Thank you for that warm welcome. My husband is going to be very jealous of my afternoon because I am spending it with all of you," Obama said. "When I look at a performance like this, it reminds me that there are diamonds like this all over the world."

Obama's visit with the Queen went just as well.

However during the reception, it appeared that Obama momentarily breached a rigid ancient protocol when she reciprocated Her Majesty's openness by also gently draping her arm across the back of the Queen. In doing so, Obama was widely revered,

prompting observers to say that she had merely exuded her usual warmth and that the Queen - who normally doesn't like to be touched - had very easily adapted.

Meanwhile, Obama who reportedly can not be seen wearing the same outfit in public more than once, has been the talk of the fashion world for her simplistic yet sophisticated choices.

And, while her propensity for selecting items from J Crew has endeared Obama to money-conscious shoppers, high-end stylists say her choices from up and coming clothing designers have given a whole new meaning to buying off the rack.

In the process, Obama keeps gaining in popularity.

According to recent polls, the first lady's approval rating in this country has more than doubled since last summer. At that time she had a 32 percent favorable rating compared to the current high rating of 76 percent.

## High Court Blunts Black Voting Power

Charlene Muhammad

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - A recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling which limits the Voting Rights Act and prohibits redrawing district lines to preserve Black and Latino representation will have far-reaching, negative implications for both communities, political analysts warn.

Previously the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was used to maximize Black voter strength by having states pull together Blacks to increase their numbers in a single district and the likelihood of electing a Black candidate, the justices' 5-4 decision removes that mandate.

Political scientists, like Dr. William Boone of Clark Atlanta University in Georgia, say the political landscape, from county commissions, to city councils, even to the U.S. Congress, may be in for long periods with no added Black representation.

After the Voting Rights Act was passed, the idea was that race was a real factor for voting representation, but the courts began to rule that race did not have to be a predominant factor. With this March 9 ruling, the court has moved away from race altogether, analysts said.

"This could mean a couple of things, for not only Blacks, but Latinos too because they're growing in numbers. Let's say Black folk are concentrated in a district that has about 60-80 percent Black. You don't necessarily need to go forward to draw lines and give them two representatives. You could just maintain one, if that, and go to the other districts and maintain them White, because given the residential pattern in this country, they are still pretty much racially and ethnically segregated," Dr. William Boone told The Final Call.

The court's decision stems from a lawsuit (Bartlett v. Strick-

land) filed in North Carolina, which rejected redrawing a district and dividing four counties to give Blacks the opportunity to elect their candidate of choice.

For Dr. Marc Lamont Hill, Professor of Urban Education and American Studies at Temple University, the decision is another sobering reminder that America is not a post-racial society.

Dr. Hill said, "This particular ruling also speaks to how significant and how influential the Bush administration has been in engineering our social policy for the next 20-30 years. Most importantly with regard to the national topic, the ruling really prevents the African American community from getting the type of political representation that is necessary for them to have a consistent and powerful voice in Congress."

## Fans Flood Natalie Cole with Kidney Donation Offers



Natalie Cole

Special to the NNPA from the St. Louis American

(NNPA) - Singer Natalie Cole has been overwhelmed with offers of fans' kidneys after revealing on TV that she requires a transplant.

Cole was diagnosed last year with hepatitis C. While appearing on Larry King Live, the 59-year-old explained that after undergo-

ing aggressive chemotherapy treatments, her kidney "stopped functioning."

"I couldn't breathe," she said. "They stopped processing the fluid that was starting to build up in my body...Dialysis is keeping me alive," Cole said, describing her visits to the hospital three times a week.

Before the program had finished, host Larry King passed Cole printed emails from viewers offering up their organs. "There are some great human beings out there," Cole said.

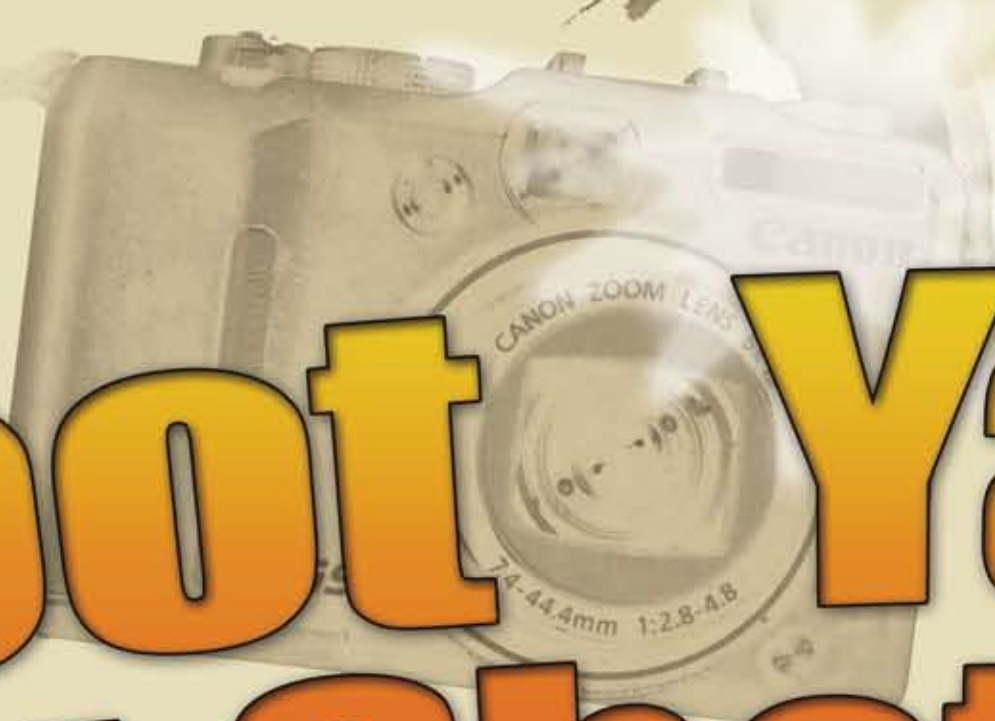
Cole attributes her hepatitis C to sharing needles 25 years ago.

Before entering rehab in 1984, she was addicted to heroin, LSD and cocaine. At the time of her diagnosis she said she would "meet this challenge with a heartfelt optimism and determination," but she has yet to find a donor match.

Information from the London Mirror contributed to this report.



# Data News Weekly



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