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New Orleans

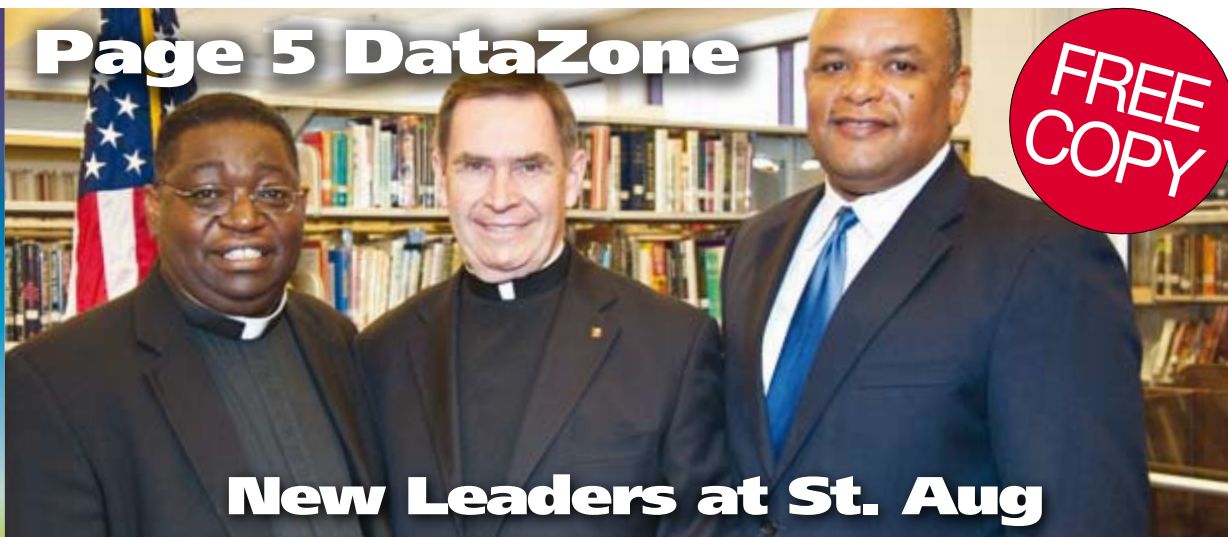
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News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

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New Leaders at St. Aug

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Righteous or Racist?



Trouble brews again in Jena

The Soul of New Orleans

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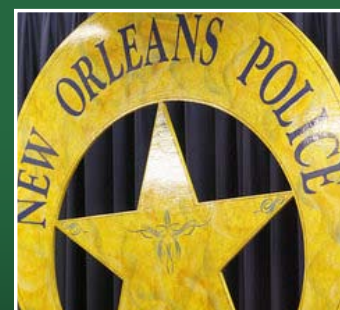
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Drug Bust or Racist Revenge?

By Jordan Flaherty

Sheriff Scott Franklin of Jena says he is trying to rid his community of drugs. Critics say he is pursuing revenge against the town's Black community.

At four am on July 9 of last year, more than 150 officers from 10 different agencies gathered in a large barn just outside Jena, Louisiana. The day was the culmination of an investigation that Sheriff Scott Franklin said had been going on for nearly two years. Local media was invited, and a video of the Sheriff speaking to the rowdy gathering would later appear online.

The Sheriff called the mobilization "Operation Third Option," and he said it was about fighting drugs. However, community members say that Sheriff Franklin's actions are part of an orchestrated revenge for the local civil rights protests that won freedom for six Black high school students - known internationally as the Jena Six - who had been charged with attempted murder for a school fight.

One thing is clear: the Sheriff spent massive resources; yet officers seized no contraband. Together with District Attorney Reed Walters, Sheriff Franklin has said he is seeking maximum penalties for people charged with small-time offenses. Further, in a parish that is eighty-five percent white, his actions have almost exclusively targeted African Americans.

Downtown Baghdad

According to a report from Alexandria's Town Talk newspaper, LaSalle Parish Sheriff Scott Franklin prepared the assembled crowd for a violent day. "This is serious business what we're fixing to do," said Sheriff Franklin. "If you think this is a training exercise or if you think these are good old boys from redneck country and we're just going to good-old-boy them into handcuffs, you're wrong. These people have nothing to lose. And they know the stakes are high."

"It's going to be like Baghdad out in this community at five am," he continued dramatically, explaining that their target was 37-year-old Darren DeWayne Brown, who owns a barbershop - one of the only Black-owned businesses in town - and his "lieutenants," who Franklin said supplied eighty percent of the narcotics for three parishes. "Let me put it to you this way," declared the Sheriff, "When the man says, 'We don't sell dope today,' dope won't get sold."

Sheriff Franklin said that option one is for drug dealers and users to quit, option two is to move, and option three is to spend



Journalist Jordan Flaherty addresses crowd in Jena.

the rest of their lives in prison. And this day was all about option three. "They will get put in handcuffs, put behind bars today and never see the light of day again unless they are going out on the playground in prison," he boasted.

At the end of the day, a dozen people were arrested on charges that ranged from contempt of court to distribution of marijuana, hydrocodone, or cocaine. Despite catching the accused residents by surprise with early morning raids, in which doors were battered down by SWAT teams while a helicopter hovered overhead and then search teams were brought in to take houses and businesses apart, no drugs or other physical evidence were retrieved.

All evidence in the cases comes from the testimony of twenty-three-year-old Evan Brown of Jena, who also wore a hidden camera during the investigation

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Catrina Wallace with her mom Caseptla Bailey

that parish officials have said provides powerful visual evidence. "We're completely satisfied with the results," said LaSalle Sheriff's Department Narcotic Chief Robert Terral, who refused further comment on the operation.

Lasalle Parish is a politically conservative enclave located in northwest Louisiana. Former Klansman David Duke received a solid majority of local votes when he ran for governor in 1991—in fact, he received a higher percentage of votes in LaSalle Parish than in any other part of the state.

The Parish became famous in 2007 for the case of the Jena Six. In demonstrations that were called the birth of a 21st Century civil rights movement, an estimated 50,000 people marched in Jena. They were protesting a pattern of systemic racism and discriminatory prosecutions. All six youths, who once faced life in prison, are now either enrolled in college or are on their way.

The Sheriff told the Jena Times that he began preparing for Operation Third Option in November of 2007, less than two months after the historic protests.

A Terrifying Morning

Catrina Wallace, 29, was sleeping in her bed with her youngest child when her door was broken down and she awoke to the feeling of a gun to her head. When she opened her eyes, her small home was filled with police. "I never seen that many police at one time," she recalled. "Everywhere I looked all I saw was police. There were six or seven just in my bedroom." She says police pointed guns at her small children and wouldn't let her comfort them.

Catrina Wallace is the sister of Robert Bailey, one of the Jena Six. Along with her mother, Caseptla Bailey, she was one of the leaders of the campaign to free the accused youths, and she organized meetings and protests for months. Wallace says her political activism made her a target. "I'm a freedom fighter," she says. "I fight for peoples' rights. I've never been in trouble."

As with every other house raided that day, the police found no drugs in Wallace's home. According to Wallace, police initially claimed they found marijuana on her kitchen table, but later discovered that they had collected broccoli stems, left over from dinner the previous night.

Despite the lack of evidence, and the fact that she has lived her whole life in Jena and is raising three

his door at five am. Howard says police tasered him three times, twice in the back and once in his arm, and pointed guns at his three kids. They took him out of his house still naked, and brought him to a baseball field, along with the other arrestees from that day. There he says he spent another hour without any clothes, standing with the other arrestees, until police brought him an orange jailhouse jumper.

"They treated us like we were hard core killers," says Howard, who says that in a small town like Jena where everyone knows each other, such violent tactics are uncalled for. "The sheriff knows me," he says. "We went to school together. He knows I'm not a violent person."

Howard is being charged with three counts of distribution of cocaine. His trial is scheduled for May 24 (Catrina Wallace's is scheduled for the same week). As with the other defendants, the only evidence against him is the testimony and video from the police informant. Howard, who has seen the evidence, says he is not implicated in the video.

His home was badly burned up that day, apparently from flares that police fired inside, and his windows were all destroyed. Howard, who does some auto repair work, says his four vehicles—including two older cars that don't run—were also seized by police.

Racially Motivated

Many of Jena's Black residents say that the town's white power structure—including the DA, Sheriff, and the editor of the local paper—wants revenge against Black people in town who stood up and fought against unjust charges. They complain that in a town that is mostly white, all but two of the people arrested were Black, and the only arrestees pictured in the town's paper were Black. The sheriff "Just wants to humiliate people" says Caseptla Bailey, Wallace's mother, "Especially the African Americans." The editor and publisher of the Jena Times, the town's only paper, is Sammy Franklin, who has owned the paper since 1968. His son is Sheriff Scott Franklin.

A white-owned store around the corner from the courthouse in downtown Jena sells t-shirts commemorating Operation Third Option, with a design of a person behind bars. Black residents of Jena say that an earlier version of the shirt featured a monkey behind bars. They say that white residents of Jena have gloated about the arrests.

small children, she was held for a \$150,000 cash-only bond. Her car, a 1999 Mitsubishi Galant, was also seized by police, who continue to hold it in an impound lot. If she wants it back, Catrina will have to pay twelve dollars a day to the lot for every day since it was seized, in July of last year—an amount already larger than the value of the car.

Tasered and Traumatized

Samuel Howard was sleeping in his bed, naked, when police broke down

Four of those arrested on that day have pled guilty. Chelsea Brown, who was arrested for contempt of court, received a sentence of 25 days. Devin Lofton, who pled guilty to conspiracy to distribute, received ten years. Adrian Richardson, 34, who pled guilty on April 23 to two counts of distribution, received twenty-five years. Termaine Lee, a twenty-two-year-old who had no previous record but faced six counts of distribution, received twenty years.

Some of the accused have hired attorneys, while others have had public defenders appointed. However, all involved say they doubt they can receive a fair trial in LaSalle. They say that white defendants with similar or worse charges received lower bonds, and face lesser sentences. "It's crooked," says Howard. "They ain't playing fair down here, that's all."

Marcus Jones, father of Mychal Bell, one of the Jena Six youths, doesn't mince words. "This is racially motivated," he says. "It's revenge." He says that the problem is that while the Jena Six youths were freed, there were no consequences for the Sheriff or DA. "Wouldn't none of this be going on if justice had been done the way it was supposed to have been," he says.

Jones was not among those arrested, but in a small town like Jena, he knows everyone involved. He says he was shocked at the resources the police brought in. "Why did you need helicopters and military weapons?" he asks. "I could see it if you were going to arrest Noriega or the Mafia, but these are people with kids in their homes. The Sheriff's department never had any violent run-ins with any of these people."

Jones believes the entire campaign by Sheriff Franklin has been a gesture of asserting control over the Black community, and he calls for a federal investigation of the Sheriff's department and DA.

Samuel Howard says that now he mostly stays home with his three kids, ages 12, 14, and 15. He's afraid of the Sheriff's office arresting him if he leaves the house, and he wants to stay close to his kids, who were traumatized by his arrest. "It scared them to death," he says. "They still talk about it to this day."

"They know they're wrong," said Howard, referring to the Sheriff and DA, "You can't tell me they don't know."

Jordan Flaherty is a journalist, an editor of Left Turn Magazine, and a

staffer with the Louisiana Justice Institute. He was the first writer to bring the story of the Jena Six to a national audience and audiences around the world have seen the television reports he's produced for Al-Jazeera, TeleSur, GritTV, and Democracy Now. Haymarket Books will release his new book, FLOODLINES: Community and Resistance from Katrina to the Jena Six, this summer. He can be reached at neworleans@leftturn.org.



Sheriff Scott Franklin

New Leadership at St. Augustine

*St. Augustine High School President, Principal and Special Guests
Announce Future Leadership and Development Plans*



(pictured left to right) Very Reverend Joseph M. Doyle, SSJ and Rev. John J. Raphael, SSJ.



(pictured left to right) Rev. John J. Raphael, SSJ, Very Reverend Joseph M. Doyle, SSJ and Troy Henry



(pictured left to right) Warren Bell, Rev. John J. Raphael, SSJ, Very Reverend Joseph M. Doyle, SSJ and Troy Henry

St. Augustine High School's President, Principal and special guests gathered to announce new leadership and development plans and celebrate the historical high school's renaissance. Warren Bell, Jr. served as host and moderator of the event, and Troy Henry, Chairman of St. Augustine's Board of Directors, announced the upcoming changes in the school's leadership.

Rev. Joseph M. Doyle, SSJ, will leave his position as President to become President Emeritus. In this new role, Fr. Doyle assumes leadership responsibility for future development that emphasizes the school's importance in the history, culture and economy of

New Orleans.

Current Principal Rev. John J. Raphael, SSJ, will succeed Fr. Doyle as President of St. Augustine. A native of New Orleans and a 1985 graduate of the school, Fr. Raphael graduated from the University of Notre Dame and entered St. Joseph's Society of the Sacred Heart. He was ordained a Josephite priest on May 20, 1995.

Speaking on behalf of St. Augustine's Trustees and Board of Directors, Troy Henry announced the search for a new Principal will begin immediately, with a selection to be made prior to the commencement of the 2010-2011 school year.

St. Augustine High School is governed by a 7-member Board of Trustees and a 13-member Board of Directors.

2010 Board of Directors:

Troy Henry (Chairman);
Very Reverend Edward J. Chiffriller, SSJ;
Very Reverend Charles Andrus, SSJ;
Very Reverend Joseph M. Doyle, SSJ;
Very Reverend Nelson A. Moreira, SSJ;
Carl A. Blouin, Sr.;
William T. Bostick;
Daniel E. Davillier;
Janice M. Foster;
Wilmer Jacobs, Jr.;
Ben Johnson;

William Lee; and
Robyn Marshall-Wallace.

2010 Board of Trustees:

Very Reverend Edward Chiffriller, SSJ;
Very Reverend Roger Caesar, SSJ;
Very Reverend John Harfmann, SSJ;
Very Reverend Donald Fest;
Very Reverend Charles Andrus;
Very Reverend James Fallon; and
Very Reverend Henry Davis.

St. Augustine will graduate 104 young men during its 56th graduation ceremony on Wednesday, May 19, 2010 at 3:00 p.m. at St. Joseph's Church on Tulane Avenue.

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Shoot Ya Best Shot!

Julius Kimbrough Fundraiser Party at Prime Example



Erasing Civil Rights: Rewriting History



Benjamin Todd Jealous
NNPA Guest Commentary

(NNPA) - In Arizona, they just passed a law that would make the study of the role of African-Americans, Latinos, Asian-Americans and Native-Americans illegals. They banned "ethnic studies" ignoring the reason those studies were created: That for too long history books have left out people of color from the central narrative of our nation's history.

Texas wants to rewrite their history books to do the same thing. This year, they want to change the record on slavery, celebrate the Confederacy and shed

a positive light on Jim Crow laws. If the proposed textbook changes happen, children won't learn about civil rights icons like Malcolm X, or Sam McCollough, who gave his life for Texas independence. And they won't learn that Texas seceded from the Union to fight for the Confederacy in the Civil War.

In many ways, as Texas goes, so goes the nation. Standards in Texas influence the contents of history books used in schools around the country meaning the numbers of miseducated children could grow exponentially.

Texas students must compete for college seats and jobs with students from other states, who will arrive equipped with a more complete and mainstream education. Advanced Placement exams, which let students earn nationally recognized college credit while in high school, are not tailored to any particular state's ideology. Similarly, International Baccalaureate exams are benchmarked to world-class university standards.

By narrowing our students' exposure, we cut them off from opportunities for accelerated learning, and free college credits that will be recognized around the country

and the world.

Every voter on a referendum should know how our Constitution and laws have evolved to expand civil rights to all citizens. Yet the Texas board's current proposals would minimize those brave men and women's contributions to our national story. To make informed decisions about the limits of government power, students must know about its past abuses, such as those perpetrated by Senator Joseph McCarthy. Yet the proposed standards would gloss over such injustices. Students who have studied poll taxes and their abolition will have a better perspective on when taxation is used inappropriately.

All of these are questions confronting today's voters, including those high school students who have turned eighteen. In order to exercise the rights and responsibilities conferred to them by their fellow citizens to safeguard their families and communities, students today or tomorrow need a strong grounding in our nation's full history.

We are - and have always been - a nation of immigrants, which has folded various strands into our collective story. So it is vital for those citizens who will work along-

side diverse peers to have an accurate understanding of their coworkers' background and culture.

Minimizing or misrepresenting African-American and Latino culture and history can lead to distorted beliefs regarding our fellow Americans. What's more, it can lead students from those ethnic groups to have a skewed picture of themselves and their place in the world. Studies of high school dropout rates have shown that students became disengaged with classes because what they were learning didn't seem relevant to their lives. And in a 2006 national study, more students cited disengagement and disinterest in their lessons as a factor in leaving school than those who reported serious academic challenges.

When, according to conservative estimates from the US Department of Education, Texas loses about one in every four high school students before graduation, can we really afford to drive any more young people from the schoolhouse door?

If learning about Cesar Chavez or Thurgood Marshall will inspire a student to study government or law, we cannot afford to pass up that opportunity. If learning about Hendrick Arnold's role as a guide and

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The Gulf Oil Spill Response.

How to find out more. Where to find help. How to volunteer.



Since the tragic accident on Transocean's Deepwater Horizon rig first occurred, BP has done and continues to do everything possible to respond to the situation. BP has taken full responsibility for dealing with the spill, and is mobilizing its full resources to fight against it in the Gulf of Mexico.

More than 2,500 of BP's operational and technical personnel from around the world are working with many federal, state and local government agencies, local communities and industry experts. Using hundreds of vessels, they are involved in efforts to protect the shore of the Gulf coast, to contain the spill offshore, and to stem the flow of oil from the sub-sea well. Staging posts to help protect the shoreline are in operation at six critical areas, supported by command posts in Houma, Louisiana; Mobile, Alabama; and St. Petersburg, Florida. Thousands of volunteers are being trained to help with the cleanup.

We are grateful for the support of the many volunteers, federal, state, and local government officials, and emergency responders. We are determined to leave nothing undone in the effort to stop the flow and minimize any potential impact.

For current information on the spill and response plan, please go to the following websites:

www.bp.com/gulfofmexicoreponse

www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com

For assistance or information, please call the following 24/7 hotlines:

To report oil on the shoreline: (866) 448-5816

To report impacted wildlife: (866) 557-1401

To make spill-related claims: (800) 440-0858

For volunteer information: (866) 448-5816

Mayor Landrieu, Department Of Justice Announce Partnership To Reform NOPD

New Orleans, LA— Mayor Mitch Landrieu was joined by Assistant Attorney General Tom Perez and Deputy Assistant Attorney General Roy Austin as the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division announced they are formally accepting Mayor Landrieu's invitation to help support a substantive reform of the New Orleans Police Department's patterns and practices. Also joining the group were New Orleans partners, including NOPD Superintendent Ronal Serpas, newly-selected Independent Police Monitor Susan Hutson, and US Attorney Jim Letten.

In his first two weeks in office, Landrieu has taken action in fighting crime and reforming the



Mayor Landrieu

New Orleans Police Department. On May 5, 2010, Mayor Landrieu sent a letter to U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder to enlist the federal government's support and resources to transform the New

Orleans Police Department. Mayor Landrieu also selected Ronal Serpas to lead the NOPD after an exhaustive, national search. Serpas has had demonstrable success in reducing crime in both Nashville, Tennessee, and New Orleans. Additionally, in an effort to provide full transparency in the department, the Mayor ordered the NOPD to cooperate with the Office of the Inspector General and Police Monitor's requests for records and information. To promote accountability and transparency, the NOPD's weekly COM-STAT meetings, where crime stats are reviewed, will be open to the public and press starting this week.

"These are just the first steps of what will be a long process in completely reforming a department that in large measure had lost its way. It's about the NOPD being an organization that both protects and serves. I am proud to stand here today as the federal government puts its weight behind our reforms," said Landrieu.

The Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division has worked closely with police departments around the country, including Los Angeles and Pittsburgh, to improve their operations and administration.

"I have said time and again that making our city safe is my top priority as Mayor. We must

transform the unnatural culture of death and violence on the streets into one of hope and joy and opportunity. This partnership is just one link in a chain of groups and individuals who must work cooperatively to transform this department and our entire criminal justice system once and for all," commented Landrieu.

Later in the day, Landrieu, Justice Department officials, Chief Ronal Serpas, Police Monitor Susan Hutson, and US Attorney Jim Letten plan to meet with members of the community at a 6:30pm open-to-the-public forum at the Louisiana Superdome.

Commentary, Continued from page 7.

spy during the Texas revolution inspires youngpeople to military service, who are we to deny them their dreams?

Our future is at stake when the State Board votes on May 21. Will we decide to prepare our youth for success in the 21st Century or let nostalgia for the 19thhobble our graduates and leave large groups of students behind? Rewriting history is not promoting patriotism, it is institutionalizing ignorance.

And it's an indulgence that Texas and the country cannot afford. Anyone who ispassionate about the accuracy of the state and nation's historical record should beappalled at these proposals and should let it be known.Our children are entitled to broad exposure to all the facts of American history,government and economic theory.

We urge the State Board to vote down these proposed changes, take some more time toset out broad guidelines ensuring all students are equipped to compete and thrive,then follow the thoughtful recommendations of their fellow Texans who are educators,economists and historians.

I will be in Austin when the board convenes to join the Texas StateConference of the NAACP to raise our voices for accuracy and fairness. Join me and fax a letter opposing changing the text books to the state board at 512322-0757. Tell them that erasing civil rights from history is wrong. Tell them to make sure our children get the world class education they deserve not a raciallybiased and ideological revision of our history. Benjamin Todd Jealous is President and CEO of the NAACP.

Deep South Center for Environmental Justice Deploys 68 Trained Workers to Clean Up Oil Spill

Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill in the Gulf of Mexico

"Democracy required an educated populous; the survival of the earth will require an environmentally conscious citizenry. It is our job as educators to make this a reality." — Beverly Wright, Ph.D., Executive Director, DSCEJ

NEW ORLEANS AGENDA, News Report, Staff

Tuesday, May 17, 2010 - Dillard University's Deep South Center for Environmental Justice (DU/DSCEJ) in partnership with Clark Atlanta University's Environmental Justice Resource Center, has conducted environmental remediation training for fifteen years through its Brownfields Minority Worker Training Program (BMWT) and Minority Worker Training Program (MWTP) under funding from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS). In recent weeks, the DSCEJ and affiliate programs have helped many of the program graduates



Clean up workers prepare to deploy to Gulf Coast to work on the Deepwater Horizon explosion disaster.

obtain jobs to cleanup the Deep Horizon Oil Spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

To date, the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice and its affiliate programs have deployed sixty-eight (68) workers to the oil spill cleanup.

NIEHS' funding provides technical training in Construc-

tion, Hazardous Waste Removal, Lead Abatement, Asbestos Abatement and Mold Remediation. Funding also provides for basic skills training, including academic remediation and life skills training for residents of communities that are both economically and environmentally disadvantaged. All programs

offer ongoing job placement and refresher training for program graduates.

For additional information regarding the Worker Training Program, please call Dr. Myra Lewis, Assistant Director at 504-816-4036.

Data News Weekly

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