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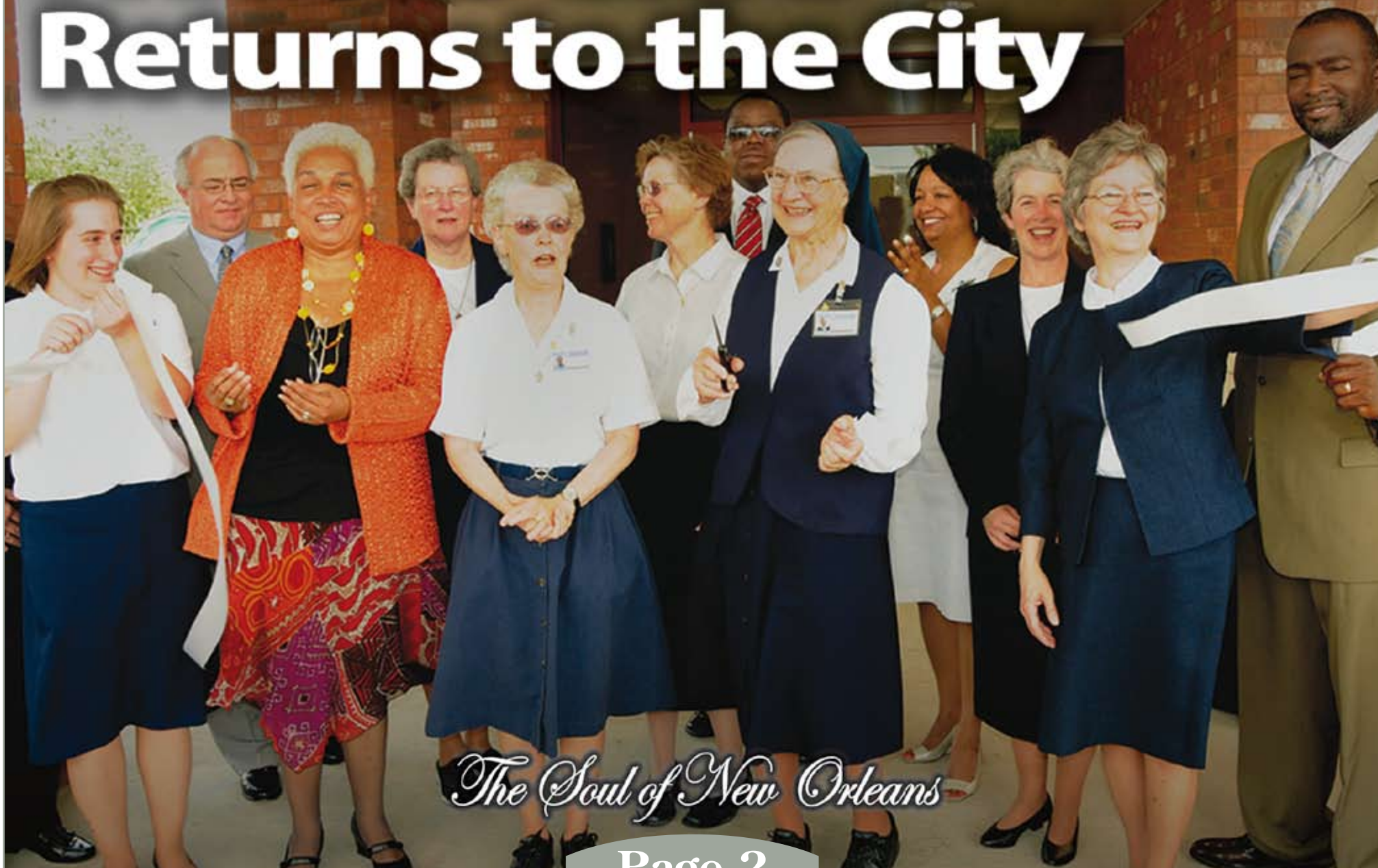
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Bruce Bruce is coming

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Health Care Returns to the City



The Soul of New Orleans

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Takes Charge



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Primary Health Care Returns to New Orleans



The ribbon is cut as Daughters of Charity Services of New Orleans dedicated its new state-of-the-art health care center in Uptown.

Daughters of Charity opens State-of-the-art center, first New, permanent primary care facilities to open since Katrina in Uptown and Bywater

By Cheryl Mainor
On May 26, Daughters of Charity Services of New Orleans (DCSNO) dedicated its new state-of-the-art health center Uptown at 3201 South Carrollton Avenue. This center and its newly opened counterpart in Bywater are the first new, permanent primary care facilities to open in New Orleans since Hurricane Katrina.
Using the medical home model, Daughters of Charity Services of New Orleans provides

community-based healthcare to residents of the greater New Orleans area at medical centers located at St. Cecilia in Bywater; on S. Carrollton Avenue, Uptown; and on N. Causeway Blvd. in Metairie. DCSNO is a health ministry of Ascension Health, the nation's largest Catholic, non-profit health system. The Daughters of Charity have been providing compassionate care to the people of New Orleans since 1830.
The new structure, built around the old

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health center housed in a former bank,

will consist of a 34,000 sq. ft. facility that includes 18 exam rooms, eight dental chairs,

two special procedure rooms, optometry exam rooms, medical and dental labs, and a

pharmacy. Located one block north of the intersection of So. Carrollton Avenue and

Earhart Boulevard, Daughters of Charity Health Center-Carrollton will offer primary

care, pediatrics, dental care, eye care and pharmacy services to the local community.

DCSNO's executive and administrative offices will also move to this location. Staff will

begin seeing patients in the new space in early June.

"We have operated an Uptown health center since 1997," said DCSNO CEO Michael

Griffin. The organization's post-Katrina space consisted of approximately 9,500 sqft. "Our new flagship location will enable us to offer our patients a modern, state-of-the-art healthcare facility that is easily accessible from many parts of the city. We will have more capacity to care for patients in one location. And we will centralize many of our back office and logistical functions in this location, giving us greater management efficiency.

"The facility will have a dramatic effect on the lives of our people, senior citizens and young alike," says Griffin." He continued, "What we are doing, is bringing healthcare back into the community, especially for the seniors who might not be as mobile and have the ability to get out to the suburbs to obtain the care they need." The new facility is a model for the future of primary healthcare and prevention, and features:

18 exam rooms, 2 special procedure rooms, 8 dental chairs, optometry exam rooms, medical and dental labs, a pharmacy and administrative offices. Says Griffin, "what we have is a full service facility, eliminating the need for patients to travel from place to place to get the care they need. No longer will they need to see their doctor, and then go to a separate lab facility for lab work or testing, they will be able to have one place that provides complete and comprehensive care." According to

Griffin, this is a possible answer to the concerns many have with the shortage of Primary Care physicians expected with the implementation of the new Health Care Reform Act. "This health center, and our mission can be part of the solution to the problem. We focus on training healthcare professionals in community and primary care and prevention, as the way to

build our profession and a better and healthier community," says Griffin."

Sr. Ellen Kron, D.C. board chair of DCSNO added "Every person who crosses the threshold, regardless of his or her station in life, deserves the very best care in the very best facility we can provide and that is manifested in this new center. The mission of

the Daughters of Charity has always been to give those who were most vulnerable the highest level of care possible. We will continue that tradition in this new space."

Dumas Dental will be the dental services provider at the all-inclusive medical health center. Dr. Jay Dumas, DDS says he is excited about the new center opening, and the impact it will have

on those who have had to forgo dental services since Katrina. "It's going to have a huge effect on dental health in the city, we are opening 13 operatories, 5 at St. Cecilia's (Bywater) and 8 here at the Uptown location, and with them opening, we will increase the capacity to treat people in the city exponentially." He continued, "I think it's going to have a signifi-

"My job means that I oversee the project managers, so I see a lot of exciting things come to fruition. My passion lies with cultural centers and, because my husband and I have two small boys, parks are near and dear to my heart as an important part of growing up right in New Orleans."

- Keely

Architect and Certified Management Professional, MWH
Has lived in New Orleans all her life.



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WET INFRASTRUCTURE

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Obama Oil Spill Press Conference:

Government In Charge Of Oil Disaster Response

By Jeniffer Loven & Tom Raum

Gulf Oil Spill Containment: BP Has Yet To Give Go Ahead On 'Top Kill'

WASHINGTON (AP) – President Barack Obama defensively and sometimes testily insisted on Thursday that his administration, not oil giant BP, was calling the shots in responding to the worst oil spill in the nation's history.

"I take responsibility. It is my job to make sure that everything is done to shut this down," Obama declared at a news conference in the East Room of the White House. The Gulf of Mexico oil spill dominated the hour-long session.

He called the spill, now in its sixth week, an "unprecedented disaster" and blasted a "scandalously close relationship" he said



President Obama gives first press conference in a year on Thursday where he addressed the ongoing Deepwater Horizon oil spill and disaster here in Louisiana. The President stated emphatically that he is the one who is in charge of the clean up efforts.

"There shouldn't be any confusion here. The federal government is fully engaged," he said, underscoring his central point.

As he spoke, BP worked furiously to pump mud-like drilling fluid into the blown-out well.

It was an untested procedure but seemed to be working, officials said Thursday, even as new estimates showed the spill has surpassed the Exxon Valdez in Alaska as the worst in U.S. history.

Obama said while the "top kill" procedure being used by BP demonstrated his administration's willingness to try "any reasonable strategy" to stop the gusher, the process "offers no guarantee of success."

Asked about inevitable comparisons between his handling of the disaster with his predecessor's handling of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Obama said: "I'll leave it to you guys to make those comparisons and make – and make – and make judgments on it – because what I'm spending my time thinking about is how do we solve the problem?"

"And I'm confident that people are going to look back and say that this administration was on top of what was an unprecedented crisis," he added.

"This has been our highest priority," he said. He conceded that "people are going to be frustrated until it stops."

As an example of the government's hands-on approach, Obama said that BP had wanted to drill a single "relief" well in an effort to eventually stop the leak in several months if all else failed. Instead, the administration insisted on two relief wells being drilled, Obama said.

Over and over, the president sought to counter criticism that the administration was giving too much leeway to BP PLC. "Make no mistake, BP is operating at our direction," he said.

"We will demand that they pay every dime they owe for the damage they've done and the painful losses that they've cost," he said. Still, he acknowledged, "We've got to get it right."

has persisted between Big Oil and government regulators.

Obama announced new steps to deal with the aftermath of the spill, including continuing a moratorium on drilling permits for six months. He also said he was suspending planned exploration drilling off the coasts of Alaska and Virginia and on 33 wells under way in the Gulf of Mexico.

The president's direct language on being in charge of the spill response, which he repeated several times, marked a change in emphasis from earlier administration assertions that, while the government was overseeing the operation, BP had the expertise and equipment to make the decisions on how to stop the flow.

As recently as Monday, the top federal official in charge of dealing with the oil catastrophe, Coast Guard Adm. Thad Allen, declined to broadly say the federal government was "in charge." Instead, when asked about that, Allen told reporters that BP was responsible for the cleanup and the government was accountable to make sure the company did it. "I would say it's less a case of 'in charge,'" Allen said when asked about that phrase.

Yet with each passing day, public frustration with Obama's administration has grown, and his poll numbers on the matter are dropping. Obama said even his daughter Malia had knocked on his door while he was shaving in the morning to ask, "Did you plug the hole yet, Daddy?"

Claiming control carries its own political risks for Obama, because any failure to stop the gusher will then belong to the president. But he could suffer politically if his administration is seen as falling short of staying on top of the problem or not working hard to find a solution.

"The American people should know that from the moment this disaster began, the federal government has been in charge of the response effort," Obama said. He was reacting to criticism that his administration has been slow to act and has left BP in charge of plugging the leak.

Obama said many critics failed to realize "this has been our highest priority."

"My job right now is just to make sure everybody in the Gulf understands: This is what I wake up to in the morning, and this is what I go to bed at night thinking about. The spill."

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Lincoln & Karen Arceneaux

Caring for our most prized citizens.....Seniors

by: Edwin Buggage

May is a month dedicated to those in their golden years. Karen and Lincoln Arceneaux through their Covenant Connection Organization has given aid in comfort to many. This husband and wife are both ordained ministers who have taken God's words and put them into action. "I feel it is important to do God's work. It is more than just praying; it is about getting in the community where people are," says Karen Arceneaux. She says the goal is to give back to those in need as an extension of their love of God." We deal with young people as well but we feel elders sometimes do not get the care they need and we want to help improve their quality of life." Their three-year old organization has helped many in need including displaced children.

Each May Covenant Connection Outreach Ministry joins communities nationwide in celebrating Older Americans Month with their Annual Senior Appreciation Tea.

Older Americans Month is a tradition that began in 1963 during President John F. Kennedy's administration. Every President since President Kennedy has issued a formal proclamation asking that the entire nation pay tribute in some way to older persons in their communities through



ceremonies, events, fairs and other such activities. In this year's proclamation President Barack Obama stated, "I call upon citizens of all ages to honor older Americans this month with appropri-

ate ceremonies and activities."

Covenant Connection's annual tea not only responds to the call of the nation's President to honor older Americans but it also responds to the call of

God to care for the widowed, the orphaned and those most often neglected. The tea is designed to remind seniors that just as Covenant Connection volunteers filled their cups with tea, God desires to fill their lives with love and joy – even in their old age. Approximately 100 seniors were in attendance at this year's tea on Friday, May 7.

Covenant Connection founders, Lincoln and Karen Arceneaux stated, "each year attendance doubled and it became clear after our 2nd year that we would have to move to a different venue. We desired to bless even more seniors but our resources were limited. We stepped out on faith, reserved the venue and watched as God blessed us with an overwhelming outpouring from corporate sponsors and a host of individual contributors. To God be the Glory!"

In addition to its Older American Months activities Covenant Connection advocates for services to improve the well being and quality of life for seniors, orphans, displaced and disadvantaged children and families-in-crisis.

For their sincere love and commitment to the Senior Community, Lincoln and Karen Arceneaux are the Trailblazers of the Month.

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Keith & Lacy Brown say "I Do"

Sandestin Beach, Florida was the location chosen by Keith and Lacy Brown to exchange their vows May 22nd. The Brown, Jones and Randolph families joined in the celebration along with friends for a great weekend getaway in the sun.



Kim J. Brown, Keenan Charles Brown, Keith Brown Jr., and Keith Brown, Sr.



Mr. & Mrs. Keith Brown, Jr.



Front Row: Jade Brown, Kim J. Brown, Lacy Brown, Keith Brown holding son Keenan Brown



Front Row: Pamela Adams, Kim Brown, Zenobia Lieteau, Esther Roberts, Janet Johnson, Keith Brown, Jr. and Justin Brown.
Back Row: David Jupiter, Keith Brown Sr. and Eugene Johnson



Esther Roberts, Agatha Jones, Zenobia Lieteau and Dorothy Guichard



Keith Brown, Jr., brothers Justin Brown and Seth Brown and friend Cory Watts.

Bruce Bruce headlines Big Easy Comedy Fest



By Edwin Buggage

Bruce Bruce has been a force to be reckoned with in the comedy game. He and a stellar group of comics will converge on the Crescent City for the First Annual Big Easy Comedy Festival. The show will include comic heavyweights DL Hugley, John Witherspoon, Damon Wayans and J. Anthony Brown. Bruce Bruce is a native of Atlanta who found his calling to

comedy early in life. "I always enjoyed comedy and making people laugh and saw this as something I wanted to do," says Bruce Bruce. He lists as his influences Milton Berle and Richard Pryor "Of course, Richard Pryor was a master comic but my biggest influence is Milton Berle. I think his wit and sense of timing was amazing." Bruce Bruce is excited about being back in New Orleans and feels good about performing with so many talented comics. "The people of New Orleans are great. I always enjoy coming here. There is a spirit in the people and the culture of the city that I love about New Orleans," says Bruce Bruce.

Doing great things at a young age



By Cheryl Mainor

New Orleans teen Bridgeja Baker will participate in the Pre-Teen America Scholarship & Recognition Program next month in Baton Rouge. The invitation only event honors young ladies aged 7 to 12 years of age based on outstanding personal achievement in the areas of volunteer service, academic excellence and leadership abilities or creative talents. The prestigious

program benefits the Shriners Children's Hospitals.

Bridgeja a talented young lady has already received critical acclaim on both the local and national level for her business, Creative Jewelry by Bridgeja. As an artist, she has had the honor of designing a 3 piece set for First Lady Michelle Obama, and has been awarded numerous business and entrepreneurial awards including the 2009 Innovator of the Year from City Business and the 2010 Girls Going Places Entrepreneurship Scholarship Award. She also received a Proclamation from the New Orleans City Council in February, 2010.



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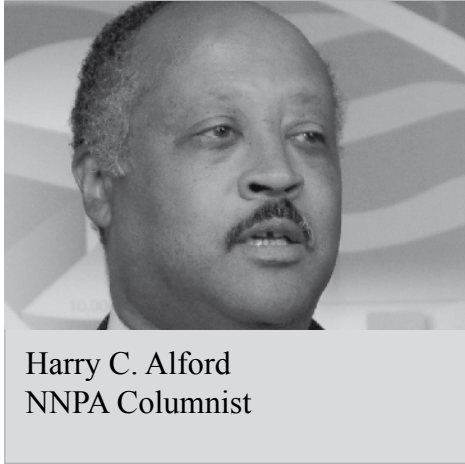
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Beyond the Rhetoric This Will Be Worse Than Katrina



Harry C. Alford
NNPA Columnist

(NNPA) - When the now infamous offshore BP oil rig first blew up, some called it another Katrina and many of us took that as an insult. The pain and suffering caused by Hurricane Katrina (August 2005) were biblical and were fanned by the slow response of our own federal government.

It wasn't until former New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin got on the airwaves and screamed with hysteria that attention was brought to the tragedy. It was an international disgrace and the flashbacks of humans suffering at the Louisiana Super Dome and the Convention Center still haunt our minds.

The BP oil spill is subtle and not as spontaneous. However, there appears to be no

end in sight and worst of all, no answer.

What we have going on here is a monster that is growing exponentially by the day. This is quickly becoming the worst environmental disaster in the history of the earth and it has yet to actually begin its deathly actions on our wildlife, land and our people.

It appears that our worst fears are coming true and no one has exaggerated the ill effects about to leap upon us. It is like a small community has a "fire" but there is no fire department. The fire is spreading and is going to affect many states, oceans and, perhaps nations. This too will be biblical and no end is in sight.

The blame goes to a few and the pain will affect millions. BP has been cheating in its operations. It has ignored due diligence and circumvented the standards set by the US Department of Interior. Its partners, Halliburton and Transocean, have been equally derelict in their duties. Also, the Department of Interior appears to have been incompetent in its enforcement of the rules and permit requirements. All of this adds up to a disaster waiting to happen and, baby, it has happened.

Now that the oil rig blew up and oil is spewing from the ocean floor there is an extreme need to stop the leak. That is the biggest problem of all. No one knows how to stop the leak. It is amazing – not the oil

corporations involved nor the US government can figure out this leak. Clearly, it is not rocket science needed but, still, no one had a plan in place that would address this situation. They are trying to figure it out as they go and that is extremely frightening.

BP has been trying to fake us out by announcing that 5,000 barrels of oil leak per day. However, others have estimated it to be much larger and the video shots that have been finally released show that BP is trying to trick us. One Purdue University professor's professional opinion is that more than 70,000 barrels of oil are leaking per day. Keep in mind that a barrel equates to 50 US gallons. Thus, close to 3.5 million gallons of oil spill into the Gulf of Mexico every day.

It has been over a month and, at least, 100 million gallons of oil are in the Gulf waters. As we learned

as children, oil and water don't mix and bad things happen when they confront each other. Estimates are it may be another three months before a solution is found and this equates to 400 million gallons of oil set loose on our precious environment to wreak havoc on our plant life, wild life and economy for decades to come. How many species may disappear? How many humans will develop cancer? God only knows.

Wait! It gets worse. One BP whistleblower claims that a much larger oil rig, the Atlantis, has the same safety violations as this one. If it blows, he claims, it will dwarf what we are going through right now. Nothing is going to stop it if we don't start addressing this issue. Safety is overdue with BP operations. Millions of people are going to lose their livelihoods and good health because of the cavalier attitudes of the aforementioned characters and entities. Will the US government wake up and start protecting us? BP is throwing "darts" at the problem. They have even used chemicals (similar to anti-freeze) that are more toxic than the oil and it took the EPA weeks before they said stop it. Why was this poison on the market to begin with?

We need oil and there are predetermined ways to gather it that will ensure safety to all and no damage to our environment. As this oil flows onto our beaches and into the Florida Keys and up the East Coast and then to Bermuda and other places thousands of miles away let's get the process together. This malfeasance is about to give us a whipping that makes Katrina look minor.

Mr. Alford a New Orleans native, is the co-founder, President/CEO of the National Black Chamber of Commerce ®. Website: www.nationalbcc.org. Email: halford@nationalbcc.org

Frustration Builds



Optimism is fast becoming a bygone emotion. Fishermen and business owners along the Louisiana Gulf Coast have now realized that the disaster affecting our communities may be here with us for many days, months, or even years to come. The Captains wait in limbo not knowing if they'll be able to continue to provide for their families by harvesting

the seafood from our waters. Charter Boat Captains are not getting any phone calls from prospective customers. They (the customers) are all afraid that when they get to Louisiana the areas will be closed to fishing. Businesses such as restaurants, repair facilities, bait shops, and sporting good stores all feel the effect of the waters being closed.

The clean-up operations have become a total disaster. Oil has bypassed the booms that BP has deployed and clean-up on the shoreline and the marsh reminds me of

the old analogy of the highway department; (one man working and 5 watch) except in this case its one working and 10 watching. The opinion of local Parish and State leaders is that BP and our National leaders need to listen to the people that know our needs; know our marshes, and know how and where to fight the encroaching waves of oil. As in any undertaking, "LOCAL KNOWLEDGE" is the first thing that should be exploited.

As you can see even my "Positive Attitude" has taken a down turn. What can I think when observers tell me that crews working 8 hour clean-up shifts hardly do 4 hours of work; safety meetings, debriefings, travel time to locations, mandatory breaks, and early departures makes everyone wonder would farmers, fishermen, and business people be able to keep our economy running if we had work schedules like this.

I still have a positive attitude, but now I am positive BP and our Federal response is not doing what needs to be done to keep our marshes a viable estuary system.

Dave Ballay

Venice marine and outdoor consultant 601-299-3012 OR www.davidballay@att.net on behalf of the Recreational and Commercial Fishermen of South Louisiana

Letter to the Editor

It is with great sorrow that I read about another positive Black male's life being senselessly taken away. Even though I did not know Brandon Franklin personally, I admire him because he was a young man that was trying to make a difference in the community and be a role model through his music. Mr. Franklin was a teacher and mentor in the music program at O.P. Walker High School, and there is no telling how much of an impact he could have had in those students' lives if he was given an opportunity. His beautiful send off was evidence of the lives this young man touched. Our city is in desperate need of a resolution, and the only way to do that is for our community and newly-elected leaders to band together and work diligently to find ways to stop the violence that has become almost commonplace in our neighborhoods. This is not a Black, White or Hispanic problem. Let's stop playing the blame game. If New Orleans is your home, then the problems of the city are most certainly YOUR problems. Do not wait until tragedy hits your front door to say enough is enough. Let's take our neighborhoods back one man, woman and child at a time. My heart goes out to the family of Brandon Franklin and also to the family of Ronald Simms because you both lost sons in a tragic incident that could have easily been avoided.

Monica Dellhoue
New Orleans, LA

LSUHSC Researcher Finds Surprising Link Between Sugar In Drinks And Blood Pressure

Research led by Liwei Chen, MD, PhD, Assistant Professor of Public Health at LSU Health Sciences Center New Orleans, has found that there is an association between sugary drinks and blood pressure and that by cutting daily consumption of sugary drinks by just one serving a day, people can lower their blood pressure. The research is published online in *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association*.

"We found no association for diet beverage consumption or caffeine intake and blood pressure," notes Dr. Chen, "suggesting that sugar may actually be the nutrient that is associated with blood pressure and not caffeine which many people would suspect."

The research, which was sup-



ported by a grant from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health, analyzed dietary intake and blood pressure of 810 adults measured at baseline, 6 and 18 months. After known risk factors of high blood pressure were controlled for, a reduction in sugar-sweetened beverage consumption of one serving per day was associated with a drop of 1.8 mm Hg in systolic pressure and 1.1 mm Hg in diastolic blood pressure over 18 months.

After additional adjustment for weight change over the same period, a reduction in the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages was still significantly associated with blood pressure reduction.

"By reducing the amount of sugar in your diet, you are also reducing the number of calories you consume and may lose weight,"

adds Dr. Chen. "But even among those whose weight was stable, we still found that people who drank fewer sugary sodas lowered their blood pressure."

Elevated blood pressure continues to be one of the most common and important problems in the United States. According to the American Heart Association, about 74.5 million people in the United States, or one in three people, age 20 and older have high blood pressure. It is estimated that high blood pressure killed 56,561 Americans in 2006. From 1996 to 2006, the death rate from high blood pressure increased 19.5 percent, and the actual number of deaths rose 48.1 percent.

Normal blood pressure, measured in millimeters of mercury,

is defined as systolic (top number) less than 120 and diastolic (bottom number) less than 80. High blood pressure (hypertension) is a systolic pressure of 140 or higher and a diastolic pressure of 90 or higher. Pressures falling in the range between are considered to be prehypertension.

High blood pressure, which usually has few symptoms, if any, is an established risk factor for stroke, cardiovascular disease, kidney failure, and shortened life expectancy.

"More research is needed to establish the causal relationship, but in the meantime, people can benefit right now by reducing their intake of sugary drinks by at least one serving per day," concludes Dr. Chen.

Cover Story, Continued from page 3.



L to R. Michael Todd, First NBC, Michael Griffin, President & CEO, Lauri Menzies, Grant Manager DOCSNO, Gus Flattmann, Sr. Accountant DOCSNO.

cant impact on the city". When asked about Dumas' decision to join this partnership of providers he said the answer was clear, "After Katrina we were approached by Catholic Charities, to provide dental care for their elderly clients. A few years later, The Daughters of Charity approached us to open in their new center since it was going to actually be located in the same place; it was a natural and good option for us. We were looking to expanding and being able to serve even more of the community."

In 2009, DCSNO experienced approximately 12,000 patient visits at the Carrollton location in the former Chase Bank. By June 2011, DCSNO will accommodate more than 23,000 patient visits for medical care alone. Dental and optometry services (not available in the old building) they expect will increase that number by approximately 7,500 patient visits. Once the former Chase Bank is fully integrated into the new building, its space will add 8 behavioral health counseling rooms to the center's capacity.



New chair in one of the new Dental Operatories at the Daughters of Charity Health Care Center. Dental services will be provided by Dumas Dental.

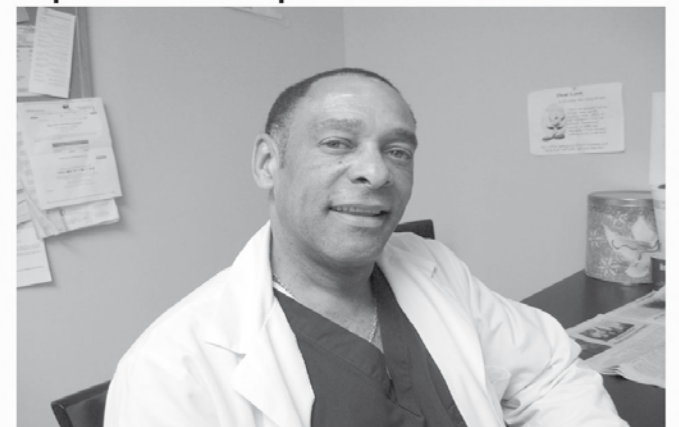
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Principals and teachers across Southeast Louisiana are going to 'summer school'

School Leadership Center hosts intensive workshops to strengthen student achievement

This summer, principals and teachers from across Southeast Louisiana will be going to summer school.

This is not your typical "summer school", but a golden opportunity for school leaders from Venice to Baton Rouge to strengthen their school's student achievement by participating in one of the School Leadership Center's (SLC) seven Summer Institutes (SI), said Founder and Executive Director Dr. Brian Riedlinger.

These intensive residential professional growth sessions for principals and teachers provide

intense training regarding a participant's school test scores and how to increase achievement in public, parochial, private and charter schools.

"In 2009, SPS scores in schools working with SLC improved at a 46 percent greater rate than schools without SLC support, so we know these programs work," said Dr. Riedlinger.

"This year, each district or school selected a Scholarly Focus for instruction for their Summer Institute, ranging from Student Engagement to Effective Leadership. All sessions include SLC's

unique disaggregation of each school's test scores and provide expertise for each school to improve their scores. These workshops provide an opportunity for SLC to work directly with school Leaders and Leadership Teams in many schools," he said.

The Institutes will include purposeful team building activities and intensive academic sessions that will address important topics such as: "Successful teaching strategies", "What a principal must know about school change and their culture" and "What is good teaching and how do princi-

pals best promote and monitor it?" All institutes are held at "retreat" locations so the participant learns in a relaxed setting.

Five of the Summer Institutes will be three-day trainings for district schools in their selected area: Advanced Baton Rouge (Student Engagement); Archdiocese of Baton Rouge (Differentiated Instruction), Recovery School District (High Poverty High Performing Schools); Boothville/Venice (Differentiated Instruction); and New Orleans Charter Science and Math High School (Response to Intervention).

The Institute for SLC Fellows selected in 2009 and 2010 will be held at Gulf Hills Resort in Ocean Springs, MS, focused on effective leadership. There will also be an Institute devoted to Special Education.

Each retreat focuses on transformational and instructional leadership; changing school culture for increased achievement; recognizing, monitoring and rewarding good teaching; data-driven leadership; developing action plans to complete school improvement; and building an effective leadership team.

BP Is 'Big And Important': BP Chairman Strikes Out At Critics

Carl-Henric Svanberg, the chairman of BP, has struck out at critics of his company's response to the Gulf oil spill and told The Financial Times that BP is "big and important."

In an interview published Tuesday by FT, Svanberg painted the oil company's relationship with the U.S. as one that was mutually beneficial to both parties. "The US is a big and important market for BP, and BP is also a big and important company for the US, with its contribution to drilling and oil and gas production," Svanberg said. "So the position goes both ways."

Svanberg dismissed calls for a government takeover of the effort to plug the well and said that

"if we do the right thing," BP's reputation may not suffer long-term damage.

The chairman's "big and important" assertions about his company came shortly after BP CEO Tony Hayward was recorded acting big and important around photographers covering the spill.

While observing a beach covered in crude, Hayward took it upon himself to scold a photographer whom he thought was too close to the spill.

"Hey, get outta there. Get outta there," Hayward barked to the photographer. "Get him out. Get him out."

Hayward's orders came just before a BP press conference.

City Council Holds First Budget Committee Meeting with New Administration

New Orleans, LA - May 25, 2010 - Council President Arnie Fielkow presided over his first Budget Committee meeting as Chair. He and his colleagues on the Committee, Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell and Councilmember Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson, accepted recommendations from the Inspector General Ed Quatrevaux regarding reforms to the City budgeting process. They also received updates on the City's operating and capital budgets and prompted a discussion about the status of two city economic development funds.

Council President Fielkow hosted many of the Landrieu Administration's top officials for the budget process. The Council Committee and Administration officials exhibited strong cohesion on broad-based principles and objectives, while committing to work cooperatively toward these goals.

In a brief presentation, the City's Inspector General (IG), Ed Quatrevaux, revived the recommendations his office made in its November 2009 report, "Review of 2009 Budget Process."

The IG repeated his call for the

budget process to be more transparent and to implement the other changes of that report. Deputy Mayor and CAO, Andy Kopplin, received these recommendations warmly and vowed to work with the Council towards implementing many of them. Specifically, he committed to work with the Council to prepare more accurate and timely data, to approach the capital budget with a fresh set of eyes and to update the City's antiquated financial management system. Council President Fielkow offered the Budget Committee as the appropriate venue to implement the changes, a move embraced by all present.

Deputy Mayors Andy Kopplin, Greg St. Etienne and Cedric Grant acknowledged the need for citizen engagement on the front end of the budget process for both the City's capital and operating budgets. Kopplin spoke of empowering department heads with the flexibility to deliver services without going over budget according to these expectations, while holding them accountable through a robust performance management system. Moreover,

while discussing the capital budget and the City's recovery, Deputy Mayor Grant spoke of creating a right-sized, coordinated, capital strategy that will transition contracted services to City Hall staff in order to increase long-term in-house capacity.

Additionally, Council President Fielkow expressed concern to Mr. Grant over the previous Mayoral Administration's process for allocating money from the Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) fund. He asked for a presentation on the status of this fund in order to establish a baseline for moving forward. The Councilmember pointed out "that this [UDAG fund] is a potentially powerful source for economic development for small businesses as well as larger strategic initiatives. We have to get a handle on the account and establish a much better policy for its use." He continued, "I look forward to working with the new Administration - which has shown a great willingness to address shared concerns openly and cooperatively - both on the UDAG issue and the budget process in general."



The Mis-Education of a State? Despite Protests, Texas Board Passes Conservative Textbook Curriculum

By Gordon Jackson

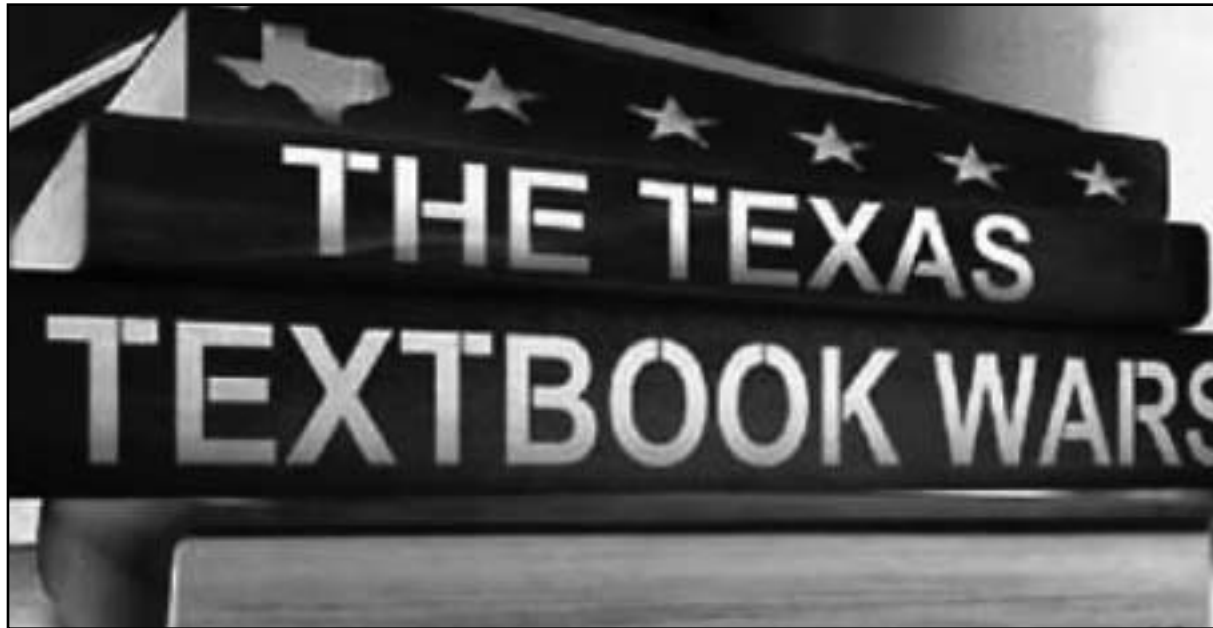
AUSTIN, Texas – A week-long series of strong testimonies, marches, rallies and cries of injustice by nationally renowned figures such as NAACP President and CEO Ben Jealous and former U.S. Secretary of State Rod Paige could not deter a block of hard-core ultra “Christian Conservatives” of the Texas State Board of Education (SBOE) from passing 9-5 a controversial social studies component of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum in the late evening of May 21.

Unless other efforts are successful, the structure of the social studies curriculum will be implemented into Texas schoolbooks, by law, for the next 10 years and taught to over 4.7 million public school students. Further, with the state being the largest supplier of schoolbooks in the country, up to 40 percent of the rest of the nation could adopt the same curriculum for their school districts. The vote ended, at least for now, several months of heated debate and charges of attempting to rewrite history in a way that would drastically diminish the credibility and contributions of African-Americans and Hispanics.

“I am ashamed of what we’ve done to the teachers and the students in this state, I will not support this travesty of a document,” said trustee Mavis Knight (D-Dallas), one of the five Democratic board members who have been fighting losing battles to prevent the adoption of the conservative curriculum.

“We might as well say Hispanics don’t exist,” said board member Mary Helen Berlanga (D-Corpus Christi). “We have hidden information; we have tried to cover up a lot of information. I guess there are people that have a difficult time with the truth. I feel that I have let down the students in our state.”

Much of the debate came to a head during the public hearing session on May 19, before overflowing crowds at the SBOE boardroom, where a total of 206 citizens signed to speak. The board was forced to turn away over half of that number as the testimonies ran into the late night hours. Jealous however was one of the first to speak and stated his case as to why the board should



the delay the vote.

“We are entitled to our own opinion but we are not entitled to our own facts. We have to make sure our kids are taught what actually happened not what the school board wishes,” Jealous told the board. “We are concerned about quality, not quotas. We are concerned about our children learning the whole truth, not half of it.”

Jealous commented on one example, where the Atlantic slave trade would be renamed the “Atlantic Triangular Trade.” Also that speeches by Confederate President Jefferson Davis, also a slave-owner, should be taught in equal value with Abraham Lincoln. “They will talk about the civil rights movement but not about the struggle,” Jealous said. “It minimizes the role of the civil rights movement. The civil rights movement moved our country and you got to talk about the facts. They will be learning something other than the truth. They will not be able to compete on SAT exams.”

Paige told the board: “In Texas, we’ve allowed the pendulum to swing backwards and forward. I’m asking that the swing (should) be narrower and let history speak for itself. What students are taught should not be the handmaiden of political ideology.

“We have allowed ideology to drive and define the standards of our curriculum in Texas.”

Other items within the proposed curriculum included the lauding of conservative institutions such as the Moral Majority, the National Rifle Association and the Contract with America with no counterbalance from the progres-

sive perspective. Another states that President Thomas Jefferson’s contribution to the writing of the U.S. Constitution did not promote the concept of the Separation of Church and State, as believed before by many historians.

The actions of 1950s Senator Joseph McCarthy, whose anti-Communist campaign resulted in the blacklisting of several Americans – many of them African-Americans – will be recorded as justified, even though many of the blacklisting were deemed inaccurate and McCarthy left the Senate in disgrace.

The “Double V Campaign” of African-American World War II veterans promoting to fight for equality both at home, as well as abroad, was “gutted from the current TEKS draft.”

Amendments have to be placed to keep the curriculum from removing the works of Thurgood Marshall, the nation’s first Black Supreme Court justice and the lead attorney behind the landmark Brown vs. Board of Education case and Caesar Chavez, the highly heralded labor organizer and Hispanic rights activist. The curriculum also purports that the gains made in the women and civil rights movements were more because of White-male benevolence instead of the courageous and death-defying sacrifices made by its leaders.

“Minimizing or misrepresenting African-American and Latino culture and history can lead to distorted beliefs regarding our fellow Americans,” Jealous said. “And it can lead students from those ethnic groups to have a skewed picture of themselves and their place in the world. Stud-

ies 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.”

Another amendment revealed that President Barack Obama’s full name was previously absent from the high school curriculum. Republican member David Bradley motioned to further include Obama’s middle name “Hussein” into the amendment, for what Democratic trustees felt was for a wrong motive of stirring up the same controversy Obama endured during his presidential campaign. After debate, Bradley said: “I’ll put an end to the whining. I’ll withdraw the motion.”

Constantly, throughout the last several months, Democratic trustees Knight and Berlanga,” along with Rene Nunez (El Paso), Rick Agosto (San Antonio) and Lawrence Allen, Jr. (Houston) have been defeated in a string of 10-5 votes in their attempt to derail the conservative measures, with one of the moderate trustees occasionally siding with them, still resulting in 9-6 losing votes. The board considered the more that 20,000 responses and worked on many of the over 400 amendments that were recommended to tweak the curriculum, many of them at the 11th hour before the May 21 vote, which upset trustees.

“I don’t know of anyone that would be accepting cut-and-paste material now,” Berlanga said. “I don’t think a teacher would accept that from a student.”

Allen made the motion late Friday evening to delay the vote until this July, with moderate trustee Bob Craig (Lubbock) actually seconding the motion. Still, the

motion was defeated 8-6, followed by the conservative side passing the curriculum for elementary, middle school and high school. The conservative board members held their positions throughout the debate. Don McLeroy (R-College Station) said the revisions, albeit last-minute, was proof that the curriculum was valid, calling any diminishing of minority representation as “clearly false.”

“We have corrected the imbalance and are heading straight in the right direction,” McLeroy said. “Children need to know what makes the country so great and unique.”

Cargill (R-The Woodlands) spoke about the amendment that will teach high school students not the “effects” of the free enterprise market economy, but its “benefits” in world history, without any counter argument.

“This is one of the most important things we teach our students, to value free enterprise,” said Barbara Cargill (R), author of the contentious last-minute addition.

“By delaying this process we’re doing nothing but increasing the amount of disagreement,” said Cargill. “Because we’re never going to agree.”

Terri Leo (R-Spring) said that it “punishes children if you delay a vote on a proclamation. This is a very transparent and public process unlike your [committee meetings].” Leo was criticized by several members of the audience, feeling that she disrespected Jealous when questioning the points during his public hearing testimony.

On the legislative front, the Texas Black Legislative Caucus, led by state representative Sylvester Turner (D-Houston) and the Mexican-American Legislative Caucus, led by state representative Trey Martinez Fischer (D-San Antonio) have jointly expressed their displeasure, as they did at a May 19 rally held outside the Travis Building, sponsored by the Texas Freedom Network.

“This year, they are changing the record on slavery, celebrating the Confederacy and shedding a positive light on Jim Crow laws – they are rewriting African-American history,” said Gary Bledsoe, President of the Texas NAACP.

The NAACP has initiated a “Not in My State” campaign, hoping to spur a boycott of the textbooks.



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