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New Orleans

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News Weekly

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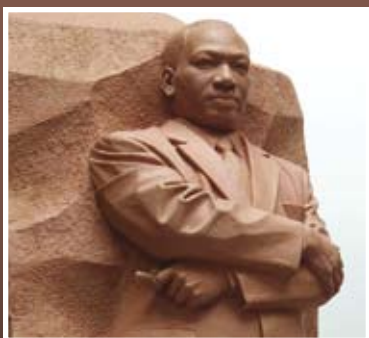
Alex Allen's Birthday Bash

January 14 - January 20, 2012 46th Year Volume 33 www.ladatanews.com

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MLK, Obama

and the Meaning of Civil Rights in the 21st Century



Reverend Dr Martin Luther King Jr.



President Barack Obama

By Edwin Buggage

MLK and the March Towards Freedom

Today in 2012 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is a man who is honored with a national holiday, and a monument in our Nation's Capital bearing his image. During his lifetime he fought for the rights of all Americans to pursue the rights granted to all.

His life embodied the words that appeared in the Declaration of Independence, that all people were endowed by their creator with inherent and inalienable rights of them was life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

When these words were drafted in 1776, they were meant as the aspiration to build a more perfect union that was in its infancy. Since this time the U.S. has evolved into a nation where more people can pursue the American Dream. Conversely, there are many Americans that experience a very different America where the dream is becoming more

and more elusive. Something that is becoming a source of frustration for many Americans, and causing some to lose hope in Lady Liberty as the light is dimly lit on the future of this great nation.

While some see dark economic days today, this nation has made a quantum leap in the area of racial relations. During his lifetime Dr. King made his plea for racial understanding in his historic "I Have a Dream Speech" on August 28, 1963 on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. His words are forever etched in the minds of people across the world as he fought for people to gain access to a better

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DATA NEWS WEEKLY

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Please call 504-309-9913 for subscription information or to obtain a back issue of the paper ONLY.
Dated material two weeks in advance. Not responsible for publishing or return of unsolicited manuscripts or photos.

Cover Story, Continued from previous page.



President Obama was the the recipient of the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize, less than nine months into his eventful presidency, was an unexpected honor that elicited praise and puzzlement around the globe.



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his nonviolent resistance to racial prejudice in America. At 35 years of age, the Georgia-born minister was the youngest person ever to receive the award.

life. But what is often overlooked when referring to King and his legacy is how this man who lived to dream saw a country even when corrective legislation and court decisions were handed down economic inequality continued to exist.

MLK and the Fight for Economic Justice

Near the end of his life King's focus shifted from simply a matter of Civil Rights and access to public accommodations, to issues regarding access to capital and economic development and equality. Also during this time as the U.S. was involved in the Vietnam War one which drained resources from the coffers of America economy. During the last years of his life Dr. King grew to see Civil Rights through a larger lens; one that looked at it not just an issue of access but how one can have the means to enjoy these new freedoms. In turn as he began to look at economic issues he had evolved into a different type of freedom fighter. This broadening of his scope often-times placed him in opposition to many of those close to him in the Civil Rights struggle; this broadening to bring together all disenfranchised Americans in a poor people's movement also placing him against U.S. President in Lyndon Johnson.

As he began traveling the country and seeing the disparities between those who have and those who do not have he realized that the struggle was more than simply Black vs. White, but rich vs. poor. Of those who have access vs. those who do not. At what would be the end of King's life he went into Memphis, Tennessee to join a protest of sanitation workers and their fight for equal rights and a living wage. While there he was met with an assassin's bullet that ended his life on April 4, 1968 at the age of 39. While the man himself died the conditions he fought to correct continued to persist.

The Fight Against Poverty and Inequality

During the decade of the 1960's many programs came into place to address poverty in the name of President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society's Program. One of which was the War on Poverty, which raised both Blacks and Whites out of poverty. From the years of 1960-1969 the number of poor dropped dramatically from 40 million to 24 million because of federal programs aimed at alleviating the problem of inequality. While these programs

helped the problems of inequality and poverty continued to persist as intra-racial income gaps became prevalent, as those Blacks who were equipped to take advantage of new opportunities fled traditional Black neighborhoods, while Whites fled the cities leaving them with a shrinking tax base. In turn creating a social gap in addition to an income gap where those who led the community no longer had a vested interest in these parts of town.

Over four decades after the assassination of Dr. King, America in some regards is a very different place. Today there are African-Americans in all corners of life in this country. Today the same hands that once picked cotton, had a hand in choosing the country's first African-American President in Barack Obama. And as the world celebrates this triumphant moment in the history of a nation that seems a step closer to fulfilling its promise of creating a more perfect union problems continue to persist.

Fulfilling the Dream: The Challenge of Obama's America

As this nation in 2008 made a monumental leap forward by electing Barack Obama, in his role as President came the day to day problems. Where one cannot simply have the audacity of hope and doing the right thing and it gets done. Obama's presidency has been one of many triumphs on both the domestic and international front. But on the economic front he has been met by opposition from some in the Republican Party as well as the obstructionism of the Tea Party faction of the GOP. Today the economy is a concern of many Americans. In some communities there is double digit unemployment, as more people are being downsized and outsourced of the American Dream. And because of this many Americans are angry and are looking for answers.

According to a recent U.S. Census report that was released while President Obama was out promoting his jobs bill, these were some of the findings. The findings were a staggering reminder of a stalled economy and that has perhaps become the fuel that has launched the Occupy Wall Street Movement and other protest that addressed income inequality.

These are some of the highlights of the report: Blacks experienced the highest poverty rate, at 27 percent, up from 25 percent in 2009, and Hispanics rose to 26 percent from 25 percent. For Whites, 9.9 percent lived in poverty,

up from 9.4 percent in 2009. Asians were unchanged at 12.1 percent 2.6 million people slipped into poverty in the United States last year, per the Census Bureau. The number of Americans living below the official poverty line, 46.2 million people, was the highest number in the 52 years the bureau has been publishing figures on it. It was the first time since the Great Depression that median household income, adjusted for inflation, had not risen over such a long period, said Lawrence Katz, an Economics Professor at Harvard. The report said the percentage of Americans living below the poverty line last year, 15.1 percent, was the highest level since 1993. (The poverty line in 2010 for a family of four was \$22,314.) The past decade was also marked by a growing gap between the very top and very bottom of the income ladder. Median household income for the bottom tenth of the income spectrum fell by 12 percent from a peak in 1999, while the top 90th percentile dropped by just 1.5 percent. Overall, median household income adjusted for inflation declined by 2.3 percent in 2010 from the previous year, to \$49,445. That was 7 percent less than the peak of \$53,252 in 1999. Part of the income decline over time is because of the smaller size of the American family. Joblessness was the main culprit pushing more Americans into poverty, economists said.

Last year, about 48 million people ages 18 to 64 did not work even one week out of the year, up from 45 million in 2009. According to the Census figures, the median annual income for a male full-time, year-round worker in 2010 — \$47,715 — was virtually unchanged, in 2010 dollars, from its level in 1973, when it was \$49,065. Poverty has also swallowed more children, with about 16.4 million in its ranks last year, the highest numbers since 1962. The report also said the number of uninsured Americans increased by 900,000 to 49.9 million.

21st Century Activism

Today as we face a daunting economic picture for America, people from around the country and world are looking at economic inequality that has spawned the Occupy Movement. And while racial intolerance is still an issue, the major Civil Right/Human Rights issue that will define 21st Century activism is economic justice. And in 2012 on MLK Day this nation should applaud its many steps in ensuring the rights of all citizens, the spirit of the struggle must forge ahead to address the issues of today.

While it is laudable of the sacrifices people made on the picket lines and the courtrooms of yesterday, today's fights are different and require new strategies. President Obama started out as a community organizer going out knocking on doors and meeting with community groups and its leaders. Today in addition to more traditional means of protesting people are using new ways to get information out to create awareness.

In the days of King and the movement of the 1950's and 60's they began to employ innovative ways of activism and used the power of television to televise truth. Today as issues still persist that make our nation a less perfect nation, citizens are finding new ways to be activist, and in the spirit of Dr. King still making strides towards freedom. So on this day that we honor a man who gave his life to make this nation a better nation, let us not forget that progress begins with understanding a threat to justice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere, and then having the courage to take a stand.

The 2012 MLK Week for Peace

Hosted by Xavier, Tulane, Loyola and Dillard Universities, January 16-21, 2012

MLK Day of Service will be Saturday Jan. 21 at 8:00 a.m. at the LU Recreation Center

The 2012 MLK Week for Peace asks "When Push Comes to Shove: Where Will You Stand?"

Annual four-university event will be held Jan 16-21, 2012

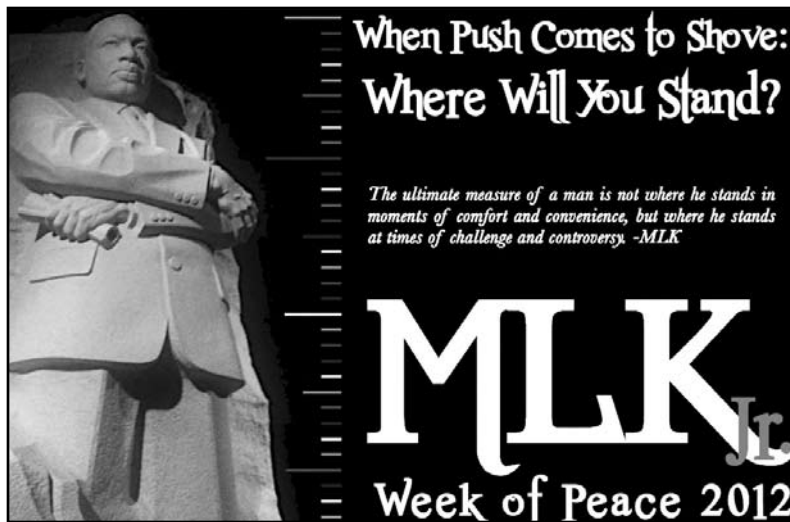
"When Push Comes to Shove: Where will you Stand?" is the theme for the 26th Annual Martin Luther King Week for Peace hosted by Xavier, Tulane, Loyola and Dillard Universities, January 16-21, 2012.

Dr. Steve Perry, Author and Founder and Principal of Capital Prep Magnet School in Hartford Connecticut will be the guest speaker. Perry who wrote "Push has come to shove: getting our kids the education they deserve-even if it means picking a fight" will speak on Thursday January 19th at 6:30pm at the MLK Week for Peace Convocation on the Xavier campus.

Also at the Convocation, local Musician Ellis Marsalis will be awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Other events for the Annual MLK Week for Peace include an Interfaith Service at Dillard University's Lawless Chapel on Monday January 16, the Expressions of Unity/Step Off for the Dream at Tulane on Friday January 20, and the MLK Day of Service on Saturday, January 21, at Loyola's Recreation Center.

About Dr. Perry:



In 1998 Dr. Perry founded ConnCAP, the Connecticut Collegiate Awareness Program, at Capital Community College. For a period of six years, the program sent 100% of its low-income first-generation graduates to four-year colleges. Then in 2004 Capital Preparatory Magnet School was established in Hartford, Connecticut's lowest performing district, and since its inception that school, too, has sent 100% of its graduates to four-year colleges!

Capital Prep has been recognized by US News & World Report as one of America's Best High Schools. Dr. Perry's uncompromising, no-excuses approach to designing the ideal educational experience for children led to his being featured on CNN's documentary "Black in America" and from there to an official role as a weekly education contributor to the network. His "Perry's Principles" and other reportage, regularly seen on both Anderson Cooper 360 and American Morn-

ing, tackles the most contentious issues being debated in American education.

Perry is a Columnist for Essence Magazine, and the Author of the bestselling self-published book Man Up!

A complete schedule of events for the week follows. For more information on the Xavier/Tulane/Loyola/Dillard Martin Luther King Week for Peace events, call 504-520-5450 or 865-5181.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

26th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Week for Peace
January 16-21, 2012

"When Push Comes to Shove: Where Will You Stand?"

Given today's economic, educational, and political crisis, America's burden to correct our current social ills will lie heavily on the shoulders of our youth. What legacy are we leaving? How will we educate them to meet these new global realities? How can we

come together as a human race, considering the political climate we find ourselves in? When push comes to shove, where will you stand? Will we get stuck in the

mudslinging and divisive meandering or sprint forward to making a stand for the future and for our children? The choice is yours. How will you make a difference?

Monday, January 16, 2012 -

INTERFAITH SERVICE- Dillard University
Lawless Chapel 6:00 pm

Thursday, January 19, 2012 -

MLK CONVOCATION -Xavier University
University Center Grand Ballroom, 3rd Floor
5:30 pm- 6:15pm-Opening Reception- Ballroom Foyer
6:30 pm- 8:30 pm- MLK Convocation

- Lifetime Achievement Award
- Student Community Service Awards
- Speaker- Dr. Steve Perry Founder of Capital Preparatory Magnet School
- CNN Education Contributor
- Author of the education bestseller Push Has Come to Shove (Crown Publishing, Sept. 2011), which has been praised by news anchor Soledad O'Brien as "brilliant...a must-read and a must-apply"...entertainer/education activist Bill Cosby as "pure gold"...and former NY City Schools Chancellor Joel Klein as "stellar and powerful." Former Washington D.C. Schools Chancellor Michele Rhee says of Push Has Come to Shove, "It should be read by everyone who wonders what's wrong with our schools" while "Waiting for Superman" director Davis Guggenheim, also a huge fan of the book, calls Perry "a powerhouse."
- Question & Answer

Friday, January 20, 2012 - EXPRESSIONS

OF UNITY / Step Off for the Dream
Tulane University, McAlister Auditorium 7:00pm
9:30 - 12:00 pm- MLK Student Event
Loyola University, Danna Center- St. Charles Room

Saturday, January 21, 2012 - MLK DAY OF SERVICE

Community Service Day - Loyola University
Recreation Complex
8:00 am - 3:00 pm

Newly Elected Legislative Black Caucus Officers Named

The Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus elected its officers for the 2012-2031 year. Representative Patricia Haynes Smith of Baton Rouge was elected to a second term as Chair of the Caucus.

Other elected officers include Rep. Herbert Dixon of Alexandria, Vice-Chairman; Rep. Katrina Jackson of Monroe, First Vice-Chair; Sen. J.P. Morrell of New Orleans, Senate Whip; Rep. Barbara Norton of Shreveport, Secretary; Rep. Ledricka Thierry of Opelousas, Treasurer; Rep. Jared Brossett of New Orleans, Parliamentarian; Rep. Patrick Williams of Shreveport, Chaplain; and Rep. Roy Burrell of Shreveport as Sergeant-at-Arms. Rep. Regina Barrow of Baton Rouge remains the Caucus's immediate Past Chair.

ASHÉ Cultural Arts Center Presents: "LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING"

Ashé Cultural Arts Center |
1712 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd.
Free & Open to the Public

Honoring the Civil Rights leaders and the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr., this concert features freedom songs led by local vocalists and instrumentalists. Artists include Davell Crawford, Michaela Harrison, Deacon John Moore, Betty Shirley, Monica McIntyre, Sharon Martin, Zion Trinity, Nana Nantambu, and others. Come celebrate and sing along at this momentous event. For more information, call (504) 569-9070.

Lift Every Voice and Sing Concert
January 15, 2012
4:00-8:00 p.m.

READY FOR A DISASTER?



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BE INFORMED.

WWW.READY.GOV



City Announces Schedule Of Events For 26th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

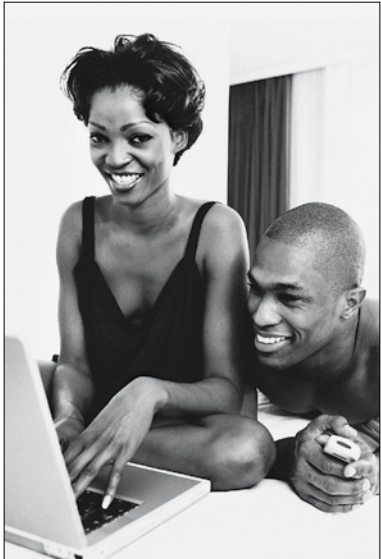
Mayor Mitch Landrieu, along with the New Orleans Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Planning Commission announced the schedule of events for the City's 26th Annual MLK Holiday Celebration.

This year's theme is "United in times of Challenge." Mayor Landrieu said he's hopeful that in remembering Dr. King's legacy, the City can overcome its current challenges together as one. "We face many challenges today—violence, fear, division, but I know, together, we as citizens can overcome these challenges and act to improve the lives of our people."

All citizens are welcome and encouraged to attend the opening program on Martin Luther King Jr., Day events. The opening program will begin at Congo Square at Armstrong Park on Monday, January 16, 2012 at 9:30am, followed by the 26th Annual MLK Memorial March at 10:00am.

The march starts at the entrance of Armstrong Park at N. Rampart and St. Ann. It goes down N. Rampart towards downtown. N Rampart turns into Oretta Castle Haley at Calliope. The parade continues down OC Haley and makes a right turn on MLK Blvd. It goes up MLK to S. Claiborne ends at MLK Monument on S. Claiborne and Felicity.

For more information, please call the Mayor's office at 504-658-4900 or visit www.nola.gov/mlk2012



ladatanews.com

Live the Dream

In celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



Ticket purchasers must be at least 21 years of age. If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, call 1-877-770-7867.

Shoot Ya Best Shot!

Louisiana Hospice of Greater New Orleans Launch Party

Nathanael Scales, owner of Garden Doctors held a launch party for his new company Louisiana Hospice of Greater New Orleans at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel. Many of the city's movers and shakers were on hand and of course Data News Weekly was there. Photos by Glenn Summers



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Shoot Ya Best Shot!

Alex Allen's Holiday Celebration and Birthday Party!

Alex "Alley Cat" Allen recently celebrated his "50+" birthday with family and friends at The Prime Example. It was a holiday jamfest done up New Orleans style. Photos by Glenn Summers



Celebrate Black History Month with Data News Weekly

Hosting an event or special presentation for Black History Month? Tell everyone about it in Data News Weekly's Black History Month Event Section.

Send your event information to datanewseditor@bellsouth.net, by January 25th and include in the subject line BHM Event Announcement and Data will run your information during Black History Month.

Shoot Ya Best Black History Month Shot
Got photos to show off of your BHM or MLK Day event, then send them to Data News Weekly at datanewseditor@bellsouth.net and we will run it in Shoot Ya Best Shot. Please make sure that your photos are at Hi-Res, and large sized, and send in jpeg format as an attachment.

Data is proud to support our community
as we celebrate our culture and
heritage during Black History Month.

Dr. King's Voting Rights Legacy Under Attack



Marc Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League

To Be Equal

"No nation can long continue to flourish or to find its way to a better society while it allows any one of its citizens...to be denied the right to participate in the most fundamental of all privileges of democracy – the right to vote." Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

On Monday, January 15th, America will celebrate what would have been the 83rd Birthday of

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The day will be marked from coast-to-coast with parades, speeches, and pilgrimages to the new King Memorial on the National Mall. But in the midst of this outpouring of praise, there is a sinister movement afoot to undo one of Dr. King's hardest fought victories – the removal of discriminatory barriers to voting and the passage of the Voting Rights Act signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson in 1965.

In Dr. King's day, billy clubs, cattle prods and guns kept African-Americans away from the polls. Today, new voter restriction laws on the books or in the works in at least 34 states could deny the right to vote to more than 5 million Americans this year. These laws include new photo ID requirements, elimination of early vot-

ing, bans on voting by out-of-state college students, and rollbacks of voting rights for ex-felons who have paid their debts to society. Florida has even eliminated voting on the Sunday before Election Day which has traditionally been a day when African-American churches organized "souls to the polls" drives for their congregations.

The mostly conservative proponents of these new laws claim they are meant to prevent widespread fraud – the casting of ballots by people who are not legally eligible to vote. But both the Bush and Obama Justice Departments have looked and not found significant voter fraud in American elections. So let's be clear – the real reason behind this spate of new laws is to suppress the votes of people likely to support progressive candidates

and issues – African-Americans, Latinos, young people, the elderly and people with disabilities. This is unconscionable. It is un-American. And it dishonors the sacrifices of generations of Americans who have fought and died to extend the right to vote to every citizen.

Fortunately, a growing number of Americans are fighting back. On December 10th, the National Urban League joined the NAACP and a coalition of Civil Rights Groups at a "Stand for Freedom" march and rally at the United Nations to protest this blatant attack on voting rights. Attorney General Eric Holder has also expressed concern about the legality of some of these new laws. Recently, the Justice Department struck down a voter ID law in South Carolina and Holder promises to continue

to monitor these attempts and stop them when they violate the law. But beating back these efforts will require citizen vigilance and action.

In a recent speech at the LBJ Library and Museum in Austin, Texas, Holder urged Americans to "Speak out. Raise awareness about what's at stake. Call on our political parties to resist the temptation to suppress certain votes in the hope of attaining electoral success and... urge policymakers at every level to re-evaluate our election systems - and to reform them in ways that encourage, not limit, participation."

We agree. We must not let the hard-won voting rights secured by Dr. King, John Lewis, LBJ and so many others slip away.

Letter to the Editor

Martin Luther King Day
March, 9:30 Am, City Hall
Monday, January 16
Sunday, January 8, 2012

The right to assemble in our Constitution's Bill of Rights is not limited to banker's hours! Beginning on October 6, 2011, Occupy NOLA inspired a 24/7 celebration of this fact. We write today to encourage you to participate Monday, January 16th in the Martin Luther King Day annual event beginning at City Hall at 9:30 AM, and a march at 10 AM, in remembrance of Dr. King's contribution in the struggle for Civil Rights and to celebrate the VOICE that called for justice.

Occupy NOLA is a group of individuals identifying corporate fraud (and a general apathy by the federal government to respond to it) as the main culprits damaging the U. S. economy and our individual freedoms. We continue to be part of a global, popu-

list movement to change these unjust economic conditions. We are mandating that state and federal government must become accountable to the citizenry of the United States of America and that government must stop the corporate manipulation of our laws.

Locally, Occupy NOLA is actively addressing the issues of New Orleans, including; advocacy for the homeless, police brutality and political corruption. Our peaceful protest has emerged from many diverse grievances and we support each individual to give voice to his/her concern. One voice does matter, as Dr. King has proved.

You'll find his final efforts in 1968, the Poor People's Campaign, foreshadowed many of the grievances expressed in today's current Occupy Movement. The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was calling then for America to think about how, "reconstruction

of society itself is the real issue to be faced." Occupy NOLA invites YOU to WAKE UP, RISE UP and SPEAK OUT! Let this peaceful march be your first step toward involving yourself in the revision of American society. After the march, Occupy NOLA invites all of New Orleans to a rally at Duncan Plaza across from City Hall at 2PM. Please join us to revive a spirited tradition we call the Right to Assemble.

Respectfully,
OCCUPY NOLA

(voices/authors: Sheryl, Mike, Bert, Captain Black, Gabe, Djomo, Derek, Robert, Christoph, Mikal)

<http://www.occupynola.net>

On Facebook: [occupynola504](https://www.facebook.com/occupynola504)

MLK event info:

www.wvltv.com/home/List-of-MLK-Celebration-Events-113806459.html

NOW HIRING SALES SUPPORT ADMINISTRATOR

Data News Weekly, "The People's Paper", is seeking an energetic professional who can juggle many tasks. Could this be you? Are you an experienced administrative assistant seeking a position with great people? If so, this could be the right opportunity for you! This position will assist the Publisher, Sales, and Customer Service departments.

We are looking for an experienced administrative assistant who has the ability to handle multiple tasks in a small team environment. Some other duties will include proofing, editing and issuing weekly sales reports; performing general clerical duties (i.e. phone coverage, mail, fax, letter, etc.); maintaining social network sites; implementing activities associated with in-house meetings; and maintaining inventory of office supplies for multiple departments.

If interested in this position, do not delay as interviews are in progress! Email your resume to datanewsad@bellsouth.net with the words "Sales Support Administrator" in the subject line. We look forward to hearing from you. Thank you!

Job Experience:

- Candidates MUST have at least 2 years of Administrative experience
- Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint and social media sites
- Experience supporting a sales team and executives



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- Find out what doctors will be in each Health Plan. Be sure to bring a list of your doctors with you.
- Register to win in our prize drawing!

You can get help with choosing a Health Plan for each family member in your house, and our staff will be available to answer questions. If you need special assistance, please call 1-888-342-6207.

Next "CHOOSE HEALTH" Meeting:

Tuesday, Jan. 10 from 5-7 p.m.

BRIDGE CITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
1805 BRIDGE CITY AVE.
WESTWEGO, LA 70094

Saturday, Jan. 14 from 11:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

DELGADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE
615 CITY PARK AVE.
NEW ORLEANS, LA 70119

Tuesday, Jan. 17 from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

GRACE KING HIGH SCHOOL
4301 GRACE KING PL.
METAIRIE, LA 70002

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Shoot Ya Best Shot!

J. Renee

Inside the Soul of an Artist

By Edwin Buggage
Photo by Ray Bonnee

As we enter the Carnival season with parades and balls it is once again Mardi Gras or as the great Al Johnson's song says "It's Carnival Time." During this time streets are transformed and people gather to catch trinkets thrown from the many ornate floats. But one of the highlights of the season is the Zulu Ball and Parade. Recently the Krewe unveiled their poster for 2012. This year the artist that was chosen to design the poster is New Orleans own Jennifer "J. Renee" Johnson. She says it is an honor to design the Zulu Poster, "I submitted my image a couple of years ago, and my piece came in second place, but this year I have done the poster and my other image will be used for the Zulu Ball invitation." Continuing on how she came across this opportunity to partner with Zulu she says,

"They wanted me to submit this year and the theme was 'From Zulu With Love' and I loved the idea and the thing I thought it was very different and in my design I wanted to do something that was timeless, classic and sharp. These posters are collector's item and I wanted to incorporate everything that was consistent with their theme, so I designed a King of hearts realizing people would immediately recognize it," says J. Renee. Speaking of the historic club she says, "I wanted the club to be represented by the image of a strong Black man." Laughingly, she adds, "It's ironic but they actually play cards on Monday night over at the club."

J. Renee is an Artist of much renown; her mentor is the late John Scott who she studied under at Xavier University; she says the lessons she learned will always stay with her and he continues to inspire her today. She is an artist

that continues to be inspired by the City of her birth, although today she resides in South Carolina, "I had a store and gallery in the French Quarter before the storm and I am tied to the tradition of our City." Excited as she talks of her City she says, "I lived in Treme for nine years, I am a Xavier Graduate, so my love will always be for New Orleans." Of her work on the Zulu poster she says, "I felt like this was a great opportunity to make people aware that people are still displaced and that they're still facing challenges and just trying to get back home and this is my way of giving back."

She is one of many artists who were displaced after Hurricane Katrina who long to return. But during her time away her life and approach to her art has been transformed. She is an artist whose work has gone in a much more serious direction post Katrina, "I feel like my art evolved



after Hurricane Katrina," says J. Renee. Continuing she says, "It became much more serious, I began creating pieces that told stories of my City and my people, things of more substance, because

of such a life changing experience I wanted to say much more with my art." But while she awaits to return to her City, since leaving she has seen her career take off as people from around the globe are interested in her and how the Crescent City inspires her amazing work, "Since leaving I have shown in New York and other places and people love the work, I feel our City is a wellspring of inspiration and there are so many talented people here and I am glad to be able to tell our story through art to the world." As we end our interview she gives homage to her home, "Regardless of where I am living I still consider myself a New Orleans artist, my work is inspired by my life here and wherever I go people are fascinated by the culture and people of our City and that is something I am proud of and represent wherever I go and wherever my art is displayed."

2012 Zulu Mardi Gras Poster Unveiled

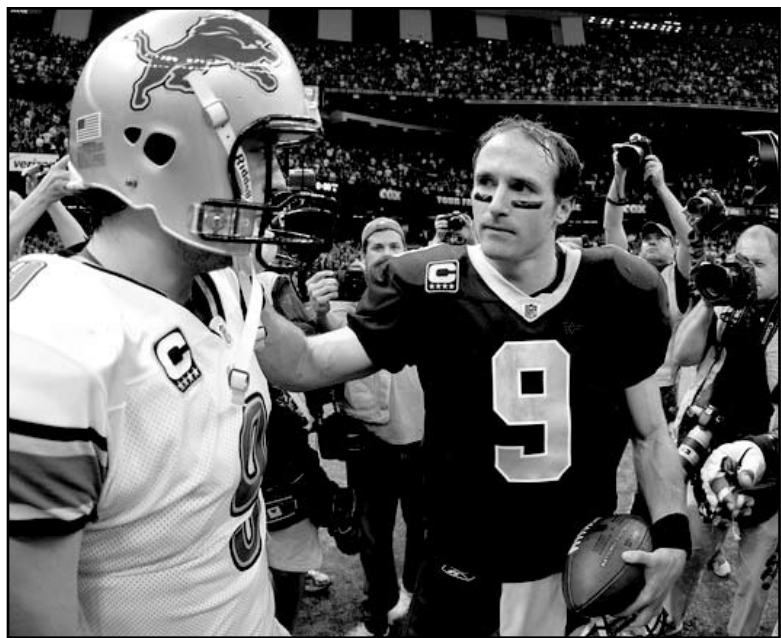
Photos by Ray Bonnee

Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club recently unveiled its official poster for the 2012 Mardi Gras season. The artist who produced the poster is New Orleans own Jennifer "J. Renee" Johnson.

A cross section of New Orleanians came to join in the celebration, from Mayor Mitch Landrieu, Chef Leah Chase, King Zulu officers from the club and many others were on hand to bring in the Carnival Season.



Hear the Saints ROAR!!



By Kingfish

Yes, Detroit came to play. Yes, Calvin Johnson is a beast, and yes they did take it to the Saints in the first half. Anyone watching this game in the first half, who is a Saints fan, their hearts were in their stomach.

Detroit's defense caused a fumble by WR Colston on the Saints first drive. A normally sure handed Colston got hit by the linebacker as he was going down. That was the first mistake of the half. Detroit gets the ball back and goes down and scores again. I don't know about your house, or where you watched, but in my house the words people used to describe the way they were feeling can't and shouldn't be repeated in print or any other arena for that matter.

After getting on the board,

Brees comes back on the next drive and fumbles. I thought my roof was going to blow off. I could hear my neighbors across the street screaming. My neighbor behind me kicked his back door open and launched a beer can out to his backyard using words I hadn't heard on Bourbon Street. I felt like we were one level from total anarchy, with people taking to the streets with axes and pitchforks. The Saints went into the half trailing Detroit 14 to 10. This is not a position the Superdome or the Saints were used to. Last time Detroit was there the Saints lead 27 to 3 at the half. To say the least, the Wheat nation was stunned and confused. However the Saints were not.

The second half of this game looked nothing like the first. The impostors that wore Saints uni-

forms in the first half were gone. As Quarterback Drew Brees said "we're pedal to the metal". That's exactly what the Saints did the entire second half. The Saints didn't punt the ball once. They converted 3 of 4 fourth downs with the last one being a kneel down to end the clock and seal there 45 to 28 Wildcard playoff victory. Every possession the offense had in the second quarter they scored a touchdown except one, which they got a field goal. That's how the Saints put the world of the WhoDat nation back in balance. The grey clouds lifted, the raising and boiling Gulf of Mexico settled and all was normal again. The Saints offense absolutely showed the young Lions how to roar.

Next week is the biggest defensive test the Saints will face

this year. My feeling is that Detroit had really good defense and an outstanding offense. The 49ers have a great defense but an average offense. As I looked at the way the playoffs could unfold as far as match ups I had more concern with Detroit than I had for the 49ers. That's not to say it's going to be an easy game, but I believe it's more favorable for the Saints. I'm so tired of hearing how the Saints are a bad team on the road; the Saints aren't going to be as fast on grass as they are on the turf. I've run on both it ain't that big of a difference. It's not going to snow and Jerry Rice is not putting on a uniform. The Saints are on a mission this year!

Let's Geaux Saints!!!!

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