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February 2 - February 8, 2013 47th Year Volume 38 [www.ladatanews.com](http://www.ladatanews.com)

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# The History and Future of Black Businesses and the Power of the Dollar



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Founder of The National Negro  
Business League

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# The History and Future of Black Businesses and the Power of the Dollar



Madam C.J. Walker  
The first African-American Millionaire



Booker T. Washington  
Founder of The National Negro Business League

Written and Edited by Eric Connerly

## African-American Business: A Brief History

"At the bottom of education, at the bottom of politics, even at the bottom of religion, there must be, for our race, economic independence." In 1900 Booker T. Washington, one of the post-Reconstruction era's most visible, and influential Black leaders, founded the National Negro Business League. Today his words still resonate the same undeniable truths.

Throughout the history of this nation and in spite of what seemed like insurmountable odds African-Americans have always found ways to become successful entrepreneurs. People like William Leidesdorf who was America's first millionaire of Black descent. During the 1840s, prior to the gold rush, the native of the Dutch West Indies engaged in trade and real estate, built San Francisco's first hotel and was the city's first treasurer.

Another part of our noteworthy history is that from its earliest days, a Black middle-class emerged in sectors where Whites shunned contact with Blacks. This group included doctors, lawyers, un-

dertakers, beauticians and barbers. Almost immediately, these individuals began to pool their money to create larger independent businesses, support philanthropic organization and fund educational institutions that benefitted the African-American masses.

While today the world marvels at Oprah Winfrey and her becoming the first African-American female Billionaire a century earlier there was Madam C.J. Walker, the first African-American female Millionaire. Madam C.J. Walker, born Sarah Breedlove McWilliams, once said, "I got my start by giving myself a start." Walker revolutionized the Black

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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.



There have always been centers of Black Enterprise and in Tulsa Oklahoma there was Black Wall Street .

hair-care business and showed thousands of women that they could succeed. A Political Activist, she contributed thousands of dollars to anti-lynching campaigns. In a New York City suburb, she built a mansion that is a national treasure.

There have always been centers of Black Enterprise and in Tulsa Oklahoma there was Black Wall Street. After World War I, returning Black soldiers established businesses and pushed for equal rights and economic independence nationwide. On May 30, 1921, Tulsa's 35-block Greenwood section, known as the Black Wall Street, was home to a thriving community of more than 10,000 Blacks – including doctors, lawyers, merchants and other entrepreneurs – and two newspapers. That day, it was attacked and destroyed by a White mob.

### **African-American Businesses: Triumphs and Challenges**

In this the month of February, Data News Weekly will present a series on the history of African-American businesses in New Orleans. While there are many African-American owned businesses that operate in our City we will focus on Funeral Homes (2/9 issue) , Restaurants (2/16 issue) and financial institutions including accountants, insurance companies, and our historic Social Aid and Pleasure Clubs (2/23 issue) which have been the backbone of the Black Community in our City.

And while it is the month of February, a time that is dedicated to us celebrating our history we have in the past looked at many of our greats and how they've contributed to this nation's rich history. But as we look at the challenges of the 21st Century at the center of it is the quest for economic empowerment. Nationally, African-American power is expected to reach 1.1 trillion dollars by 2015

according to The State of the African-American Consumer from Nielson and the National Newspaper Association (NNPA), a federation of more than 200 community newspapers across the U.S.

Today African-American owned businesses face many challenges, as reported by New Orleans Blackbook; In an article called, "Reality Check: The State of Black Business" it states, "According to the most recent Census Survey of Business Owners, which was released in early 2011, Blacks made up more than 60 percent of New Orleans' population, but were the owners of less than 29 percent of the businesses or about 7,850 of the more than 27,000 businesses." Also published in this document is an alarming statistic regarding the sustainability of African-American owned businesses along the Gulf Coast based on phone disconnection rates, nearly one in four Black-owned companies in New Orleans and Biloxi had closed in 2008, a rate of 52 percent higher than for White-owned businesses, according to the Political & Economic Research Council, a North Carolina think tank.

### **The African-American Economy and the Power of the Dollar**

According to a report posted on the NAACP.org by Economic Program Specialist, Nicole Kennedy it states that while levels of Black consumption is up, support for African-American businesses is down, "The NAACP and other organizations are constantly advocating for policies to create more opportunities for Black owned businesses (e.g., increasing access to capital) to succeed. But, while these organizations are affecting change at an institutional level, I want to highlight how we, as individuals, can foster an environment where more Black businesses can thrive. First, we must stop the massive "leakage" of

our money out of our communities. Currently, a dollar circulates in Asian communities for a month, in Jewish communities approximately 20 days and White communities 17 days. How long does a dollar circulate in the Black community? 6 hours!!! African-American buying power is at 1.1 Trillion; and yet only 2 cents of every dollar an African-American spends in this country goes to Black owned businesses."

This is something that we must take heed of in our community if we are to not simply survive, but thrive moving forward. It is about spending our collective wealth wisely by supporting African-American owned businesses. In the 21st Century many of the social barriers have been removed as more African-Americans are entering into the middle-class. While much media attention is focused on urban poverty many great strides forward have been made. According to the Nielson/NNPA report it also states, "The number of African-American households earning \$75,000 or higher grew by almost 64%, a rate close to 12% greater than the change in the overall population's earning between 2000 and 2009. This continued growth in affluence, social influence and household income will continue to impact the community's economic power."

And more so if African-Americans with a buying power of estimated 1 trillion dollars annually, if it were a nation would make it the 16th largest nation country in the world. This is something to think about as we move forward, to look at how the new frontier of Civil Rights is not simply about access but how we use our capital to build wealth in our community. And we hope to in our series enlighten, inform and inspire our readers to go out and support African-American businesses and exercise the power of the dollar in our community.

# Shoot Ya Best Shot!

## NNPA Publishers 2013 Mid Winter Workshop Highlights

NNPA, The Black Press of America members met for their Annual Mid-Winter Workshop on Ft. Lauderdale, FL last week. Publishers from across the country attended seminars and meetings dealing with keeping Black newspapers vital and current in the new media world.



Mary Alice Thatch, Publisher, Wilmington Journal, Cash Michaels, Staff Writer, Wilmington Journal, Dr. Benjamin Chavis, Pres. Of Education Online Services, Prof. Irving Joyner, Prof. at NCCU Law School and Atty. James Ferguson, III, Founding Partner at Ferguson, Stein, Chambers, Gresham & Sumter P.A. Professional Ass. In Charlotte, NC



L to R. Bobby Henry, Sr., Publisher, Westside Gazette, Scott Davis, Publisher, Pride Publishing, Inc., and Terry B. Jones, Publisher, Data News Weekly



L to R. Clovis Campbell, Jr., Publisher, Arizona Informant, Scott Davis, Publisher, Pride Publishing, Inc. and Terry B. Jones, Publisher, Data News Weekly



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The Good Morning Show  
6AM-10AM



**Paul Beaulieu**  
Showtime in the Afternoon  
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# Weird Plant Material



Bat Plant



Mantis Orchid

By MC Calla Victoria  
Data News Weekly Columnist

I love all flora and fauna but I am especially captivated by the unusual gifts of nature.

One such specimen is the Titan Arum, or "Corpse Flower" which has the largest non-branched inflorescence, which is the scientific way of saying they have big bodacious flowers. It is called the Corpse flower because when in bloom it smells like decomp (dead body), so it stinks to high heavens! I love God's sense of humor; yes it is the biggest most fabulous funkiest bloom around. Whenever I see a photo of this magnificent flower I really want to add it to my garden, but then I have to ask myself if I am willing to deal with the smell. No thanks, I'll just have to admire it from afar. Corpse Flowers are indigenous to the equatorial rainforests of Sumatra and Indonesia. The plant was first discovered by an Italian botanist in 1878, and the first bloom of the species occurred in cultivation in 1889. This strange plant only produces a flower every four to six years. Hail to the Titan

Arum the world's biggest and worst smelling flower.

Another unique but beautiful plant is the Sea Poison Tree, a species endemic to mangrove habitats on the tropical coasts and islands of the Pacific Ocean and Indian Ocean like Philippines, Fiji, Taiwan, Zanzibar and New Caledonia. It is also known as Fish Poison Tree or Box Fruit due the distinct boxed like shaped fruit it produces.

Then there is a species of Rafflesia as known to the Bagobo tribe as Bo-o, a red looking pod. This parasitic plant has the largest flower among the Rafflesia species found in the Philippines with a diameter of up to 80 cm. Among all other Rafflesia species, it has the second largest flower. Its first specimen was collected in 1882 and it was not seen for over a century and was thought to be extinct. It was rediscovered in 1994 on Mount Matutum, South Cotabato.

I first saw the Tacca Chantrieri 'Black Bat Plant while visiting the Conservatory at the New Orleans Botanical Garden, it scared me a bit as it peeked out under some foliage. The incredible, yet stunning

looking Bat Plant is so unusual in shape and design that it almost looks unreal. Growing wild in the tropical forests of the Yunnan Province, China, this gothic plant can reach a height of up 36 inches! It grows best in a well-drained, slightly acidic soil and although it appears highly exotic, this beautiful plant is in fact hardy down to -3 degrees Celsius!

Although not a plant, I could not help but to include this sweet little insect, the Orchid Mantis, or Hymenopus Coronatus. This creature, also called the "walking flower, is a beautiful pink and white mantis with lobes on its legs that look like flower petals. Although this species does not live on orchids, it does look remarkably like the flower of an orchid. This species is very popular and loved because of its beautiful bright colors and amazing camouflage. In the wild Hymenopus coronatus is found in Malaysia.

Check out my weekly gardening tips on my website at [www.thegardeningdiva.com](http://www.thegardeningdiva.com)

Remember never be too busy to stop and enjoy the beautiful flowers!

**My diabetes ABC numbers:**  
A1C = ?  
Blood Pressure = ?  
Cholesterol = ?

**My PIN number** ✓

**My Social Security number** ✓

## Know your diabetes ABCs just like you know your other numbers.

If you have diabetes, you are at high risk for heart attack and stroke. But you can fight back. You can control the ABCs of diabetes and live a long and healthy life. Ask your health care provider what your A1C, Blood pressure, and Cholesterol numbers are and ask what they should be. Then talk about the steps you can take to reach your ABC goals. You have the power to help prevent heart attack and stroke. Control your ABCs.

**Talk to your health care provider today.**

For a free brochure about the ABCs of diabetes, call 1-800-438-5383 or visit [www.ndep.nih.gov](http://www.ndep.nih.gov).

A message from the National Diabetes Education Program, sponsored by the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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# Sensible Gun Reform Advances



**Marc Morial**  
President and CEO  
National Urban League

"No one hunts with an assault rifle. No one needs 10 bullets to kill a deer and too many innocent people have died already. End the madness, now!"

- New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo

Last week, one month after the shooting deaths of 20 first-graders and six adults in a school in Newtown, Conn., New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed into law the most com-

prehensive gun legislation in the nation. Passed with overwhelming bipartisan support, the New York SAFE Act strengthens the state's assault weapons ban, reduces gun magazine capacity from 10 to seven bullets, increases penalties for purchasing illegal guns and using guns on school grounds, mandates universal background checks, and takes guns out of the hands of mental health patients deemed likely to commit violent acts.

Two days later at the White House, President Obama unveiled the most sweeping federal gun control proposals in a generation. In addition to calling on Congress to reinstate the assault weapons ban and close background check loopholes, the President signed 23 executive actions to immediately strengthen background checks, make schools safer, in-

crease access to mental health services and reduce gun violence. We applaud the actions of Gov. Cuomo and President Obama to finally address the plague of senseless gun violence and we are encouraged by their commitment to increase resources for mental health counseling and programs that help create safer communities.

As a long-time advocate of sensible gun control measures, the National Urban League stands ready to work with the governor, the president and others to end the epidemic of gun violence in America. Each year on average, more than 100,000 people are shot or killed with a gun in this country. The American people have had enough.

A Siena College survey shows that 73 percent of New Yorkers support the state's expanded as-

sault weapons ban and new limits on high capacity magazines. Recent national polls also show that the American people believe sensible gun control measures are more important than protecting gun rights. Clearly, it is time for state legislatures and Congress to put the safety of our children and the wishes of the people before the demands of the gun lobby which has used extremist rhetoric to promote a tortured and distorted interpretation of the Second Amendment. And let me be clear: While we understand the desire to promote safety and protect our children, we are adamantly opposed to arming teachers or placing armed guards in schools. Guns do not belong in schools.

As a nation, we have been horrified by the tragedies in Columbine, Aurora, Oak Creek and now Newtown. But as Americans,

we should be equally heartbroken and outraged by the daily gun violence occurring in cities throughout the country. Since the Newtown massacre, there have been more than 1,000 additional gun deaths in this country, and several more school shooting incidents. The time for half-measures is over. As the president said last week, "I will put everything I've got into this and so will Joe Biden...but this will not happen unless the American people demand it." We urge you to join the National Urban League in calling on Congress to work with the President to enact common-sense gun reforms. Our goal should be to make America the safest big country in the world.

Marc H. Morial, former mayor of New Orleans, is president and CEO of the National Urban League.

## Pipeline to the People

By Corey Anderson

*Question: How do you feel about the New Orleans Hornets becoming the New Orleans Pelicans?*



**Joseph McDonald**

"I'm extremely disappointed about the Pelicans being the name of the organization. I just think that it sounds real weak and it makes us look weak. I wish they would've put more thought into it."



**Jade Young**

"I hate it. Would you be afraid of a pelican?"



**Britt Martin**

"It's quite bizarre to say the least, but at the same time it makes sense because it is our state fowl. He really couldn't touch the Saints' name. I don't know."

Talk to us on Facebook; let us know how you feel.





# Joseph S. Clark Preparatory High School To Host First Annual Tremé Day 5K + Health And Wellness Fair On March 9, 2013

NEW ORLEANS, January 28, 2013 – Joseph S. Clark Preparatory High School (Clark Prep) will host its first Annual Tremé Day: 5K + Health and Wellness Fair on Saturday, March 9th starting at 8:30 a.m. This event supports Clark Prep's Athletic and Enrichment Department – raising funds for uniforms and equipment for our students to ensure the high quality athletic experience they deserve. The Department's activities are fundamental to school culture; an exemplary environment for students provides both academic excellence and comprehensive enrichment programs because both are

vital for students to succeed - at Clark Prep today and in the world tomorrow.

**Date:** Saturday, March 9th 2013

**Time:** 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

**Location:**

Joseph S. Clark Preparatory High School

1301 N. Derbigny St

New Orleans, LA 70116

**Registration:** 8:00 a.m. for the 5K run/walk.

**Race Starts:** 9:00 a.m.

**Health and Wellness Fair:** 9:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Adult pre-registration is \$20, participants under 21 years of age pre-register for \$15.

Day of registration increases by \$5 and does not guarantee that your t-shirt size will be available. Registration, sponsorship opportunities and additional event information can be found at: <http://clarkprep.org/Treme-day.html>.

Tremé Day is sponsored by The Forty-fourth's Education Initiative. Partners of Tremé Day include: Edible Schoolyard New Orleans, School Health Connection, Second Harvest Food Bank, a local sorority and a local women's organization that serves the community in various capacities, including health and wellness.

## Loyola's February Forum Features Special Guests From Treme's Underground Mardi Gras Tribes



Loyola University Professor Jim Gabour



Millisia White's New Orleans Baby Doll Ladies

Following the success of last year's forum highlighting the History of the Mardi Gras Indians, Loyola University New Orleans' Professor of Video Technology, Jim Gabour returns to present "Treme's Underground Carnival: Baby Dolls and Skeletons." The presentation highlights the deep subculture of some of Treme's most renowned Carnival groups.

The event is free, open to the public and will take place Monday, Feb. 4 at 5 p.m. in Nunemaker Auditorium in Monroe Hall. For those unable to attend in person, the forum will be available via live streaming on Loyola's website.

The forum will feature special guests, including Filmmaker Royce Osborn of the Downtown Skeletons and acclaimed Musician Bruce Sunpie Barnes of the Northside Skull and Bones Gang. Also in attendance will be Millisia White, a Representative of the New Orleans Society of Dance that is co-producing the upcoming Louisiana State Museum exhibit, "They Call Me Baby Doll: One Hundred Years of a Masking Tradition and Way of Life," on display in the Presbytere this month.

Gabour and guests, many of whom will be in full Carnival garb, will discuss the past,

present and future of the underground tribes and how the Skull and Bones Clubs fit into the neighborhood carnival tradition. They will also pay tribute to the late, legendary Big Chief Al Morris of the Skull and Bones Gang and screen film clips of several tribes, including footage of the tribes parading on Super Sunday 2008 and excerpts from Osborn's "All on Mardi Gras Day."

For more information, contact Jess Brown in Loyola's Office of Public Affairs at 504-861-5882.

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