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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

Reflections After the Election What Will it Mean for New Orleans?

The Soul of New Orleans

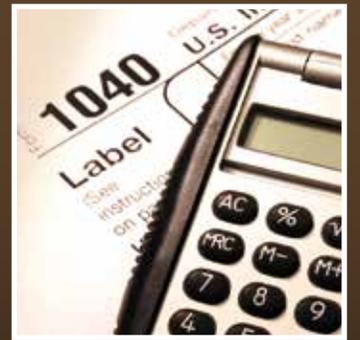
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Reflections After the Election

Sheriff Gusman Re-elected and New Leadership in City Council What Will it Mean for New Orleans?



Pictured above, Data News Weekly Publisher Terry Jones and newly elected City Councilwoman Nadine Ramsey.

by **Edwin Buggage**

As the City has gone through many changes post-Katrina and is experiencing the growing pains of a City re-inventing itself, questions arise as to who will steer its direction and what will be the agenda. Who or in this case what communities will be a priority in

the reconfiguring of New Orleans. And who will shape the policies and agenda moving forward. In the recent City-wide elections voters decided who would lead them in a variety of races. One of the most important races was on the city-council to determine who would be on this collective body that is the legislative arm of City government.

The voters chose three new members to the council, with two of those being Attorney Jason Williams and former Civil District Court Judge Nadine Ramsey defeating candidates with long records serving on the council in addition both of the defeated candidates receiving the endorsement of present New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu. Questions

On the Cover, Terry Jones, Data News Weekly Publisher and Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff Marlin Gusman.

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Newly elected Councilmember-at-Large, Jason Williams and Data News Weekly Publisher, Terry Jones.



Rev. Samson "Skip" Alexander



Hal Clark

arise about what will this new body mean to the future of his agenda and how will this council work together to ensure that the entire City will receive the attention and resources it deserve in its rebuilding. Data News Weekly spoke to several people in the community who has a thorough knowledge about the history in the area of politics, civil rights and the fight for justice. We spoke with them to get their input on the new council and their feelings about what they see as the direction of the council and how it will affect and impact the political direction and agenda of the City.

Don Hubbard: Inside the SOUL of a Life Dedicated to Fighting for What's Right

Don Hubbard is a Veteran of Civil Rights, once a member of CORE (The Congress of Racial Equality) where in addition to his work on the front lines in the fight for social justice, he drove the Ford Station Wagon from New York that the three civil rights workers James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner were savagely killed in. During Freedom Summer in Mississippi in 1964. He is also one of the founding members of SOUL (Southern Organization for United Leadership). His focus as an activist and today as a business man has been centered around access to resources, opportunities and economic empowerment.

Speaking on the issue of having those elected to the council or any elected office he feels there is a need for a Black agenda, "Getting Blacks elected means nothing if they do not have a Black agenda. And let me be clear in saying that having a Black agenda does not mean it is one that is anti-White." Continuing he says that by helping those with the most need nets benefits across racial lines and is good for the entire City, "By helping

the most vulnerable citizens of the City everyone in the City benefits," says Hubbard.

He feels with the new council that has a 5-2 majority it is important that they have a plan that can empower the African-American community. "To be effective addressing inequality it is about having a plan and making empowering your community a top agenda item. And if that is not the case then we have style and not substance and that is something we can ill afford as a community. We need people who are going to put forward policies and positions that will work to empower more people giving them access to resources and things that can improve their quality of life."

Hubbard feels that having roots and a record of serving those in the community were important and continues to be an important ingredient if one who is elected is to be successful in governing. "When we started SOUL the people we helped get elected were people who had a neighborhood base, they had proven themselves in the neighborhoods as leaders."

As a successful business owner, he continues to advocate for economic empowerment, he feels this is key to leveling the playing field for the citizens of New Orleans. Speaking of what he hopes would be a sincere effort to eradicate inequality and speaking of his life's work as an activist and businessman he says, "The power that I have always fought for and been advocating for is economic power, because I feel you cannot be broke and have power. And we have to be serious in our critiques of the people who control the purse strings demanding they bring more to the table than coming in our community for photo ops that masquerades as help for our community. We have real needs that have to be addressed and it is my hope with this new council it makes the needs of the African-American community a priority."

Skip Alexander: An Eyewitness to History

Rev. Samson "Skip" Alexander is a man who has worked tirelessly serving to help better the condition of African-Americans throughout his adult life. As a labor leader he helped break the color lines in labor unions and was involved in many causes during the Civil Rights Movement. Today he's is one of the goto people on the history of Black New Orleans. He is a walking library of New Orleans history and always willing to share his keen insight and perspectives.

He feels encouraged by the new council and thinks it can bring a new spirit into the council chambers. "It is great to have balance and independent voices on the council that can create an environment with more voices that better reflect the entire community can be heard," says Alexander.

Alexander is a visionary with his eyes set on the future. He is a seasoned veteran of Civil Rights who unlike some are willing to pass the baton, giving the mantle of leadership to young people. "I am encouraged by these young people who are a different breed of leader who did not live through segregation. Their mentality is different and they can speak up and speak out against what they deem as unfair." Continuing he speaks of how they are building coalitions of Blacks and Whites, "What is also great about these candidates is their base of support is different, when you look at both Jason Williams, Nadine Ramsey and Latoya Cantrell they all were elected with a cross-section of support from people from all walks of life and varied interest coming together to support their campaigns."

While he is one that is race transcending, he believes that a specific Black Agenda is necessary and should be a high priority for the new council. "As far as having a Black agenda, I think it is important, because for so long our com-

munity was ignored, but the fights to help Blacks are all our fight, for example, the work that James Gray is doing to bring back New Orleans East and the Lower Ninth Ward are bigger than just District E, it being underdeveloped affects all of us."

Issues of race and class have been paramount post-Katrina, Alexander feels with a younger council many of those problems will not be front and center as in previous councils,

"I think the council will work better together because they are younger people who are not bogged down as much by problems of race like previous generations." He also sees the City changing for the better where in the future there will be more economic opportunities for the City's residents. What we are about to see is a City that is changing with so

Cover Story, Continued on page 10.

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Nuggets Move To No. 2, Their Highest Rank Of The Season



2014 Xavier University of Louisiana Gold Nuggets

Not only did the Xavier University of Louisiana women's tennis team defeat Auburn Montgomery, but the Gold Nuggets also helped knock the Warhawks out of the top spot in the NAIA Coaches' Top 25 Poll on Tuesday.

Xavier (8-4) climbed from fifth after four consecutive victories since the previous poll, including a 5-4 decision at AUM on March 9. It was the Gold Nuggets' first-ever victory against a top-ranked team. Xavier has a season-best five-dual winning streak, and the poll position is its highest since being No. 1 in three consecutive polls in 2013. Before Tuesday, Xavier's highest rank this year was third in the preseason.

The Gold Nuggets are in the top 10 for the 11th consecutive time. Second-year program Georgia

Gwinnett, the only NAIA team to beat Xavier this season - 5-2 at Hattiesburg, Miss., on Feb. 16 - is the new No. 1. The Grizzlies (12-2 overall, 7-0 against NAIA teams) received 11-of-12 first place votes, with AUM (10-6, 9-1) getting the other.

AUM is ranked third, four points behind Xavier.

Beginning Thursday, the Gold Nuggets will be on the road for four duals in four days. They'll visit No. 4 Lindsey Wilson on Friday, play No. 18 Milligan in Nashville, Tenn., on Saturday and visit No. 15 Cumberland on Sunday. XU's Thursday dual will be against Graceland, which missed the top 25 by six points.

The top 25:

1. Georgia Gwinnett
2. Xavier

3. Auburn Montgomery
4. Lindsey Wilson
5. SCAD Savannah
6. Embry-Riddle (Fla.)
7. Brenau
8. Northwood (Fla.)
9. Vanguard
10. Lewis-Clark State
11. Oklahoma Baptist
12. Westmont
13. Concordia (Calif.)
14. SCAD Atlanta
15. Cumberland
16. Coastal Georgia
17. Indiana Wesleyan
18. Milligan
19. William Carey
20. Cardinal Stritch
21. Marian (Ind.)
22. Campbellsville
23. Northwestern Ohio
24. Olivet Nazarene
25. Davenport

Two Events, One Great Mission!

On Friday, March 28, Daughters of Charity will host two events aimed at achieving one great mission: improving the health status of the Greater New Orleans community and providing high quality, compassionate care for all—the insured, underinsured and uninsured.

Morning

Daughters of Charity Health Centers will host a ribbon cutting at its newly constructed New Orleans East Health Center at 9:30 a.m. on Friday, March 28 at 5630 Read Blvd. This event will feature a ribbon cutting and a blessing by Archbishop Gregory Aymond. The public is invited to attend.

Evening

Daughters of Charity Foundation of New Orleans' 3rd Annual "Keeping Our Promises" Gala will take place Friday, March 28, 2014 at Hyatt Regency New Orleans, 601 Loyola Avenue. The Patron Party begins at 7 p.m.; the Gala immediately follows at 8 p.m. This exciting event will feature live music by Deacon John and the Ivories, great food, drinks, the Inspired

Cross Awards Presentation and a silent auction with some unique offerings, including an autographed and framed Steve Gleason jersey, signed prints by famed artists Terrance Osborne and Varion Laurent, an autographed Drew Brees helmet and football, a football signed by the entire 2013 Saints team and much more.

During the "Keeping Our Promises" Gala, Daughters of Charity will honor one organization and three individuals who share their vision, and work tirelessly to ensure healthy communities. This year's Inspired Cross Awards honorees are Dr. Karen DeSalvo, Senator David Heitmeier, Dr. Reed Tuckson and Sisters Servants of Mary: Ministers to the Sick.

The Third Annual Gala is especially meaningful as the event also will celebrate the Daughters of Charity and their 180 year anniversary of providing health services to the New Orleans community.

Visit www.dcsno.org/foundation for more information on the Gala and for ticket/sponsorship information.

Free Energy Efficient Lightbulbs for New Orleansians

Looking for ways to cut your energy costs at home? This month, Green Light will be able to provide free energy efficient CFL light bulbs to 500 New Orleans homes! If you are on their waiting list but have not yet received your new light bulbs, send an email to green@greenlightneworleans.org, or give them a call at 504-324-2429 to set up an appointment. If you have already received their

service or you are already using your own CFLs, please forward this information to friends and family in Orleans Parish who might be interested in Green Light New Orleans' service. Anyone who is not already using CFLs is eligible to participate. New signups should go online to www.greenlightneworleans.org and fill out the online form or call them at 504-324-2429 to get on the list.

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New Orleans Job Corps Success Stories

Educating, Empowering and Employing

Waldolyn Patterson and Dewyna Taylor are the two latest success stories to graduate from New Orleans Job Corps. Patterson is now working in the nursery at Touro Hospital and Taylor accepted a Culinary position on an American military base in Africa last month.

Patterson, a Medical Office Support graduate, walks with the aid of a cane but she has never allowed her disability to stop her from pursuing her dreams with gusto. Today, she is well on her way to achieving her goals as a unit secretary in the pediatrics center at Touro. Patterson's immediate goal is to work in billing and coding. She graduated from Job Corps in January 2012 and credits the program with giving her life new direction.

"I wanted a better life for my two children," says Patterson. "I ended up trying to go back to high school at the age of 23. A lady told me that I would be a great candidate for Job Corps. I did a lot of research on Job Corps and decided to go to the orientation because I knew it would be a great program for me."

"Being a person with a disability and a little shy as well, and coming into Job Corps not knowing what to expect, honestly, I thought that I would only be at the Center for a few days. I thought people would tease me about my disability but actually everyone embraced me," says Patterson. "One of my teachers-Mr. Leon Hartman- really pushed me to stay focused and the faculty and counselors helped me throughout the whole program."

One of the things that Patterson discovered about herself while at Job Corps is that she's a natural leader. The prospect of serving on the Student Government Association appealed to her almost immediately.

"When I first got to Job Corps, they were holding elections for SGA. Running for student government is something I wanted to try from the very first moment I arrived. I loved the idea of being in SGA. Being able to be a voice for other students and interact with people who wanted to get something more out of life was phenomenal."



Dewyna Taylor, pictured above, is a culinary arts graduate who will be working alongside other staffers, assisting in the daily preparation of thousands of meals for troops on the military base in Djibouti.

Faculty at New Orleans Job Corps said they saw the seeds of greatness in Patterson from the start.

"She's bright with a determination to succeed, always willing to go that extra mile and learn new concepts in order to become successful" says her former MOS instructor Rayolga Delair.

As the Job Corps Center's Clinical Medical Assistant instructor, Rhonda Remo, who also works at Touro, has had the unique experience of seeing Patterson as both a student and now a co-worker. "She's always very persistent about achieving her goals and now, I'm proud to say that she's a co-worker of mine at Touro. She gets along great with the other nurses and her personality is perfect for working with the babies in the nursery."

When KBR, a technology engineering procurement and construction company based in Houston, contacted Odle Management Group, the operator of New Orleans Job Corps Center, about employment opportunities at Camp Lemonier, a U.S. Navy base in Djibouti, Africa, Admissions Manager Andrea Lister had little doubt that Culinary Arts student Dewyna Taylor was up for the challenge and

ready to seize the opportunity.

"Dewyna is very personable. She's fearless," Lister said. "When we said 'Africa,' she didn't flinch. She really, from day one, viewed it as an exciting challenge and growth opportunity."

Staff members recall Taylor as someone with unlimited potential as she walked through the front door of the Admissions office two years ago. Now as a culinary arts graduate, she will be working alongside other staffers, assisting in the daily preparation of thousands of meals for troops on the military base in Djibouti.

Before boarding the plane for Djibouti, Taylor, beaming with a confident smile, said, "I'm going to be able to tell people I worked in Africa. Now I can tell every future employer, 'I've cooked in Africa.'"

Michael Fernandez, a 15 year veteran of the New Orleans Center, has served as the program's director since November 2012. "Waldolyn and Dewyna are two shining examples of the positive impact our graduates are making each and every day," he said.

Fernandez added: "The commitment of our students coupled with the efforts of our dedicated academic and career technical training

team, serves as the foundation of our work preparation process. The center's staff, along with our community and employer partners, are committed to educating, empowering and employing our graduates. This collaborative effort solidifies our workforce development process by providing opportunity to the young people we are so privileged to serve."

New Orleans Job Corps Center is operated by the U.S. Department of Labor and offers job training for young adults between the ages of 16-24 with six academic trade offerings: Medical Office Support, Clinical Medical Assistant, Health Occupation Technology, Culinary Arts, Carpentry and Electrical. To see if you qualify for the program, contact the Outreach & Admissions Department at 504-483-8093.

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Shoot Ya Best Shot!

New Orleans Fashion Week Highlights

Photos by Jamie Jones

Recognizing the common thread between designers and boutiques, Tracee Dundas created Fashion Week New Orleans that has become an amazing week of showcasing the best in fashion. It is a week chock-full of high-end runway shows, pop-up boutiques, networking opportunities and chic parties. Fashion has quickly becoming an important contributor to the New Orleans culture and is celebrated in conjunction with the city's legendary cuisine, music, art, and film. The launch of what has become a staple in the city recently held its launch party and Data News Weekly was there.



Visit www.ladatanews.com for more photos from these events

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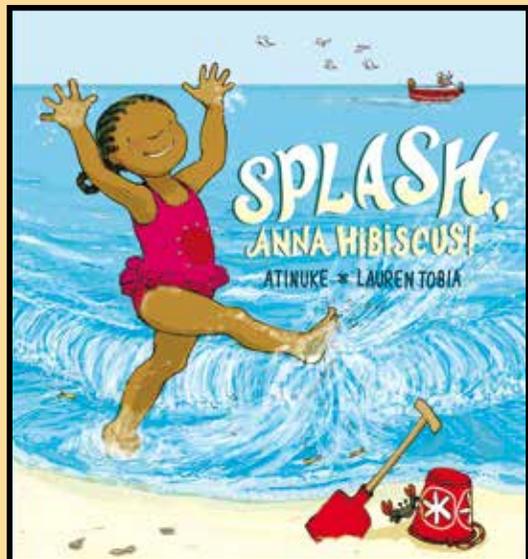
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Splash, Anna Hibiscus!



Splash, Anna Hibiscus!
By The Bookworm Sez
"Splash, Anna Hibiscus!"
by Atinuke & Lauren Tobia
c.2013, Kane Miller \$14.99 /
\$17.95 Canada 32 pages

"Look, Mom!"

You probably say that ten times a day. You want to show her something, ask a question, or just get Mom to see what you're doing. Sometimes, it's hard to get her attention, but if you're like the little girl in "Splash, Anna Hibiscus!" by Atinuke & Lauren Tobia, you might go ahead and have fun without it.

It was a beautiful, sunny day on a beach in Africa. That's where Anna Hibiscus lives, and it's where her whole family was relaxing.

Everybody was having fun. Papa was with Uncle Tunde, and they were visiting with fishermen. Some of the cousins were on their phones, some were playing soccer, and Chocolate was dumping sand on Angel. Even Mama was busy.

Anna Hibiscus watched the ocean waves as they splashed and laughed. She wanted so much to splash, too, and she wanted everyone else to come with her!

She asked Angel and Chocolate, but they were digging in the sand. They invited Anna Hibiscus to play in the sand with them, but that's not what she wanted to do.

She asked Benz and Wonderful to splash with her in the waves, but they didn't even hear her. They were playing ball with beach boys and that wasn't what Anna Hibiscus wanted to do, either.

She asked her girl cousins if they would like to go play in the waves, but Clarity, Joy, and Common Sense said they were messing with their phones and were "too big now for playing." Anna Hibiscus didn't want to hear "too big," so she stomped away to watch the laughing waves some more.

Mama was braiding hair. Auntie Joli was working beneath an umbrella. Auntie Grace was cooking corn. Papa was standing by a boat, deep in conversation and everybody knows that men don't stop talking. Even Grandmother and Grandfather were busy asleep beneath their newspapers.

Anna Hibiscus looked at the waves again. She wanted to splash in them. They wanted to splash with her, too. They were laughing and dancing. She started laughing, too.

And then Anna Hibiscus jumped....

It's been a long and difficult winter. On many occasions, I'll bet you dreamed of tropical things. So maybe now's the time to put sand between your toes, the sound of ocean in your ears, and "Splash, Anna Hibiscus!" in your hands.

If you can't tell by looking at the cover of this cute book, there's a lot of joy in the story of a little girl who just wants to play in the water. Author Atinuke and illustrator Lauren Tobia, in fact, make this one of the happiest books you'll ever read to your children: there's no pouting, no whining, just glee in what lies beyond the sand.

Just one caveat: careful parents of 3-to-7-year-olds might want to have a "don't go in the water alone" talk while reading this book. Do that, then immerse yourselves in the delight of this adorable story. For both of you, "Splash, Anna Hibiscus!" is a book you'll look at again and again.

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My Sons' Keeper

By Ron Busby, Sr.

I must admit, being a single father of two Black boys isn't easy, especially since my wife passed away 12 years ago. From breaking up fights, to discussing college and career choices, I've learned that being a good father means more than just "being there." Decisions are made, things happen, but despite the inevitable bumps in the road of parenthood, I am always proud to see how my two sons have grown into bright young men. Recently, you have heard lots about President Obama's laudable effort to ensure bright futures for America's young men of color. We agree it makes sense to use his bully pulpit to highlight the challenges faced by Black and Latino males and to galvanize solution providers around a common work plan.

What makes a lot less sense to us is how – in the face of dwindling contract awards to Black-owned businesses – we are to remain hopeful that equitable opportunity is within the grasp of Black businesses. For

sure, there is lots of happy talk in the president's proposed budget about commitments to SBA loan guarantees, certified development companies (CDCs), small business investment companies (SBICs), millions to infrastructure rehab and surface transportation projects, millions to the Minority Business Development Agency for technical assistance and money for expansion of Promise Zones designed to focus federal resources in targeted areas, both urban and rural.

Against the backdrop of these huge outlays across education, healthcare/social services, infrastructure and transportation, let's suppose that the targeted young Black and Latino males successfully scale all the hurdles facing them – that they graduate from high school, matriculate to a community college, four-year institution or trade school and set out to pursue their career aspirations. What awaits them?

Shrinking federal contract awards to Black and Hispanic-owned businesses seem to pre-

clude any opportunity at supplying their goods/services to government agencies. Kauffman Foundation researcher Alicia Robb, said in her study of SBA lending that minority borrowers are "turning to mainstream lenders less because they have a fear of denial, which is warranted." So, it appears that even commitments of loan guarantees won't be enough to open access to capital. Tuition costs are skyrocketing while low-income students face cuts in the availability of tuition assistance. Therefore, repayment without improved employment/entrepreneurial prospects will exacerbate the challenge.

To compound matters, within minutes of President Obama's announcement, his political opponents cranked up their "anti-everything-Obama" screed and pronounced "My Brother's Keeper" not only socialist, but racist, as well. While the program is decidedly neither, it may serve to distract from more immediate, short term fixes.

Growing businesses need employees. Black (and Brown) busi-

nesses, given access to the tools that fuel expansion, are far more likely to extend job opportunities to young minority males. Hence, it makes at least as much sense to expend effort to ensure that federal, state and local contracts are awarded fairly. And, as always, we will contend that healthy, growing, vibrant Black-owned businesses are the best cure for Black unemployment.

Among the more hopeful signs of support for "My Brother's Keeper" is the announcement from The Opportunity Finance Network (OFN). OFN, which represents more than 225 community development financial institutions, will pledge \$1 billion to expand financing for organizations and initiatives working to help young minority men. While Opportunity Finance Network CEO Mark Pinsky has yet to define how his organization will allocate dollars raised from network members, we will engage his organization to encourage more business lending rather than program development.

There absolutely is room in the

national marketplace for a program such as "My Brother's Keeper." The challenges faced by young, ethnic minority males are well documented. The futures of these young men – and the future well-being of the nation – deserve the kind of focused solution-searching described in the blueprint for the effort.

In the meantime, Black business owners – males and females – the daunting task of building and sustaining enterprises without the safety net implicit in "My Brother's Keeper." If we, as a nation, continue to fall short of fostering the healthy economic environment that we know is essential to long-term prosperity for all Americans, then the work of "My Brother's Keeper" shall be in vain. Let's put our actions – and dollars – where our economic futures are, for James 1:22 (KJV) says, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

Ron Busby, Sr. is president and CEO of U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. For more information about the U.S. Black Chambers, go to www.usblackchamber.org/

Thank You New Orleans



By Jason Williams
City Council At-Large Elect

Thank You. I am humbled by the overwhelming response from this City to the vision and plan that we created together. As I said from the very beginning, this was never about me but about the citizens from every community and every walk of life coming together to support change and new leadership in New Orleans. The joy that it has given me to listen to each and every one of you and discuss the issues that we face together cannot be expressed in words. I look forward to working for you and with you over the next 4 years.

This will be no easy task but as a city united behind a common objective we will work together to move forward. As always, my door will be open to each and every one of you. I encourage you, and all of my constituents, to get and stay engaged. I am here to serve you and I look forward to bringing progress to your community.

Thank you again. I cannot wait to get to work.

Jason Williams,
City Council At-Large Elect
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Do You Live in Fear of an IRS Audit?

5 Red Flags to Avoid on Your Return

By: Rick Rodgers, CFP

It is no secret that one of the biggest fears people have is receiving an audit notice from the IRS. It ranks right up there with being diagnosed with a life-threatening illness. Of course, the IRS does nothing to alleviate this fear because the more frightened you are, the less likely you will be to cheat on your taxes.

The IRS audited one out of every 104 tax returns in federal fiscal year 2013. It's becoming increasingly evident that the greater your total income, the more you'll attract the agency's attention. Last year, the IRS audited about 10.85 percent of taxpayers with income greater than \$1 million. The audit rate dropped to 0.88 percent for those with income less than \$200,000.

Some of the audits were taxpayers pulled at random. The rest of the returns are selected for examination in a variety of ways.

Lowering your IRS profile will help minimize your chances of being audited. Here are five ways to help you stay off the audit list.

1. Large Itemized Deductions: The IRS has established ranges for the amount of itemized deductions based on a taxpayer's income. Deductions that exceed the statistical "norm" for a given state and region may be red-flagged for a closer look. This does not mean that you shouldn't take legitimate deductions. Your deductions could



exceed the IRS range due to high medical expenses and large charitable contributions. Take all valid tax deductions – just be sure you keep your backup documentation.

2. Self-Employment Income: The IRS believes that the vast amount of underreported income occurs among the self-employed. Self-employed taxpayers are audited by the IRS far more frequently than those who receive a W-2 for wages. People who are employed by others and receive W-2 income but also run a business that reports a loss are especially high on the IRS radar screen. You will need to be able to prove you are operating a business with the intention of earning a profit and not just trying to write off the expenses of a hobby. You will need to be able to pass both the "passive loss" and "hobby loss" rules in or-

der for the deductions to stick.

3. Business Expenses: Big deductions for business meals, travel and entertainment are always ripe for audit. A large write-off will raise red flags if the amount seems too high for the business. Taxpayers claiming 100 percent business use of a vehicle is also a huge red flag. The IRS knows it's extremely rare for an individual to use a vehicle strictly for business. The IRS looks for personal meals or claims that don't satisfy the strict substantiation requirements.

4. Rental Properties: The IRS is scrutinizing rental real estate losses for those who claim to be real estate professionals. You must meet two requirements: 1. More than half of the personal services are performed in real property trades or businesses in which you materi-

ally participate, and 2. You perform more than 750 hours of services in real property trades or businesses in which you materially participate.

5. Home Offices: Taxpayers who operate a business from their home are entitled to deduct the portion of their home that is dedicated to operating the business. The IRS believes that many taxpayers use this deduction as a means of writing off personal expenses and carefully scrutinize tax returns that claim the home office deduction. Claiming this deduction greatly increases the chances that your tax return will be audited. You should consult a tax expert to determine if you are entitled to claim this deduction. If the tax savings are minimal you may opt not to claim the deduction simply to avoid the scrutiny. For details, see IRS Publication 587.

There is no way to completely audit-proof your return, and if you do get an audit notice from the IRS, don't take it personally. It does not mean the IRS believes your return is fraudulent. When you get a notice, pick up a copy of IRS Publication 1 "Your Rights as a Taxpayer." Be courteous and helpful without volunteering more information than what is requested. Plan ahead so that you are organized and can answer questions promptly. Ask for a postponement if you need more time to prepare.

If you are a self-employed taxpayer or have unusual circumstances that place your return outside of the statistical norm, let a professional prepare the return. Self-prepared returns are themselves more likely to be audited. The IRS believes that a non-professional has limited knowledge of the 4,000 pages of tax code.

Tax law is complex. The fee charged by an Enrolled Agent or CPA can be easily justified by the peace of mind they bring if you get the dreaded audit notice.

About Rick Rodgers: Certified Financial Planner Rick Rodgers is president of Rodgers & Associates, "The Retirement Specialists," in Lancaster, Pa., and author of "The New Three-Legged Stool: A Tax Efficient Approach to Retirement Planning." He's a Certified Retirement Counselor and member of the National Association of Personal Financial Advisers.

5 Questions to Ask Your CPA During Tax Season

Simple Strategy Changes May Boost Your Retirement Dollars, Says Financial Advisor

Many people talk to their accountant just once a year – right about now, says financial consultant Larry D. Roby.

"This is a good time to ask a few questions that may not have occurred to either you or your accountant simply because at tax time, you're both focused on the task at hand and not the bigger picture," says Roby, founder and president of Senior Financial Advisors, Inc., www.sfabridge.com.

"But, if you don't have a financial advisor, asking your accountant a few questions may help you spot places where you're unnecessarily leaking retirement

funds. Many of those leaks can be plugged with some simple changes."

Roby tells the story of a woman he worked with at the financial counseling ministry where he volunteers. She was a widow on Social Security who also received an annual disbursement of \$35,000 from her retirement plan. She didn't need the whole \$35,000, so she put a large chunk of it in CDs each year.

"She was getting hit with what I call 'the tax torpedo,'" Roby says. "That \$35,000 from her fund caused the portion of her Social Security income being taxed to jump from

zero to 85 percent. And she's also getting taxed on the whole \$35,000! Putting the extra money into CDs earning only about 1 percent interest, meant she was actually losing money."

The fix, he says, was easy.

The woman could pay no taxes on her Social Security benefits if the combined total of 1 – her adjusted gross income, 2 – nontaxable interest income and 3 – half the benefits, was less than \$25,000. If the amount was \$25,000 to \$34,000, she would likely be taxed on 50 percent of her benefits.

"By lowering her retirement fund disbursement to the amount

she actually needs, she saw a substantial tax savings," Roby says.

Such oversights are surprisingly common and can be corrected when you have the right information. If you're planning for retirement or already retired, here are the questions Roby suggests you ask your accountant:

1. Do I have to pay taxes on my Social Security benefits?
2. Is there a way to reduce or eliminate those taxes?
3. Why am I paying taxes on money I'm not spending?
4. How long will my retirement funds last based on my current withdrawals?

5. Based on my tax records, will my spouse have sufficient income after my death?

If your retirement picture is far more complicated, with a variety of taxable and non-taxable income streams, Roby says seeking the services of a financial advisor with a diversified perspective may be a worthwhile investment.

"I always recommend people to talk to an advisor who doesn't specialize in just one area, like annuities," Roby says. "If you're a hammer, everything looks like a nail. Someone equipped with lots of tools can put help you put together the best strategies for you."

Rise In Heart Attacks After Hurricane Katrina Persisted Six Years Later

Lingering stress from major disasters can damage health years later, according to a new Tulane University study that found a three-fold spike in heart attacks continued in New Orleans six years after Hurricane Katrina.

Researchers also found a lasting disruption in the timing of heart attacks in the six years after the storm with significantly more incidents occurring on nights and weekends, which are typically times hospitals see fewer admissions for heart attacks.

The research, which will be published in the journal *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*, is an update of an ongoing study tracking the increases in admissions for heart attacks at Tulane Medical Center in downtown New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. The new study confirmed the increase persisted even six years later.

"Prior to Hurricane Katrina, about 0.7 percent of the patients we



were treating in our medical center were suffering from myocardial infarctions (heart attacks)," said lead author Dr. Matthew Peters, in-

ternal medicine resident at Tulane University School of Medicine. "This increased to about 2 percent in first three years after Katrina

and continued to increase to almost 3 percent in years four through six after the storm."

The hospital had 1,177 heart at-

tack cases during the six years after the storm, representing 2.4 percent of patient admissions; only 0.7 percent of its patients were admitted for heart attacks two years before Katrina.

Researchers attribute the increase to several factors, most notably chronic stress, higher unemployment and greater risk factors for heart disease, such as increased rates of smoking, substance abuse, psychiatric disorders and noncompliance in taking prescribed medications.

"We found more patients without insurance, who were unemployed and more who had a previous history of coronary artery disease, showing us that the milieu of patients was a sicker population," said senior author Dr. Anand Irimpen, an associate professor of medicine for the Tulane Heart and Vascular Institute and chief, cardiology section, Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System.

Cover Story/ Continued from page 3.

much of new development, it may resemble Houston in some ways as far as opportunities are concerned, and a lot of our local people will see opportunities they didn't before, so I am encouraged."

Rev. Alexander lives in an up-town neighborhood where he is seeing younger Whites moving into his neighborhood. He sees this as a good thing, "I see the City changing and I think it's a good thing, but what has to happen is that local people must be prepared to take part in leading and guiding it in the right direction." As a person who's lived through the dark days of segregation he sees these new trends in the City as a positive step forward, "I am not for segregation, I don't want to live that way, I was born into that, I have traveled the world and want to live in the world community. I feel in New Orleans if we can be integrated down where tourist are, that must trickle down to everywhere else in the City if we are to truly become a world class City."

Hal Clark: Perspectives in Black and the Need for Community Engagement

Hal Clark is an Author and Playwright, but what he also known as

the longtime host of Sunday Journal, a Public Affairs Radio Program that airs on WYLD FM98. During his show he has newsmakers from all over the City discuss the issues of the day, it is also on his show that the voices of many New Orleanians are heard voicing their views on the issues of the day.

He feels that while turnout was low those who voted were engaged and understood the impact of this election on the future direction of the City, "I think what this election says more is that people are paying more attention to the issues and understanding that this is a pivotal time for the City, also in this election it seems more young people were engaged." While there sometimes seems to be polarization in the City when it comes to issues that resonate with voters Clark feels in this election the opposite effect occurred. "With this election we may see an indication of where the City is going and looking at the votes both Ramsey and Williams received is an encouraging sign that people can perhaps unite around common issues."

Clark is concerned about voter apathy and feels this is an issue that has to be dealt with if the public policy positions pro-

posed will reflect a wider spectrum of the City's population. "People have to get engaged, it behooves all of us to become more politically astute and not just think of voting as the only way to be involved. It is about citizens getting more involved in helping to shape the agenda and positions of those who are elected to represent them."

As we have seen in the last election more newer and young people are running for office, Clark is encouraged by this trend and hope it continues. "I think it is a great time for young people getting involved in politics, and doing things in the community, so when they decide they may want to run for office they've already shown a level of commitment and have a track record." But cautions against those who have not as Don Hubbard spoke about spent time working in the community. "We need young new voices who are committed to doing things better and different, but we cannot support people who just show up and say I am running for office, because the question for voters should be what have you done to deserve our vote? Ultimately, you should make a positive impact in the community before running for office."

Paul Beaulieu: Giving Voice to the Voiceless with Real Talk for Real Times

Paul Beaulieu is someone who gives voice to the voiceless as the General Manager of WBOK 1230-AM. He is also the host of a popular mid-afternoon show. Whose motto is "Real Talk for Real Times" and that is what they do every day is engage the public in a dialogue and take the temperature of the citizens in what are their concerns.

Beaulieu is pleased at the outcome of the recent elections, but feels that the low turnout numbers are unacceptable. "I am concerned that we are expecting 25 to 30% as normal turnout. This low turnout is not just about Blacks, but this level of disengagement." Chiming in on the recent election he says he sees the political tides turning with people looking for a new breed of elected officials.

"I think voters said they will not allow politics as usual and are looking for something different from their leaders."

Spending many decades as a member of the media in print, television and now radio, Beaulieu feels for citizens to become more engaged they must first

become more informed. "People have to make an attempt to stay more informed, if not we will continue to have voter apathy and the result of that the policies put forth by those in office oftentimes will not address the needs of all the people of the City, especially those who need the most help."

Beaulieu has been known to be outspoken about the present mayor and feels this council can work to place a different agenda on the table other than being a rubber stamp for Mayor Landrieu. "I am excited about this new council, because the first thing I see is independence from the Mayor's Office, and from a political agenda etc. With a five person Black majority you would hope that there is sensitivity to the needs of the African-American Community and its needs. I don't think you will see bully politics anymore that's often times been the way the present administration has sometimes operated." Continuing in his praise for the new council he says, "What I am excited about with this council is that you have young, sharp independent individuals. Many of those elected are progressive thinkers who I feel will work for equity in our community."

Parents of Slain Black Teenagers in Chicago and Jacksonville, Fla. to be Honored by Black Press in Washington, D.C.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – (NNPA) Cleopatra and Nathaniel A. Pendleton, Sr., parents of 15-year-old Hadiya Pendleton, who was fatally shot in the back while standing in a park after taking her final examination at King College Prep High School in Chicago on Jan. 29, 2013, and Ron Davis and Lucy McBath, parents of Jordan Davis, a 17-year-old who was shot to death November 23, 2012 in Jacksonville, Fla. by Michael Dunn on a convenience store parking lot after an argument over loud music being played by Davis and three teenage companions riding in a Dodge Durango sports utility vehicle, will be honored as part of Black Press Week as “Newsmakers of the Year.”

Dunn, who is White, fired 10 shots into the SUV carrying the four Black teenagers even after it was speeding away. Three of the shots struck Davis and the other seven shots missed his friends. The jury found Dunn guilty of three counts of attempted murder, but deadlocked on a second-degree murder charge in connection with Davis' death. Bullets fired by Dunn pierced Davis' liver, a lung and his aorta.

Dunn testified that he thought he saw a gun sticking out of the Dodge Durango, but no weapon was found or seen by any witnesses at the scene. Dunn never reported the shooting to police and was arrested after witnesses recorded his tag number and gave it to police.

In Chicago, Young Pendleton was killed one week after participating in the second inauguration events of President Barack Obama. First Lady Michelle Obama, whose home was just a mile away from the shooting, attended Hadiya's funeral. The president mentioned Hadiya's death in his 2013 State of the Union address as her parents sat as honored guests in the first lady's box. The two suspects arrested in connection with Hadiya's death told police that she was standing in a group that was mistaken for members of a rival gang.

“We know there's nothing anyone can do to bring back Hadiya Pendleton or Jordan Davis, but we wanted their parents to know that the nation not only mourns their loss, but rededicates itself to reducing senseless gun violence that is all too common in our communities,” said Mary G. Denson, publisher of The Windy City Word in Chicago



Cleopatra and Nathaniel A. Pendleton, Sr., parents of slain teen Hadiya Pendleton.



Ron Davis and Lucy McBath, parents of slain teen Jordan Davis.

and chair of the National Newspaper Publishers Association Foundation, the sponsor of Black Press Week.

Cloves C. Campbell, Jr., publisher of the Arizona Informant and chairman of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), a federation of approximately 200 newspapers, said: “The deaths of Hadiya and Jordan were stark reminders that all of us must redouble our efforts to rid our communities of violence. The loss of any life is a tragedy and the loss of teenagers with their future ahead of them is particularly appalling and totally unacceptable.”

The parents of the slain teens will be presented with NNPA Foundation's “Newsmaker of the Year Award” at dinner on Thursday, March 20. At that same event, former North Carolina Congressman Melvin L. Watt, the first director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, will be presented the Torch Award for Political Achievement. Rev. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr., leader of the Wilmington Ten and

president and CEO of the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network, will be presented the Torch Award for Religious Achievement.

Earlier, Thursday Charles W. Tisdale, the late publisher of the Jackson Advocate, the oldest Black-owned newspaper in Mississippi, and the late M. Paul Redd, publisher of the Westchester County (N.Y.) Press, will be inducted into the Distinguished Black Publishers Enshrinement Ceremony at Howard University. Tisdale, died in 2007 at the age of 80.

“Charles Tisdale purchased an innocuous, nearly defunct weekly newspaper in 1978, transformed it into a strident voice for African Americans and poor whites in Mississippi, then endured the wrath of those who wanted to silence the paper – and him,” the Los Angeles Times observed in an obituary. “The office of the Jackson Advocate was attacked – firebombed, riddled with bullets, burglarized, ransacked – at least 20 times over the years. Tisdale often received death threats.”

Redd, who purchased his newspaper in 1986, died Jan. 9, 2009 of a heart attack at age of 80. He wrote a column called “M. Paul Tells All” for more than 40 years. He was a major figure in Democratic politics in New York, serving as Rye City Democratic County Committeeman for 46 years. He was also vice chairman of the Westchester County Democratic Committee. Whether through his newspaper or his political activities, he was always urging African Americans to become more active in politics as a means of improving the Black community.

The NNPA will visit the office of the National Republican Committee on Wednesday to hear about their outreach efforts and visit the White House on Friday for a briefing on President Obama's “My Brother's Keeper” Black male initiative.

On the morning of Friday, March 21, a breakfast panel on confronting HIV/AIDS titled, “Black Press and the Black Pulpit,” will be moderated by Rev. Walter Silva Thompson Jr., Pastor, Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, Jamaica, N.Y. Panelists will include Rev. Dr. Kendrick E. Curry, Senior Pastor, Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church, Washington, D.C.; Rev. Dr. Lewis Brogdon, Director, Black Church Studies Program, Louisville Seminary; Rev. Yvonne Cooper, Associate Minister, Allen Chapel AME Church, Washington, D.C. and Pastor Frances “Toni” Draper, Freedom Temple AME Zion Church, Baltimore, Md.

Black Press Week activities will conclude with a luncheon Friday, March 21, at the National Press Club featuring a panel discussion on Black economic empowerment. Moderated by NNPA News Service Editor-in-Chief George E. Curry, the panel will consist of Maggie Anderson, founder of The Empowerment Experiment and author, Our Black Year, a book that catalogues the Anderson family spending a year buying only products and services produced by African Americans; Dr. William Spriggs, Chair of the Department of Economics and Howard University and former Assistant Secretary of Labor in the Obama administration, and Dr. Valerie Ralston Wilson, newly-appointed Director of the Program on Race, Ethnicity, and the Economy at the Economic Policy Institute in Washington, D.C.

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