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News Weekly

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# Cullen Jones

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# Cullen Jones

## Making a Splash and Saving Lives

*Olympic Gold Medal Swimmer Reaches Out to Youth*



2008 Olympic Medalist Cullen Jones. Jones was a member of the team that won the 4X100 freestyle relay.

By Edwin Buggage

### Learning an Important Life Lesson

As we near the 2012 Summer Olympics in London there will be a young African-American who will be competing for his second gold medal. To look at Cullen Jones with his lean frame and standing 6 feet 5 inches tall one would assume he was a basketball player. But Jones has become to the sport of swimming what Tiger Woods is to golf. A person of color who is a champion competing at the highest level in a sport with few African-Americans, and he is a champion both inside and outside of the pool as he is committed to giving back to his community. After winning Olympic gold, he soon partnered with the USA Swimming Foundation and Conoco Phillips for the Make a Splash Initiative and Tour; Where Jones goes to different cities to promote water safety and with his partners give a 5000 dollar grant to give free swim lessons to local children.

Learning to swim is important to Jones because of an incident that occurred when he was five years old. Recounting this moment that changed his life he says, "When I was five-years old I always loved being near the water and my parents took me to an amusement park and I almost drowned." Continuing he says dispelling one of the myths about drowning, "People think that drowning usually happens when no one is around, but in this case my parents they were there as well as the lifeguard; so I ended up going underwater and when they resuscitated me my mom got me swimming lessons immediately. After my incident she was even more adamant about me getting lessons so that I would have the tools to be safe around the water."

While it is summer and pools and water parks are now bustling places with people enjoying the water, being safe is important especially for young children, "Drowning is the second leading cause of death in children; and we feel it is a life skill that is important. Unlike other sports it is something that can save your life," says Mariah Cunnick, Director of Development of the USA Swimming Foundation. She is excited that Cullen Jones is the face of such a noteworthy cause and says he is a perfect fit also recounting his story and how he can inspire youth, "We think Cul-

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After winning Olympic gold, Jones partnered with the USA Swimming Foundation and Conoco Phillips for the Make a Splash Initiative and tour. Jones travels to different cities promoting water safety providing free swim lessons to local children.

len is a great person for the Make A Splash Initiative because when he was five-years old he nearly drowned and he is such a story of success. We also know that 70% of African-American kids do not know how to swim and that is something that resonates with Cullen and he is committed to making sure that all citizens realize it is important. We realize that when kids learn how to swim the likelihood of them drowning is reduced by 88%, so Cullen knows what he's doing is saving lives."

### The Making of a Champion

Jones has been swimming competitively since he was eight-years old. And in those two decades he has become part of a team that won the 4X100 Freestyle Relay on a team that included eight gold medal winner and swimming phenomenon Michael Phelps. Of being an African-American he talks about his journey from a young boy learning to swim to becoming a champion, inspiration and trailblazer, "It was a different experience competing in a sport like swimming, and I guess others like Tiger Woods, or Venus and Serena Williams had to deal with some of the same things as African-American competing in sports like golf and tennis." Con-

tinuing talking about his journey and some of the obstacles with race prejudice, but noting it was something that did not deter him from striving to be the best, "The first team I was on was a minority team of Hispanics and African-Americans. Then eventually I started swimming at the Jewish Community Center where I was clearly the only African-American. And yes I experienced racism but it was not with my teammates it was the people we were swimming against; and they would say ugly things to me and it may have been a mix of their closed racial attitudes and poor sportsmanship when I would win, but I used some of their negative energy as fuel to make me better."

The skills that one learn in sports can be used in many areas of life says Jones, "We are doing two a days in competitive swimming and it definitely taught me time management and how to focus and personally I have to say I was never a child prodigy. I had to practice, and I took baby steps in my career." Speaking of the role his parents played in laying the foundation for his life he says, "My mother and father taught me to set goal for myself and once I reached a goal; I set another goal and so forth and I think that

is the basis of my success." Cullen says of his life he has always been inwardly focused and while competing against others he is mostly striving to be the best he can be first and foremost, "I never thought I had to be the best in the world or I wasn't anything," he says, adding that there are many things he has learned in sports that has helped him in many areas of his life, "I don't think that taking this approach only works in sports but in anything you want to do in life," says Jones.

### Making History... Making a Splash and Impacting Lives

2008 was a historic year as Barack Obama became the nation's first African-American President and in the same year Cullen Jones became only the second African-American to win a Gold Medal in swimming at the Olympic games, "It was a great feeling and before the race I was very nervous, but the biggest thing I had to focus on is what I was doing," says Jones recalling this historic day. Continuing he says, "It wasn't that the pool had gotten any longer, it's not that my race had to change, I just had to go there and do what I had to do and then we won. I was the first one jumping up and ran

over to the other guys it was surreal, we overcame the odds, we saw the French team was faster than us on paper but as a team we knew we were better, so there was in no part of our mind that I did not think we couldn't win." As he stood receiving his gold medal in Beijing he recalls his feelings of his country and his place in history, "When we won it completely changed my view of what the national anthem meant, standing on the podium being first I was the proudest American than anyone."

During his stop in New Orleans on his Make A Splash Tour he spoke with kids and then gave a swim class for young people. Through the funds they are giving 100 local young people free swim lessons; to date the program has reached over 1,200,000 young people. And in a City where many people died because they could not swim this is an important skill that could have saved lives. While spending time in the City for the first time Jones was able to see some of the wreckage that still lies in parts of New Orleans nearly seven years after Hurricane Katrina.

But in spite the abysmal state of some parts of the City he was able to see the City's best asset and that is the resilience of its

citizens who are the heartbeat of the City keeping it alive. On the people and the City he says "To the people of New Orleans I say you have shown the world what it means to say never to give up. I have seen so many families trying to put their lives back together, but there is one thing I've also seen is the people still have a smile on their faces." Continuing his praise of the citizens of the City he says, "For a community that has been through so much they are still strong, I say continue to keep up the hope and belief and things will get better." On the mission of Make a Splash and its importance particularly in New Orleans he says, "One of the big reasons we came to the City is because of Katrina and understanding many people died because they could not swim. And it is important for kids to learn to swim and adult as well for there may be a time where it may save your life or the life of one of your love ones." Cullen Jones is a person who has overcome the odds and became a champion, and now is making a splash by giving back, not just by making history by winning a gold medal, but with his heart of gold that is impacting lives.

# Morial Warns Louisiana Supreme Court Not To Violate Federal Law: Insists Bernette Johnson is the Rightful Chief Justice

Earlier this week, National Urban League President and CEO Marc H. Morial asserted that the seniority of Louisiana Supreme Court Associate Justice Bernette Johnson is clear, and any effort to deny her the position of Chief justice would violate a federal consent decree, the Voting Rights Act and the civil rights laws of the United States - as well as all the express provisions of Act 512 of the 1992 Louisiana Legislature.

"Justice Johnson's presence on the Supreme Court in 1994 represented a victory over Louisiana's dark history of racial gerrymandering," Morial said. "Invalidating her years on the Court not only would be an affront, it would be an outright breach of federal law and a return to the dark days of racial gerrymandering."



Louisiana Supreme Court Justice Bernette Johnson

The seat Johnson won in 1994, while technically on the 4th Circuit Court of Appeal, was af-

forded all the rights, privileges and emoluments of a seat on the Supreme Court under both a federal consent decree and Act 512 of the 1992 Louisiana Legislature, intended to remedy a racially discriminatory judicial election system.

That includes seniority, Morial said.

Justice Johnson functioned as Acting Chief Justice during the period of absence by Chief Justice Catherine Kimball, and both Justice Johnson and the late Justice Revis Ortique were fully recognized in seniority in all respects since the settlement was effectuated in 1992.

"For the Supreme Court even to countenance that anyone other than Justice Johnson is the rightful Chief Justice is surprising, il-

logical and blatantly illegal," Morial said.

Morial was chair of the plaintiffs committee in *Chisom v. Edwards*, which was settled in 1992 with the creation of a Supreme Court district to allow a fair opportunity for African American representation. The Justice Department of then-President George H.W. Bush signed off on the arrangement which gave that seat the full rights of a Supreme Court Judgeship.

Morial also was a member of the State Senate team that negotiated the settlement with then-Attorney General Richard Ieyoub and members of the Supreme Court. Additionally, Morial co-sponsored the legislation that effectuated the terms of the settlement.

"The Chisom consent decree represents a hard-won victory for

equality under the law, and those of us who fought that battle will not stand by and see the rights of Louisiana citizens trampled," Morial said.

The National Urban League is a historic civil rights organization dedicated to economic empowerment in order to elevate the standard of living in historically underserved urban communities. Founded in 1910 and headquartered in New York City, the National Urban League spearheads the efforts of its local affiliates through the development of programs, public policy research and advocacy. Today, there are nearly 100 local affiliates in 36 states and the District of Columbia, providing direct services that impact and improve the lives of more than 2 million people nationwide.

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## Al Sharpton to Receive Humanitarian Honor at 2012 BET Awards

The Rev. Al Sharpton, leader of the National Action Network, will be honored with a humanitarian award at the BET annual awards show at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles July 1, the network announced.

BET said Sharpton will receive the 2012 Humanitarian Award for his commitment to political activism and social reform over the last five decades.

"As the Founder and President of the National Action Network, Sharpton continues to raise awareness about civil rights and political issues, and actively takes a stand against prejudice and injustice for all people-no matter one's race, gender, sexual orientation or political affiliation," the network said in a release.

BET's president of music programming Stephen Hill praised Sharpton's service and highlighted his efforts this year in attempting to bring forth justice in the Trayvon Martin case, according to the New York Daily News.

"What he does better than anyone else is, he gives a voice to the voiceless," Hill said. "Trayvon Martin is the most recent example."

Hill added that while the BET Awards primarily honors entertainers, he believes it's important to highlight the work of community leaders like Sharpton.

"It's important for us to honor not just entertainers, but also people who are excelling in their service...people who give back," Hill said. "It's to be celebrated."

Past honorees of the Humanitarian award include Steve Harvey, John Legend, Alicia Keys, Denzel Washington and Muhammad Ali, among many others.

Box office superstar Samuel L. Jackson will host this year's awards ceremony and artists Usher, Chris Brown and Nicki Minaj will perform.

After hearing the news of his imminent award, Sharpton announced that he will dedicate it to his mom Ada, who died in March.

## The American Red Cross and NORDC Host Free Swimming Lessons and Water Aerobics Classes for Adults



The American Red Cross Southeast Louisiana Chapter and the New Orleans Recreation Development Commission (NORDC) provides opportunities for adults to achieve success and build confidence in swimming at all skill levels through a variety of programs. Join us at the Gentilly Stallings Pool in New Orleans for a demonstration of a swimming lesson and water aerobics class for adults.

No matter what your age, there are swim skills to learn and enjoy. Swimming is a wonderful fitness activity, enhancing cardiovascular fitness while increasing muscle strength and endurance.

To join the free swimming lessons for adults or the free water aerobics classes visit the following NORDC facilities: Whitney Young Pool, Lyons Center Pool, Behrman Pool, Joe Brown Pool, Stallings Gentilly Pool and St. Bernard Pool.

Call the American Red Cross at 504-620-3135 for more information.

Swimming lessons for adults are on Mondays and Fridays 5:00p.m. to 6:00p.m.

Water aerobics classes for adults are on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 5:00p.m. to 6:00p.m.

## GREATER Joy Comes Downtown to Historic Canal Street

Greater St. Stephen Full Gospel Baptist Church expands its mission of ministry to downtown New Orleans as the Joy Theater opens its doors for Sunday morning church services. Beginning Sunday, July 8th at 11:30am GREATER Joy worship experiences will take place at the renowned Joy Theater, 1200 Canal St. at the corner of Canal St. and Elk Pl.

Pastor Debra B. Morton said, "Need Joy? We are on a mission to meet the needs of people, which is one of the main purposes of the church. Downtown New Orleans has much to offer locals and tourists by way of shopping, great restaurants, the French Quarter, neighborhood living, nightlife and now a life-changing GREATER Joy church worship experience. Our goal is to spread joy and to participate in the resurgence that's taking place in the area!"

Locals and tourists will be

welcomed with open arms to the Sunday morning joy services. Greater St. Stephen ministries currently serves as host to tourists from all over the world on a weekly basis. The ministry has formed relationships with local travel agencies and tour companies, which in turn promotes the church's Sunday morning services to their clients. "We've found out by way of tourists that our cab drivers even recommend our church to visitors as a possible place of worship. So the fact that the GREATER Joy experience will be conveniently located on Canal Street's streetcar line and be accessible to bus drop off locations will offer easy access and convenience to tourists and locals in the area" said Pastor Morton.

Everyone can come receive joy. From the neighborhood residents, hotel guests and employees, homeless, hospital

district employees, Bourbon St. party goers, Canal St. shoppers etc. Greater St. Stephen won't discriminate. We are in the business of making a positive difference in the lives of people.

For more than 70 years, Greater St. Stephen Full Gospel Baptist Church has been a catalyst for change and spiritual advancement not only in New Orleans, LA but also in the world. Over the decades, Greater St. Stephen under its visionaries, Bishop Paul S. Morton, Sr. and Dr. Debra B. Morton has been known as the largest Pentecostal congregation in Louisiana.

Post-Katrina with Dr. Debra B. Morton as Senior Pastor, Greater St. Stephen is now declaring that "Greater, Is Not Just Who We Are...It's What We Do!" and inviting everyone to come and "Discover A Greater You!" For more information, visit [www.gssmin.org](http://www.gssmin.org)

## Need a Job?

Thousands of jobs in the Recovery Efforts;  
Join Us and Get on the Call List for Jobs!

Call 1-800-239-7379 to Register.

**A Community Voice Meeting**

**Hire NOLA**

Thursday June 28<sup>th</sup>

6:30pm -8:30pm

First Grace United Methodist Church  
3401 Canal Street

**Register for jobs**, and meet with a free lawyer

about wage & hour disputes.

Let's Fight for Residents to get them!

**Many Residents are Angry that there are no Blacks or Local People at these Job Sites.**

**Bring your ID, Proof of Residency if you need to sign up for a job! Minority Contractors sign up to speak out against job discrimination.**



**A Community Voice**

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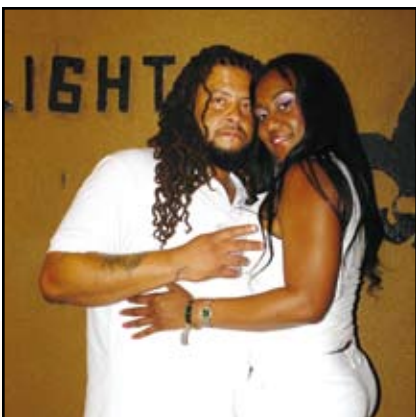
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# Shoot Ya Best Shot!

## Solid Partners White Party

Photos by Glenn Summers

Solid Partners is fast becoming known for bringing first-class entertainment to the Crescent City. Their most recent event was a White Party that featured the lovely songstress of soul Chante' Moore, and Data News was in the building.



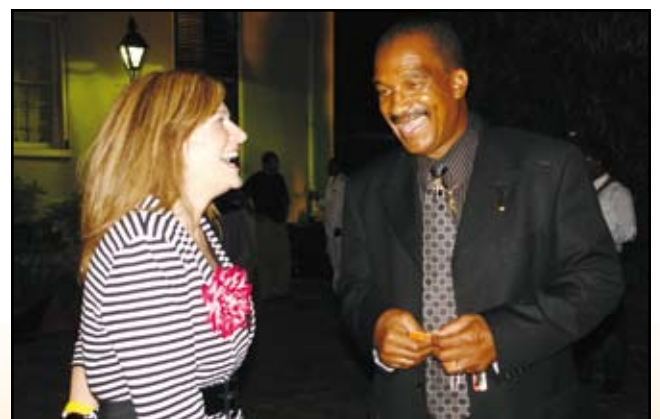
If you have photos of parties or events you would like to run in DATA, please send to [datanewsad@bellsouth.net](mailto:datanewsad@bellsouth.net) for inclusion.

# Shoot Ya Best Shot!

## Annual Juneteenth Celebration

Photos by Glenn Summers

The Annual Juneteenth Celebration took place at the African-American Museum. Many were on hand for this great event and Data News Weekly was there!



If you have photos of parties or events you would like to run in DATA, please send to [datanewsad@bellsouth.net](mailto:datanewsad@bellsouth.net) for inclusion.

# Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill

## *Economic and Property Damages Settlement* Providing Money to Individuals and Businesses

If you have economic loss or property damage because of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, you could get money from a class action settlement with BP Exploration & Production Inc. and BP America Production Company (“BP”). Go to [DeepwaterHorizonSettlements.com](http://DeepwaterHorizonSettlements.com) for more information, including information on how to file a claim.

### **WHO IS INCLUDED IN THE ECONOMIC & PROPERTY DAMAGES SETTLEMENT?**

The Economic and Property Damages (“E&PD”) Settlement Class includes people, businesses, and other entities in the states of Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi, and certain counties in Texas and Florida, that were harmed by the oil spill. The website [DeepwaterHorizonSettlements.com](http://DeepwaterHorizonSettlements.com) has detailed descriptions and maps to help you determine whether a geographic location may be included in the E&PD Settlement. Additionally, you can call 1-866-992-6174 or e-mail questions@[DeepwaterHorizonEconomicSettlement.com](mailto:DeepwaterHorizonEconomicSettlement.com) to find out if a geographic location is included.

### **WHAT DOES THE ECONOMIC & PROPERTY DAMAGES SETTLEMENT PROVIDE?**

The E&PD Settlement makes payments for the following types of claims: (1) Seafood Compensation, (2) Economic Damage, (3) Loss of Subsistence, (4) Vessel Physical Damage, (5) Vessels of Opportunity Charter Payment, (6) Coastal Real Property Damage, (7) Wetlands Real Property Damage, and (8) Real Property Sales Damage. There is no limit on the total dollar amount of the E&PD Settlement; all qualified claims will be paid.

### **HOW TO GET BENEFITS FROM THE ECONOMIC & PROPERTY DAMAGES SETTLEMENT**

You need to submit a Claim Form to request a payment. You can get a copy of the various Claim Forms by visiting the website or by calling 1-866-992-6174. Claims can be submitted online or by mail. If you have questions

about how to file your claim, you should call the toll-free number for assistance.

The deadline to submit most E&PD claims will be April 22, 2014 or six months after the E&PD Settlement becomes effective (that is, after the Court grants “final approval” and any appeals are resolved), whichever is later. There will be an earlier deadline to submit E&PD Seafood Compensation claims. The earlier deadline to submit Seafood Compensation claims will be 30 days after final approval of the Settlement by the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana (regardless of appeals). Actual claim filing deadlines will be posted on the website as they become available. Valid claims will be paid as they are approved, beginning shortly after the Court-Supervised Settlement Program commences. It is highly recommended that E&PD Settlement Class Members complete and submit their claim forms promptly. Please read the Medical Benefits Settlement notice because you may also be eligible for benefits from that settlement.

### **YOUR OTHER OPTIONS**

If you do not want to be legally bound by the E&PD Settlement, you must Opt Out or exclude yourself by **October 1, 2012** or you won’t be able to sue BP over certain economic and property damage claims. If you stay in the E&PD Settlement, you may object to it by **August 31, 2012**. The Detailed Notice explains how to exclude yourself or object.

The Court will hold a hearing on **November 8, 2012** to consider whether to approve the E&PD Settlement. You or your own lawyer may ask to appear and speak at the hearing at your own cost. The Court will also consider Class Counsel fees, costs, and expenses including an interim payment of \$75 million and additional awards equal to 6% of class claims and benefits paid. Class Counsel fees, costs and expenses under the Economic and Property Damages Settlement Agreement and the Medical Benefits Settlement Agreement jointly cannot exceed \$600 million. Class members’ payments will not be reduced if the Court approves the payment of Class Counsel fees, costs, and expenses because BP will separately pay these attorney fees, costs, and expenses.

**DeepwaterHorizonSettlements.com • 1-866-992-6174**



# Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill

## *Medical Benefits Settlement*

### Providing Benefits to Clean-Up Workers and Certain Gulf Coast Residents

If you have a medical claim related to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, you could get benefits from a class action settlement with BP Exploration & Production Inc. and BP America Production Company (“BP”). Go to [DeepwaterHorizonSettlements.com](http://DeepwaterHorizonSettlements.com) for more information, including information on how to file a claim.

#### **WHO IS INCLUDED IN THE MEDICAL BENEFITS SETTLEMENT?**

The Medical Class includes (1) clean-up workers and (2) certain people who resided in specific geographic areas in coastal and wetlands areas along the Gulf Coast during specific periods in 2010. The website [DeepwaterHorizonSettlements.com](http://DeepwaterHorizonSettlements.com) has detailed descriptions and maps to help you determine whether a geographic location may be included in one of these zones. Additionally, you can call 1-866-992-6174 or e-mail [info@DeepwaterHorizonMedicalSettlement.com](mailto:info@DeepwaterHorizonMedicalSettlement.com) to find out if a geographic location is included.

#### **WHAT DOES THE MEDICAL BENEFITS SETTLEMENT PROVIDE?**

The benefits of the Medical Benefits Settlement include: (1) payments to qualifying people for certain acute (short-term) and chronic (ongoing) medical conditions occurring after exposure to oil or chemical dispersants; (2) provision of periodic medical examinations to qualifying people; and (3) creation of a Gulf Region Health Outreach Program, consisting of projects to strengthen the healthcare system. Benefits (1) and (2) will be provided only after the Court grants final approval and any appeals are resolved.

#### **HOW TO GET BENEFITS FROM THE MEDICAL BENEFITS SETTLEMENT**

You need to submit a Claim Form to request benefits. You can get a copy of the Claim Form by visiting the website or by calling 1-866-992-6174. Claims can

be submitted by mail. If you have questions about how to file your claim, you should call the toll-free number for assistance.

The deadline for filing a Claim Form is one year after the Medical Benefits Settlement becomes effective (that is, after the Court grants “final approval” and any appeals are resolved). The exact date of the claim filing deadline will be posted on the website. It is highly recommended that Medical Class Members complete and submit their claim forms promptly. Please read the Economic and Property Damages Settlement notice because you may also be eligible for a payment from that settlement.

#### **YOUR OTHER OPTIONS**

If you do not want to be legally bound by the Medical Benefits Settlement, you must Opt Out or exclude yourself by **October 1, 2012** or you won’t be able to sue BP over certain medical claims. If you stay in the Medical Benefits Settlement, you may object to it by **August 31, 2012**. The Detailed Notice explains how to exclude yourself or object.

The Court will hold a hearing on **November 8, 2012** to consider whether to approve the Medical Benefits Settlement. You or your own lawyer may ask to appear and speak at the hearing at your own cost. Class Counsel will ask the Court to consider an award of fees, costs, and expenses of 6% of the value of the benefits actually provided under the Medical Benefits Settlement Agreement. Class Counsel fees, costs, and expenses under the Medical Benefits Settlement Agreement and the Economic and Property Damages Settlement Agreement jointly cannot exceed \$600 million. Class members’ payments will not be reduced if the Court approves the payment of Class Counsel fees, costs, and expenses because BP will separately pay these attorney fees, costs, and expenses.

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# Rodney King Symbolized Police Brutality



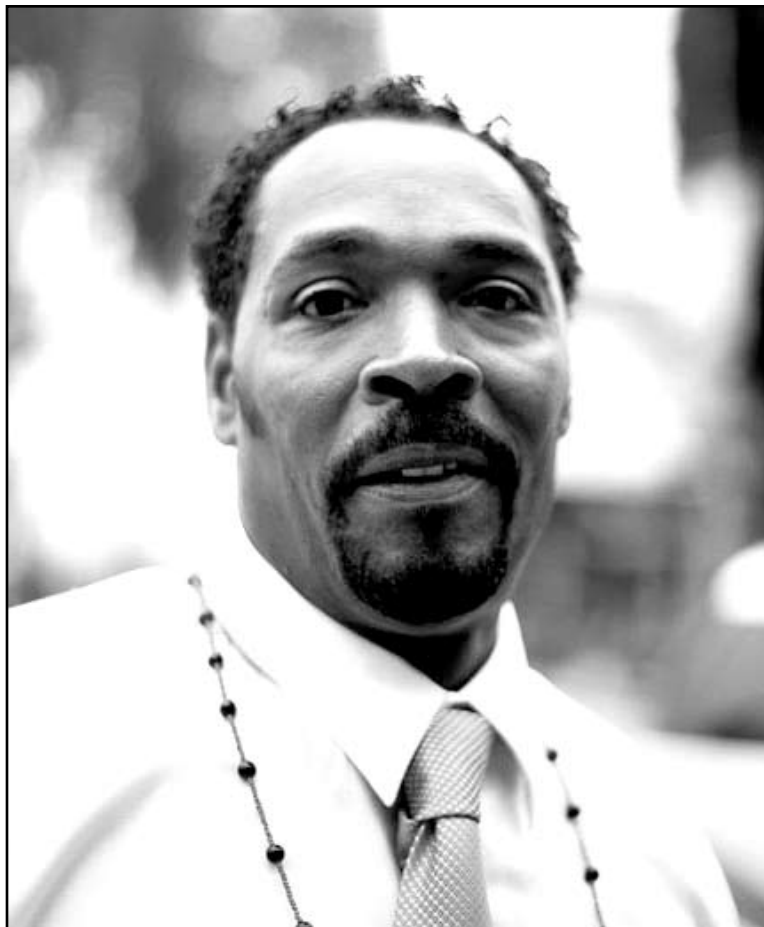
**George C. Curry**  
 NNPA Columnist

unemployed construction worker, forced America to see what many did not want to believe existed – police officers, hiding behind a badge and a gun, brutalizing citizens who pose no immediate threat to them or the public.

King was found dead early Sunday morning at the bottom of his swimming pool at his home in Rialto, Calif. No foul play was suspected.

His entry into the national spotlight has its roots in an incident that took place in 1989. King robbed a grocery store in Monterey Park, Calif. He took \$200 and was sentenced to two years in prison. On the night of March 2, 1991, following hours of drinking with friends, King was spotted speeding in the San Fernando Valley area of Los Angeles. When cops tried to pull him over, he tried to elude them by driving even faster, up to 100 miles per hour, fearing that he would go back to jail for violating his parole.

After a high-speed chase joined by other officers, King was cornered and ordered out of his vehicle. The two passengers accompanying him, Bryant Allen and Freddie Helms, immediately complied with the order to exit the car and lie face down on the ground. King delayed his exit and when he emerged, he acted strangely, waving at police helicopters that had been part of the chase and



Rodney King

Rodney King would be the first to tell you that he was no Martin Luther King, Jr. or Malcolm X. His lifelong bout with alcohol and drugs – battles that he always seemed to lose – and frequent run-ins with police did not qualify him for icon status. Yet, that's what he achieved in 1991 at the age of 27 because of one video clip. It was graphic footage filmed by a bystander showing at least four Los Angeles policemen savagely kicking and beating King with police batons, landing at least 50 blows as the unarmed King was sprawled on the ground or struggling to stand up.

In the video, the officers were seen teeing off on King as though they were holding baseball bats or golf clubs. Several other officers stood around, doing nothing to halt the repeated assault on the helpless King.

More than any other event, the brutal beating of Rodney King, an

giggling uncontrollably.

Sgt. Stacey Koon, the supervising officer, fired a Taser into King's back, causing him to drop to his knees. Officer Laurence Powell hit King in the head, knocking him to ground, and continued striking King. Other officers moved in as

well, pummeling King with their night sticks. After being struck 56 times and kicked a half-dozen times, King was handcuffed and dragged to the side of the road on his stomach to await the arrival of an ambulance. King later reported that he had suffered 11 skull fractures, permanent brain damage, kidney damage and broken bones and teeth.

Four of the officers – Koon, Powell, Timothy Wind and Theodore Briseno – were charged with excessive use of force. The trial was switched from Los Angeles to Simi Valley, a largely White community in Ventura County. On April 29, 1992, a jury that contained no African Americans acquitted three of the officers and was unable to reach a verdict on a fourth.

Los Angeles exploded upon hearing the verdict. At the end of six days of unrest, there were 53 deaths, 2,383 injuries and property damage was nearly \$1 billion.

In an effort to end the violence, Rodney King appeared in public to utter his now famous, "Can we all get along?"

After the Los Angeles prosecutor failed to win a conviction against the four officers, the federal government obtained indict-

ments charging the officers with violating the civil rights of King. Koon and Stacey were found guilty and sentenced to 32 months in prison; Wind and Briseno were acquitted. The city of Los Angeles settled a civil suit brought by Rodney King for \$3.8 million.

Later, it became clear that the Rodney King beating was not an aberration.

Feb. 4, 1999 – Amadou Diallo was killed by New York City police officers who claimed they thought he was reaching for a gun. Four officers were indicted for second-degree murder, but were acquitted.

Sept. 2, 2005 – Following Hurricane Katrina, Henry Glover was shot to death while near a strip mall shopping for baby clothing. Two cops were sentenced to more than 15 years in prison for shooting Glover, tossing his body into a car and setting it on fire.

Nov. 26, 2006 – Three unarmed Black men, including Sean Bell, were shot a total of 50 times by New York police officers. Bell, who had been celebrating at his bachelor's party, died in the hail of bullets. Three officers charged with manslaughter were acquitted.

Jan. 1, 2009 – Oscar Grant was shot in the back by Officer Johannes Mehserle while on the ground at a train station in Oakland, Calif. The officer was found guilty of involuntary manslaughter, but served only 11 months in prison.

There are dozens, if not hundreds, of cases similar to the ones above. Thanks to Rodney King, the public is not as quick to believe police officers who abuse their power and violate public trust.

George E. Curry, former editor-in-chief of *Emerge* magazine, is editor-in-chief of the National Newspaper Publishers Association News Service (NNPA) and editorial director of *Heart & Soul* magazine. He is a keynote speaker, moderator, and media coach. Curry can be reached through his Web site, [www.georgecurry.com](http://www.georgecurry.com). You can also follow him at [www.twitter.com/currygeorge](http://www.twitter.com/currygeorge).

**Read more:** <http://www.nnpa.org/news/commentary/rodney-king-symbolized-police-brutality-by-george-e-curry/#ixzz1yGgALdas>

## To The Editor

# Jobs for NOLA Residents!

Dear Editor,

As you know there are millions in Recovery dollars for projects all over New Orleans. Many residents are angry that there appear to be no residents or Black people working at many of these locations.

It is necessary to take a stand and plan actions, for those of us who support the hiring of local residents hired for Good Jobs.

Please do what you can and help to win jobs for Residents

(according to % by race, gender and disability).

1. Please Send anyone looking for a job to the HIRE NOLA Campaign Hearing Thurs., June 28, 6:30 p.m. at First Grace Methodist Church, 3401 Canal at Jeff Davis

2. Register to get on the HIRE NOLA Campaign phone and email list for all Upcoming Actions: 504-941-2852 or email me please.

We have been told by City officials that there is no list of resi-

dents, including Job 1, that the Contractors can use, so we have developed our own database. We need more names in the database.

Job applicants are asked to come to the hearing, and to register. They will be placed in the jobs database.

Thank you and God Bless you, Beulah Labostrie, President E. and Vanessa Gueringer, Vice Pres. A Community Voice

## Master Gardener's Corner

# A Rose By Any Other Name Would Still Be Easy To Grow!



By MG Calla Victoria

The rose is the official flower of the United States of America; it received that designation in September of 1986. We associate the rose with romance and roses are received or given on our most memorable occasions like Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, any occasion where someone is honored, or when we are trying to make up for the wrong we've done.

The rose is a woody perennial (comes back each year) of the genus *Rosa*, within the family Rosaceae. The genus *Rosa* originated in Africa some 60 to 70 million years ago and from there spread over the entire Northern Hemisphere. The yellow rose which is a symbol of friendship, was said to have been given to Eve by Christ in the Garden of Eden, this little tidbit is soon to be revealed in a new book called "The Truth Concealed," about the lost books of the Bible.

There are over 150 species of roses with growing habits which includes climbing roses, rambles, bushes, hedges, and groundcovers. Most roses have thorns but a few species are thorn-less, most rose bushes are deciduous (meaning they drop all of their leaves in the winter), while other varieties are evergreen. The two main classifications are Grandiflora and Floribunda. Grandiflora roses are recognized for their large single blooms on long stems. A Grandiflora rose bush will range between 4 and 6 feet tall. The Grandiflora rose bloom is what you find at the florist, and what we call "long-stemmed roses." While the Floribunda rose blooms are small and on short stems but come out in clusters that look like small bouquets; and grow as compact

bushes ranging from 2 to 4 feet tall, depending on the variety. These roses are not great as cut arrangements because of their very short stems, but they provide any garden with an explosion of blossoms all season long.

Roses do get a bad rap however as many say roses are hard to grow. I felt the very same way because I too had murdered a few rose bushes in my day, and that was only because I did not know what roses really needed. Roses DO NOT like to be wet and they love full sun. Too much watering will definitely drown your roses, in fact the only time you really have to water a rose bush in New Orleans is when we have gone a couple of weeks without rain. Place yours in a sunny spot and let them thrive. Roses really do not do well in shade gardens however there are a few varieties that will take some shade.

There is one exception to the drought-tolerant habit of most rose bushes and that is the Peggy Martin Rose. This rose is a climbing Floribunda bush which creates an amazing sea of cluster blooms when it is in season. After Hurricane Katrina the Peggy Martin Rose was re-named the "Katrina Rose" or "Hurricane Rose" because it was the only rose bush in the entire rose garden at the New Orleans Botanical Garden to survive the flood waters of Hurricane Katrina. It sat for about 4 weeks in all of that murky water and survived. So Peggy Martin rose bushes, no you cannot ever water them too much.

Roses do have a few little annoyances. They are prone to "black spot," a fungus that is so named because black spots appear on the leaves of the rose

bush. However there are several products on the market to treat the problem. Also in most cases you do have to dead-head your roses. This means that after the bloom is spent, then you snip that bud off just above the next pair of leaves. Sniping just above a leaf formation is the proper way to prune any plant, that way your bush never looks like something is missing and there are no blunt branches jutting out from your plant. Now if you just can't see yourself dead-heading roses, ain't gonna happen, then there is still a rose for you. The Knockout Rose is the newest hybrid and all the rage in the rose world. This rose bush is self-cleaning (no dead-heading required), disease free (no black spot, ya heard me), and it is drought-tolerant to boot!

After all of your hard work remember to enjoy your roses, the more you prune them the more blooms you will have. The bloom is the final phase in the cycle of all plants except for fruiting plants, so if you prune off the bloom then the plant begins to push out other blooms to complete the life cycle. I have twenty-two rose bushes so I guess it is okay to say that I have a rose garden, and everything is blooming like crazy right now. So I am always cutting my flowers and bringing them inside for flower arrangements, when those blooms are spent I collect the petals and create a luxurious spa bubble bath with those lovely fragrant petals suspended atop the bubbles. When I have friends coming over I sprinkle fresh rose petals in front of my door and down the walkway just to make my guests feel like royalty, and aromatic rose petals sprinkled on satin sheets always

guarantees sweet dreams.

The intoxicating fragrance of roses is coveted by many cosmetic and perfume manufacturers however the most important use of roses is in medicine! For ages people have been well aware of the positive effects of roses and things made from its petals. Roses, especially rose hips, are very rich in vitamin C and have been used in cooking and medicine for centuries. The rose hip is the tasty looking sweet smelling bud type fruit that buds on the bush after the roses themselves have died away. They are harvested to make all sorts of things from jam and jelly to extract oil and even vitamin pills! Roses are also used for protection, now how can a sweet little rose protect you? Along your back fences, as opposed to unsightly barbed wire, plant rose bushes instead. Their blooms are beautiful, the fragrance is sweet, but those thorns are nasty!

A rose is a rose, there is too much to say and my space is limited, so look out for Part 2 on Roses next week. In that article we get into detail on selecting, planting, and propagating roses.

Send photos of you and your garden to [datanewseditor@bellsouth.net](mailto:datanewseditor@bellsouth.net) if you would like to have your garden considered for "Data's Garden of the Week." We are currently updating our website, when that is done you will be able to send me your gardening questions, and check out a new gardening tip each week.

Never get too busy to stop and enjoy the beautiful flowers!

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