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on the boards ...from M-24

3.

THE GREEN, GOLD & PURPLE SHUFFLE. Various locations, 891.6815 — Cripple Creek Theatre Company presents a play by Andrew Kingsley and An-

drew Vaught about a how campaign for Parks Commissioner of New Orleans is rudely interrupted by David Duke. Call for tickets and details. Through Feb. 20.

HATS!: The New Musical for the Rest of Your Life. Harrah's New Orleans Casino, Canal Street, 593.8008 — Inspired

by the phenomenon of the Red Hat society, with songs by Melissa Manchester, Gretchen Cryer, Amanda McBroom and Carol Hall. Lynn Taylor-Corbett directs and choreographs Sharon McKnight, Maxine Weldon, Terry Palasz, Carrie Saloutos, Patricia Welch, Barbara Lauren, Lynda Reed, Cory Elias and Constance Lawton. Tickets \$44-\$69. 7pm Thursday-Friday, 2 and 7pm Saturday, 2 and 5pm Sunday. Through Apr. 25.

I KNOW WHAT IT MEANS.... Le Chat Noir, 715 St. Charles Ave., 581-5812 — Ricky Graham's back with a brand new show, an evening of good, old-fashioned, real New Orleans laughs and songs. Tickets \$29 (includes \$5 bar credit). 8pm Friday-Saturday, 6pm Sunday. Through Feb. 9.

THE PAPAYA MAN. Anthony Bean Community Theater, 1333 S. Carrollton Ave., New Orleans, 862.7529 — A world premiere of Phyllis M. Clemons' romantic comedy set in an employment agency on Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard. Anthony Bean directs Marie Slade Weatherspoon, Michael Martin, Donna King, Anastacia Scott, Stephon L. Guidry and Escalante Lundy. Tickets \$18, \$15 students & seniors. 8pm Friday-Saturday, 3pm Sunday. Through Feb. 11.

A RAISIN IN THE SUN. Slidell Little Theatre, 2024 Nellie Drive, Slidell, 985.643.0556 — Lorraine Hansberry's classic play about an inner city family's dreams and aspirations. Will Williams, Joan Spraggins and Judy Faust direct. Tickets \$12, \$5 youth. 8pm Friday-Saturday. Through Feb. 4.

THE RED LIGHT DISTRICT VARIETY SHOW. Le Chat Noir, 715 St. Charles Ave., 581-5812 — Jim Fitzmorris emcees a topical revue of gossip, raves, rants and rumors about our political affairs featuring dancing girls and musical guests. Tickets \$15. 11pm Saturday, February 10.

STEEL MAGNOLIAS. Teatro Wego! Dinner Theatre, 177 Sala Ave. Westwego, 885.2000 — Revolving around Truzy's Beauty Parlor in a small parish in modern-day Louisiana, Robert Harling's hit dramedy tells the story of a close-knit circle of six women. Dane Rhodes directs Danon Dastugue, Morla Gorrondona, Kerry Cahill, Angie Joachim, Sandy Bravender and Doris Methe. Tickets \$26, seniors \$23. 7:30pm Friday-Saturday, 2pm Sunday. Through Feb. 4.

[continued on Main-27]

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David Wagner, M.Ed., LPC, NCC

on the boards ...from M-26

THE SUNKEN LIVING ROOM. Southern Rep Theatre, The Shops at Canal Place, 333 Canal St., third floor, 522.6545 — David Caudle's play, postponed from last year due to Katrina, tells the story of two teenage brothers, the possibly pregnant girlfriend of one, and their mother who is more concerned with her weekly bridge game than her family. Acclaimed by the Miami Herald as an "unsettling, funny, poignant play" and named by the Miami Sun Post as the "the best Drama of 2006." Tickets \$15-30, \$16-20 students and seniors. 8pm Thursday-Saturday, 3pm Sunday. Through Feb. 11.

SYMPATHETIC MAGIC. Marigny Theater, 1030 Marigny, 948-9608/945-9805/218-8559 — To Do Productions presents Lanford Wilson's play which explores the mysteries of the universe and artistic creation in this ensemble comedy/drama. Don McDonald directs Steve Kubrick, T.J. Touns, Lisa Davis, Sharon Clement, Lewis Routh, El Tahra Ibrahim, Fredrick Mead and Jeff Mallon. Tickets \$20, students \$15. 8pm Friday-Saturday, 6pm Sunday. Through Feb. 11.

THE TRIUMPH OF LOVE. Hatcher Hall Theatre, LSU, Baton Rouge,

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225.578.3527 — LSU's Department of Theatre presents Marivaux's classic portrayal of the pleasure and pain of falling in love. Steven Young directs this delightful romantic romp. Tickets \$15.50, \$13.50 seniors, \$8.50 students. 7:30pm Tuesday-Friday, 2pm Sunday. January 31-February 11.

Renew Your Spirit, Rebuild New Orleans

New Orleans...the name of the city invokes a thousand emotions and memories from countless people worldwide. Today, New Orleans stands on the brink of a revival of unprecedented proportions. Now, more than ever before, New Orleans is poised and ready to regain the attention, adoration and admiration of people around the globe. As the city rises like the proverbial Phoenix from the ashes, there has never been a more opportune time to grasp a piece of this uniquely American of all American cities. Like thousands of other New Orleanians I am committed to helping **ALL** of New Orleans' families return and rebuild. To that end I am pleased to offer the properties below for your consideration.



Perfectly Paradise 373 Broadway

Enchanting & charming 2 bed/2 bath Victorian cottage located on picturesque Uptown Street. Numerous dramatic architectural details & classic historic features. Gourmet lovers kitchen with Viking range, Bosch dishwasher, SubZero refrigerator/freezer, granite-tops and premier cabinetry. Spacious backyard & patio areas for garden oasis. An exquisite jewel of a home.

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Notable Marigny 601 Elysian Fields

In a 1973 film interview for Canadian Broadcasting entitled "Tennessee Williams South" this building was designated by Mr. Williams as the inspiration for Stanley & Stella's residence in "A Streetcar Named Desire". Loaded with historical merit and in a prime location on Elysian Fields this property offers HMC-2 zoning, three floors of living and/or business space and unparalleled vistas of the City. Perfect for a combination residence and small, creative business venture. An exceptional property in an exceptional location for an exceptional opportunity.

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by Toni J.P. Pizanie
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Graham Honored

In a recent *Times-Picayune* article, **Broad Strokes** by Doug MacCash, Larry Graham's exhibit was honored as being the second of the "year's brightest" art shows. MacCash called the exhibit "Pictorialist Perfection." The Face of God is photographer Larry Graham's Renaissance-esque religious tableaux. The showing took place in November, 2006 at Perrin Benham Gallery in the 1900 block of Magazine Street.

MGC XXIV

Volleyball New Orleans presented Mardi Gras Classic XXIV on January 12th through 14th. President and Tournament Co-Director Kevin Wiemken welcomed the 87 teams to New Orleans. Julie Thompson, Joe Melcher, Lynn Friedman, Randy Evans, myself and others from PFLAG and Forum for Equality worked the event and were entertained by tournament play. Jerry Traigle from Volleyball N.O. was our coordinator. There were four divisions of play: Host City, A, B and BB. The Host City Division was designed for new teams to NAGVA and used for the first time at the Mardi Gras Classic.

Play began on Saturday at 7:30am and was finally completed after 10pm on Sunday night while a Ball Room full of players waited patiently to hear the results announced and trophies awarded. The new hotel host was Bourbon Orleans Hotel where an unusual and tasty cocktail buffet was served. The food ran out long before the last team was off the court.

In his letter to participants, hosts and volunteers, David Pope, NAGVA president, said that the MGC was one of the largest and most well received events. That was proven out by the larger than usual number of visiting teams.

The top three finishers in each division were: Host City 1st New York City Bam!, 2nd Asbury Park, New Jersey Mama Jo's, and 3rd New York Empires – Division A 1st Columbus Hot & Messy, 2nd New York Nemesis, and 3rd New York Toxic – Division BB 1st Minneapolis Manpower, 2nd Ft. Lauderdale We're Tops, and 3rd San Antonio Greek Gods – Division B 1st Columbus Sports Monster, 2nd Idaho Double Dora, and 3rd New York Slap Happy. New Orleans' teams finished in 9th place New Orleans Totally Tops, 17th place New Orleans High Water and tying for 25th place New Orleans Hurricanes and New Orleans Big Easy Boys.

Open Down Under

It's summer in Australia and for a country known for sports lovers, it means tennis is number one on their list. For pro tennis lovers around the world, it is the first of the Opens.

This year's drought ridden Melbourne has had much needed rain for many days delaying Australia Open play. The weekend before the finals sees Americans Andy Roddick and James Blake still in the running. ESPN has been televising the

competition for several hours in the afternoon if you want delayed action. For live play, you have to be willing to stay up all night for the best of the best usually finish at about 5am.

My viewing schedule looks something like watching until early morning (very early morning), sleeping until 9am, catching the matches I missed around noon and then taking an early nap before gearing up again around midnight. This might sound a little intense but wouldn't we do the same for our Saints. Of course, we would.

Speed = \$189.50

It was a truly beautiful day in mid-November when I was cruising home from church down Airline Highway. The speed limit is 40mph but it is difficult to stay under 60mph on the long distance between the New Orleans' city limits and the traffic light at Ridgewood. This is the drive along side the golf course where there are no residences or businesses. Sometimes I cannot keep up with the traffic speeding by me. The guys in the big pick-up trucks are especially heavy footed.

For anyone that has ever sat in my passenger seat, you know that I also have a heavy foot. I can get to almost anywhere in the city in 20 minutes. I've been known to get from Metairie to the little Church of Christ the Liberator in the Marigny in 15 minutes. This is not something to be proud of but it is my way.

So on that beautiful Sunday morning I was traveling at 59 mph without a care in the world. Suddenly there was a State Trooper standing in the road waving me over. I realized that there were at least six other cars parked on the side of the road and when one would leave another was waved in to take its place. This was my first speeding ticket in over 30 years. It was justified and definite not welcome.

Just a few days before this writing, I showed up in court willing to pay for my mistake. I was told that I would have to pay court cost as well as a fine. When I was told the fine was only \$75.00, I was relieved until I learned that the bogus court costs were \$114.50. Why bogus? I was charged for a jury which did not exist. I was also charged for things like a D.A.'s fee. There was no D.A. There were fees for several other ridiculous items and when I asked what they were, the cashier laughed and a sheriff's deputy showed up at my side. Nothing like a little intimidation to scare the tax payers into paying politicians their scams.

However, there was a funny moment in all the tension. Standing directly in front of me was the doctor responsible for putting me into the hospital last July. You might remember that I was prescribed a drug that put me into a coma for four days.

I had nothing to say to him since I have another six months to decide if I want to sue him or not. And he was sure trying to ignore me. That gave me a real giggle. I said once that I hoped never to see him again but this exception was not unpleasant for me. I was hoping he would talk so

that I could say, "try to kill any other patients lately." The hospital told me that they were researching my case. I expect that the hospital and their attorneys told him never to speak to me if he saw me again.

... also

That was also the evening of TCC's party at the Country Club. Unfortunately, I got home a little too late to get to the party to make a report. It was a nasty night for a party, foggy and rainy; and I hope that all our organizations and businesses made it OK. With strong leadership, TCC will do great good for our Gay community. The idea of one group helping another is rather new in New

Orleans. There have always been destructive jealousies between groups and this is a chance to come together and build a strong Gay community.

Next Issue

Before the next issue, I have a date with Tony Clessi, owner of Palmer Gallery on Howard Avenue. I am sure you have seen a few of the notices I have written about the Gallery like the Russian Icons and hopefully you have been there. The new exhibit is truly something to write about so look for a full interview and report. Until then, be happy and stay healthy.

COMMENTARY

An Increase in Gay Police Officers Means an Increase in the New Orleans Police Department

A steady concern is creeping up on New Orleans and that is the inevitable shortage of officers in the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD). Currently it seems the city has been short-sighted in the rebuilding process, doing very little except securing federal funding and maintaining positive publicity to boost its image. But like any fine commodity that will deteriorate if not properly taken care of, New Orleans and its police department will face harsher times ahead if the city encounters enough financial trouble. There's a fine line between having the federal government give your city a leg up, and having to rely on the same funds to stand on your own two feet.

New Orleans has always had trouble taking care of itself. Many validating factors have lent a hand, from crime to blighted neighborhoods to race relations to out-of-touch politicians to a straight out stigma that New Orleans is the city most New Orleanians had abandoned years ago. Where is New Orleans heading, and worse, in five years who will be left living here? The owner of a junky car would not sink good money after bad trying to fix it up; rather the idea of trading it in seems more attractive, more efficient and more logical. The city of New Orleans needs to offer more incentives to its residents, and most importantly a reason to stay.

After Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans last year, the city has been approaching flat broke status, having to borrow heavily from the national guard and state police to barely keep the NOPD afloat. If that's not bad enough, the FEMA rental assistance period ends in a couple of months. This means over 100,000 evacuees still stuck in neighboring towns like

Houston and Atlanta may return home. New Orleans needs more policemen to properly sustain a community increase this large.

As of November, the number of NOPD officers totaled 1425, down over 15% from pre-Katrina status. How long will we be asking everyone else to bail out our police department, and why should we keep asking for help when the logical step is to look at the resources in our own city?

The gay and lesbian community in New Orleans is a driving force, the biggest in Louisiana. Unlike the military who implements a "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, the NOPD does not subscribe to that stringent guideline. Some of the city's finest I have spoken with are gay and out. These officers usually have more seniority though, and have long proven themselves worthy to the force. They feel free to live their lives without fear of harassment from their co-workers. But then there are other policemen I have spoken with who make up a closed lip (and even closeted) community of homosexuals who serve day to day in the same department and feel just the opposite. "If anyone knew, I'd be fired," and other type sentiments.

New Orleans should take the step in creating a campaign that would not only make the gay community feel comfortable fighting alongside their fellow officers, but one that would also welcome the gay men and women and their lifestyle as an acceptable part of the city's fighting power. This would not only boost both New Orleans and the gay community to a whole different level, as it has been successfully done before in cities like San Francisco and New York, but there would also be a tremendous influx of candidates who might otherwise never have considered a career in law enforcement before.

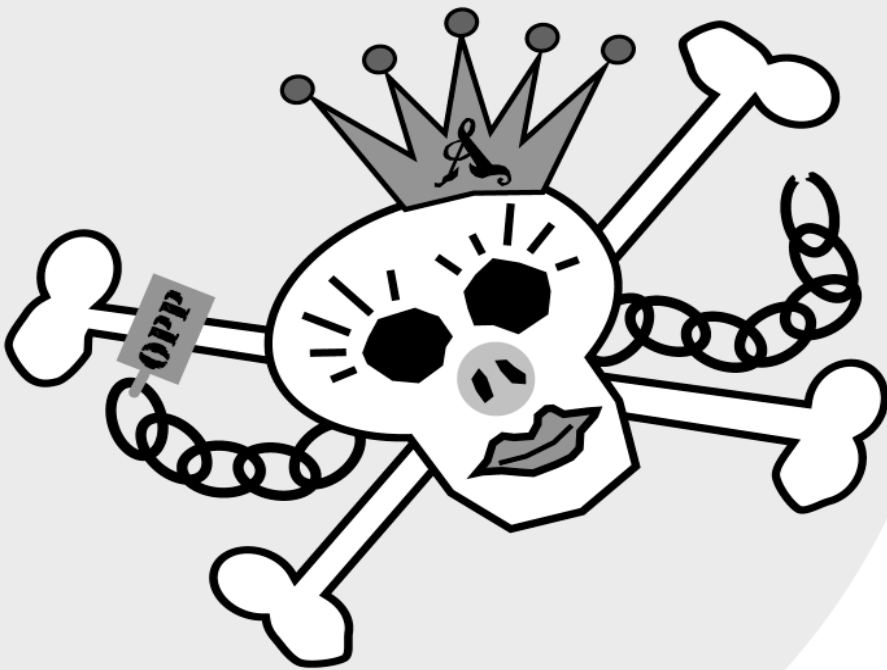
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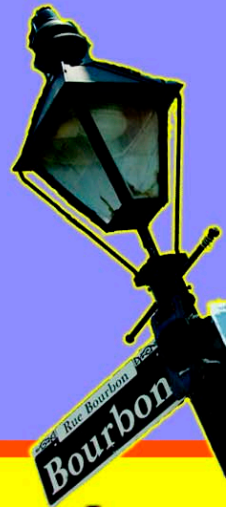
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Photo: Larry Graham



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