

New Orleans Jazz Fest shows survival spirit

New Orleans residents and visitors alike jammed the old race course in New Orleans for the town's 37th annual Jazz Fest.

Jimmy Buffet opened with "City of New Orleans," and people cried.

Fats Domino, whose house in the Lower 9th Ward was swept away by the flood, was the scheduled headliner, but wound up in the hospital. Lionel Richie took his place.

The 78-year-old Domino, a legendary figure in the music business, surprised the crowd by showing up during the show to thank them.

The infield at the New Orleans Fair Grounds Race Course was packed, but the weather was as cool, they said, as the show.

As they did after Mardi Gras, some will criticize New Orleans for putting on such a party. Less than nine months ago, the fair grounds had been under five feet of water. Many New Orleans performers, like Domino, like the 9th Ward, lost everything.

But New Orleans people know better than to listen to the do-gooders and goody-two-shoes.

It's impossible to imagine the city without its parties, its music and its food.

New Orleans people know that their city is going to survive. They have plenty of support.

There are many decisions to be made, many rules to be written. Some say redevelopment and government aid are months behind. New Orleans people know, in the end, they'll have to do it themselves anyway.

They'll have to make the decisions and build the houses, the schools and hospitals they need.

They will.

They've proved time and time again that they know how to survive.

Festivals and folderol? Sure.

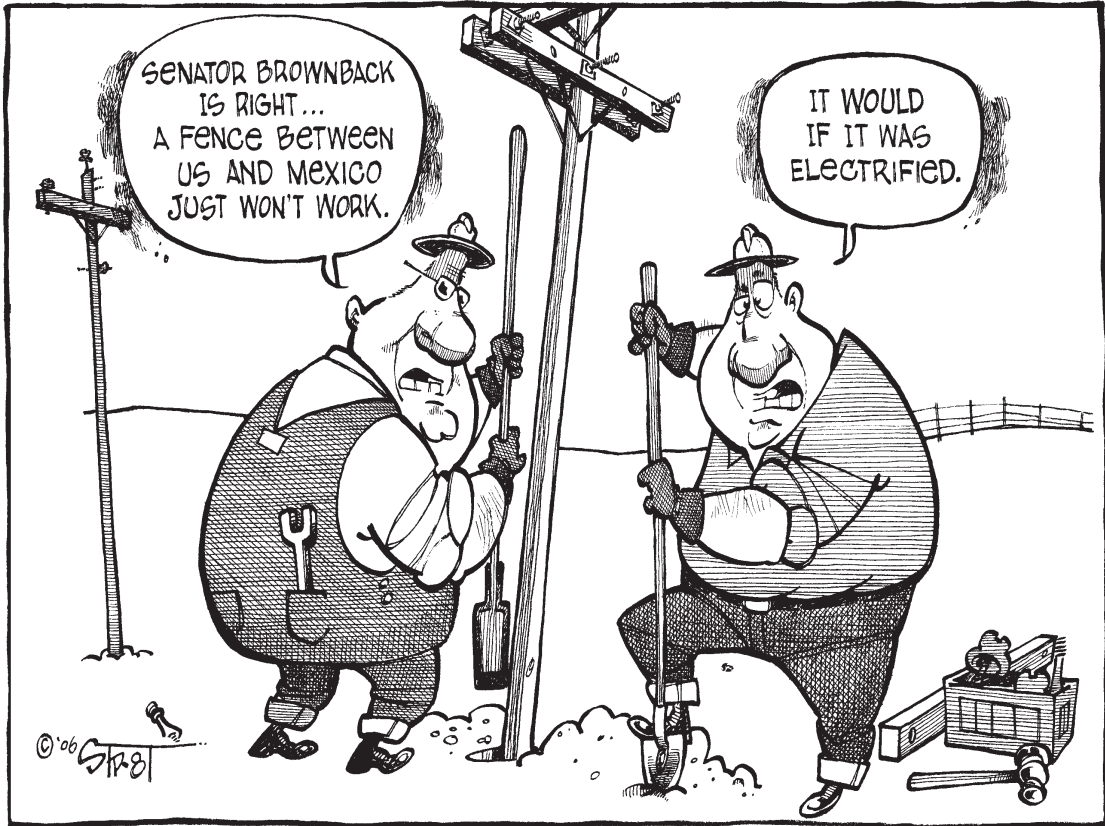
Every city has its character, New Orleans more than most. It's the city of jazz, Cajun food and easy living. It's unique in American lore. It's not going to change just because outsiders tut-tut its excesses.

Nationally known performers like Buffet and scores of New Orleans musicians flocked to town to show their support at the festival.

"This has been a Jazz Fest like no other," one woman said. "So many artists have come down for us. They're trying to inspire us to restore and rebuild New Orleans, both musically and emotionally."

No one outside New Orleans could have said it better.

— Steve Haynes



Job thrills boyfriend's boss, too

Daddy! I got the job! He was on his cell phone on the other side of the car, but I could hear that shout like I had the ear bud in instead of him.

Youngest daughter was graduating from the University of South Carolina with a masters degree and hoping to get a job at the Medical College of Georgia in Augusta.

Augusta was where her boyfriend lives, and although she had applied at several other schools, her first choice was the med school, where she would teach budding doctors how to use the library and do data-based research on the Internet.

She had been with us in Washington when she had had her phone interview. Friends from New Jersey to Oregon knew about the interview and wanted to know, so her father sent out a mass e-mail.

She was amazed to get e-mail congratulations from people in Texas and Colorado, whom she hardly knew.

While she was excited, her boyfriend's boss was thrilled.

Her boyfriend, Brad, is an accomplished Internet programmer with Morris Digital Works in Augusta, and his boss wants to keep him. If



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
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youngest daughter suddenly moved to Missouri, he figured, he would probably head for Missouri.

When the boss heard that youngest daughter had gotten the job in Augusta, he was ecstatic until the staff pulled a dirty trick on him.

Her boyfriend told boss that although youngest daughter had gotten the job in Augusta, she was still waiting to hear from the University of Missouri, her first choice, and wouldn't take the Georgia offer until she had interviewed in Kansas City.

They said the boss looked sort of like a whipped puppy. He was especially worried when one of the other employees asked the boyfriend if youngest daughter's parents were excited that she was moving home. (It's interesting that most of the

country seem to think that if you live in Kansas, you live near Lawrence and Kansas City. It's in the same state, after all.)

Her boyfriend finally confessed. His boss didn't know whether to kick him or kiss him, so he settled on congratulating younger daughter and giving her boyfriend a day off to help her move from South Carolina to Augusta.

The rest of the staff can expect paybacks in the near future.

They get even at Morris, and their jokes can range from a pregnant woman faking labor to a worker finding her cubicle and everything in it completely wrapped in foil.

I can't wait for the next chapter in this story, and since youngest daughter will be in Augusta, she'll be able to tell me all about it.

Lilac season brings happiness

It's almost the end of lilac season, and I'm enjoying what will be one of my last bouquets.

Jim just brought in a lovely cluster of the fragrant beauties and set them beside me on a table. So, as I type, I am inhaling their fragrance.

Which makes me think about my mother. She loved flowers but knew that if she was around them, she would pay dearly with an asthma attack. I think, occasionally, she would weigh the risks against the rewards. "Rewards" would sometimes win out, and she would let herself enjoy the beauty and aroma of flowers, knowing full well she would later have a breathing crisis.

How lucky I am to not have allergies of any kind. I love to bury my nose in the center of a rose. I love to have a fresh bouquet of anything that blooms in the house.

Usually, I'll take a bouquet of flowers to the office. That's where I seem to spend the most time, so if I'm going to enjoy looking at them, I better put them where I am.

—ob—
Sunday I got to play master of ceremonies at a benefit concert for one of our pet projects. I haven't shared anything in this column about the Haven, because I didn't want to sound like I was bragging. But now I've decided it's time to let you know what's going on.

Jim and I have been involved in a prison ministry for about six years. We've found that you haven't really worshipped until you've worshipped with inmates.

There is another side to men in prison — and that's the women they leave behind. It might be a wife, girlfriend or mother, but they are doing time right along with their man.

Most women don't stick around. We spend a lot of time counseling men who have received their "Dear John" letter or divorce papers.

A small group of us involved in



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
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prison ministry saw the need to try to keep families connected. Travel costs and motel rates kept these women from visiting very often. An inexpensive, safe place to stay was what they needed.

A few months ago, a house came up for sale and this group banded together to buy it. A benefactor stepped forward to carry us until we received our non-profit status, which we expect any day now.

That is how the Haven was born. It is a big, old two-story house with enough space for 25-30 people to stay. Every weekend since Christmas, we have had guests. Volunteers take reservations over the phone. Other volunteers greet the women when they arrive, show them their room and accept their \$10-per-night payment. Still other volunteers bring in a meal Saturday night and others come to minister to the women or just listen.

Like any house, there is always something that needs to be fixed, repaired or replaced. That's why we held a benefit concert; it all costs

money. It's a good deal that everybody on the board has a talent.

Some of us are plumbers, electricians, painters and carpenters, and some of us are good at promotions and public relations. Can you guess which category I fall into? Now that you know, you won't be surprised when I ask for your help some time.

—ob—
Jim is telling everyone he began a new chapter in his life this week. He filed for Social Security. This is where you're supposed to say, "Oh, Jim. You couldn't possibly be that old."

And that's where he says, "Oh, yes I am."

From the Bible

Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake.

Psalm 79: 9

Honor Roll

Welcome and thanks to these recent subscribers to *The Oberlin Herald*: Keith Shaw, Tallahassee, Fla.; Mrs. Dale Bixby, Cheyenne, Wyo.; CCC Information Services, Sioux Falls, S.D.; Barry Avery, North

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Driving tough in blinding rain

We are in the South. It is wet. We are driving.

Or trying to. We're not used to having an inch of water on the road. Neither, it appears, are the southerners. They're all going 30 mph down the freeway.

Still, I think we'll get to Savannah by evening. It's "only" a three-hour drive.

Cynthia is driving; I am writing. OK, she is driving and cursing.

Cursing me. The highway. The rain, which has two speeds, hard and blinding. The southern drivers. And me.

I think it's rain anyway. We haven't seen anything quite like this in years.

Southern rain is different. We have scattered thunderstorms, for instance. They're intense. Small in area. Separate.

These storms cover whole states. The strong cells dump sheets of rain. The weaker clouds just rain.

We are driving from one to the other. As far as I could tell, there were no breaks, just heavy rain and hard rain.

Finally, Cynthia pulls off. Hail is pounding our roof. She looks for cover at a gas station. A guy with a spotless, shining hot rod moves a



Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes
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little to let her in. Then the sky brightens and the rain lets off. The last hailstone bounces away.

She looks up, smiles at her brilliance for pulling off and heads back for the freeway.

Things look good. It's hardly raining. Traffic is moving again.

"Uh oh," she mutters. Ahead, the gridlock we left behind has reformed.

"Why are they slowing down?" "Probably," I say, "because the strong cell you got out of is ahead of us and we're catching up to it."

I can't print the reply, but if you want to know what it was, just call.

Then we drove back into the rain, 30 mph right down I-26.

"It's only four miles until we turn south," I said. "Maybe it'll get better."

She pulls off for gas.

"Can you drive?" "Gotta finish this column. We'll be in Savannah soon enough."

I know in the city I have to drive. I'll need her to watch traffic and save me from rear-ending someone. She does.

Later, we go out to walk the riverfront while we wait for the kids to drive down from Augusta.

They leave late, as usual, something about dropping off the dogs at the sitter.

On the waterfront, the humidity is oppressive, then the sun comes out. We duck into a hotel and walk a block in air conditioning.

Just when we think we'll die, a breeze springs up. We're saved. We've walked. We're ready for dinner in a town where the only problem is picking which good restaurant to go to.

But that's another story.

Senator gets thanks for bill support

To the Editor:

I want to recognize Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer for demonstrating leadership in support of a bill that allows full tuition ownership for the six Regents universities.

A similar measure was passed last year that created a block-grant funding model, but it did not permit full ownership of tuition dollars. This new structure will enable greater flexibility for Fort Hays State University in meeting Kansas' changing educational needs, as all tuition money paid to a particular university will remain with that institution.

Letter to the Editor

Leadership demands actions that make a difference. We truly appreciate the efforts and foresight of Sen. Ostmeyer and other members of the Senate in taking action on this bill that will have a positive impact on Fort Hays State and our state higher education system. The challenge of adequate funding for education at all levels remains an issue, but it is apparent that Kansas legislators are

working hard to find viable options. Fort Hays State will remain true to the promise of "affordable success" by keeping tuition as low as possible while providing students with a quality education in order to reach their goals. We are grateful for the support of our legislators in this endeavor.
Edward H. Hammond, president
Fort Hays State University

Subscriber enjoys story on teacher

To the Editor:

I just noticed that my subscription is running out, so here's my check for another year. I hope it gets to you soon enough that I won't miss any issues.

Although I find less and less people's names that I remember, occasionally we hit a jackpot, as in the March 29 story about "Oberlin grad featured in teacher's magazine."

Kathryn Weyeneth, Virgil Dolph and I were first cousins of nearly the same age. The Laidig clan was closely knit, and we three first cousins saw a lot of each other in our

young rest. It was a very pleasant surprise to me to find the article.

John Laidig
Holmdel, N.J.

Write

The Oberlin Herald encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of public interest. Letters should be

brief, clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.