

Katrina and the waves

Walking on sunshine after the storm

"Brownie, you're doing a heckuva job." That statement instantly replaced "Mission accomplished" as the most cluelessly optimistic words of the Bush administration. While Dubya was busy praising incompetent FEMA chief Michael Brown, thousands of Hurricane Katrina victims were starving, drowning and dying along the Gulf Coast.

But who am I to rain on his parade? Let's follow our leader's example and look at the bright side! At least a few folks came out ahead as a result of this national nightmare:

Repent America: The fundies were delighted to see Katrina wipe out NOLA just days before Southern Decadence was set to fill the French Quarter with "drunken homosexuals engaging in sex acts in the public streets and bars," according to a statement from the organization.

"Although the loss of lives is deeply saddening, this act of God destroyed a wicked city," director Michael Marcavage said. "New Orleans was a city that had its doors wide open to the public celebration of sin."

The Emmys: The 57th annual television awards ceremony, airing 8 p.m. Sept. 18 on CBS, received some free publicity when DatelineHollywood.com reported that televangelist Pat Robertson blames Katrina not on every homosexual (that's so 9/11) but on one in particular—yep, Ellen DeGeneres. (Hey, at least he didn't call for her assassination.)

"This is the second time in a row that God has invoked a disaster shortly before lesbian Ellen DeGeneres hosted the Emmy Awards," Robertson reportedly said Sept. 4, referring to her well-received post-9/11 appearance. "America is waiting for her to apologize for the death and destruction that her sexual deviance has brought onto this great nation."

(By the way, I was unable to substantiate the validity of this story, but nothing would surprise me at this point.)

Michael Jackson: The Gloved One immediately jumped in with damage control—not for the levees, but for his career. With the sex abuse trial fresh in everyone's mind, what better time for a charity single?

Billboard reported Sept. 13 that Jacko has recruited fellow nut-case Mariah Carey and fellow short-eyes R. Kelly, among others, to record "From the Bottom of My Heart," a song that "he humbly hopes will make a tremendous difference to all the individuals who have been affected by this tragedy," a spokesman said.

Anderson Cooper: The gay son of socialite Gloria Vanderbilt raised his profile as a CNN talking head when he went off on U.S. Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-La., for expressing gratitude to supportive colleagues.

"Excuse me, senator," he fumed Sept. 1. "To listen to politicians thanking each other...you know...there are a lot of people here who are very upset and very angry and very frustrated, and...it kind of cuts them the wrong way right now, because literally there was a body on the streets of this town yesterday being eaten by rats because this woman had been laying in the street for 48 hours."

Hillary in 2008: As if we needed any more evidence to confirm that the White House is crumbling, Bush friends and family spent the week after Katrina with their noses in the air and their feet in their mouths.

First there was Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, caught spending thousands of dollars at Ferragamo's in Manhattan on her way to see the Broadway musical *Spamalot*. A rightfully outraged customer shouted, "How dare you shop for shoes while thousands are dying and homeless!" (Condi had her physically removed.)



Jim's Closet
by Jim Radosta

THE TOP SHELF

+ A couple of Hurricane Katrina benefits are listed on Page 28. Here are a few other late-breaking ways you can help:

Polaris Dance Theatre will perform with jazz and blues musicians through Sept. 24 at Melody Ballroom, 615 S.E. Alder St. Enjoy a \$10 New Orleans-style dinner from 6 to 8 p.m., followed by a full evening of entertainment for \$10-\$25, with proceeds benefiting MercyCorps and Northwest Medical Team. For a complete schedule visit www.polarisdance.org.

Responding to an urgent need for plus-sized clothing donations, **FatGirl Frock Swap 4** will be held from noon to 5 p.m. Sept. 25 at Northeast Community Center, 1630 N.E. 38th Ave. For details visit www.fatgirlspeaks.com/frockswap.

MarchFourth Marching Band is among the acts scheduled to perform during **Blues for Katrina** from 1 to 7 p.m. Sept. 25 at Waterfront Park. Proceeds benefit America's Second Harvest and Oregon Food Bank. Bring at least a \$10 donation, but leave your coolers at home, because the food vendors are donating their net profits to Katrina aid, too.

Wig artist **Madame Bouffant** is donating all profits from this month's Mardi Gras Bead Sale to Habitat for Humanity and Noah's Wish. The hair emporium is at 1130 S.W. Alder St.

Then there was U.S. Rep. Richard Baker, R-La., overheard telling lobbyists: "We finally cleaned up public housing in New Orleans. We couldn't do it, but God did." (He later claimed he was referring to his long-standing desire to improve low-income housing and didn't mean to be flip.)

Oh, and don't forget shock jock Rush Limbaugh mispronouncing the name of New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin as "Nagger." (A slip of the tongue, I'm sure, just like Dick Armey's infamous "Barney Fag.")

Or first lady Laura Bush, repeatedly calling it "Hurricane Corrina." (Somebody forgot to read her cue cards!)

However, first mum Barbara Bush took the cake (as in "let them eat it") for her snooty appraisal of the crowded Astrodome in Houston: "So many of the people in the arena here, you know, were underprivileged anyway, so this is working very well for them."

The Divided States of America: Katrina ultimately unified all anxiety-ridden Americans, whether conservative or liberal, who are starting to sense that The End Is Near. The only difference is the Bible bangers believe it has something to do with The Rapture. The rest of us agree that the world might end soon—not because of The Second Coming, but because of The Second Term. **JR**

Arts and Culture Editor JIM RADOSTA needs your feedback. Write to jim@justout.com.

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