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## GAMBIT'S SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON CITIZENS FOR 1 GREATER NEW ORLEANS AFTER KATRINA

Citizens for 1 Greater New Orleans is grateful to *Gambit* for the vital role and significant impact their numerous articles made in our efforts to reform and consolidate the southeast Louisiana levee boards and Orleans assessors' offices in 2006. *Gambit* enhanced our visibility and credibility immeasurably.

"Enraged and Engaged" by *Gambit's* Clancy DuBos in early 2006, spread the story of our reform efforts to citizens from across the city. DuBos states, "One of the bright spots since Hurricane Katrina is the awaking of civic responsibility by ordinary citizens," DuBos wrote. "People are enraged and engaged and the politicians had better take note. The best example to date is a coalition founded by women demanding the region's levee boards be consolidated." In the first special session of the state legislature in November of 2005, a House Committee killed the reform measure that had been supported by the New Orleans Business Council. Citizens for 1 took up the gauntlet through a petition drive, causing Governor Blanco to call another special session focused on levee board reform and consolidation. "The petition drive appears to be more popular than blue roofs," DuBos wrote.

In his "Da Winnas and Da Loozas" column, DuBos ranked Citizen Activists as the number one Winna. "Citizens for 1 Greater New Orleans proved that a handful of committed people can still make a difference in a democracy," he wrote. "The group, which formed around a kitchen table in Uptown New Orleans and quickly grew into a metro-wide, diverse, and irresistible force for change, lobbied to get levee board and assessor amendments on the September 30th and November 7th ballots, respectively, and passed."

In DuBos' "Top 10 Political Stories of 2006," the No. 1 story was on the consolidations. "For all that went wrong in 2006, reforming the levee boards and merging the assessors into one office will have a lasting positive effect on government and politics," he wrote.

Again, congratulations on the 40th anniversary of *Gambit Weekly*. I have been a reader all 40 years. You have guided readers through research and observation that has helped in making New Orleans a better city, and our citizens are more involved and engaged.

— RUTHIE FRIERSON. FOUNDER  
CITIZENS FOR 1 GREATER NEW ORLEANS

Over two decades ago, *Gambit* writer Julia Kamysz Lane covered the 1999 remarriage of my biological parents Chuck and Linda Pendergast. They had originally married in December 1969 (13 months following their relinquishment of me to the old Protestant Home For Babies on Eighth Street). After raising three daughters and divorcing in 1994 after 25 years of marriage, I found them in '97 with the assistance of the former Adoptees' Birthrights Committee (ABC) search/support group for now-adult adoptees. Chuck and Linda (and my younger, full-blooded sisters) were ecstatic to see me for the first time in 28 years and get to know me and love me as their adult son and brother, and after a couple of years of post-divorce couple's counseling, Linda and Chuck rekindled their love for one another and decided to remarry. Julia was at the May 1999 wedding and wrote a beautiful story chronicling our journey to that moment. *Gambit* decided to put it on its cover in (I think) September 1999 with amazing cover graphics that told the whole complicated story in one creative photo collage. I even remember Julia nabbing a couple of deserving award mentions for the piece. Though Chuck and Linda's remarriage was short-lived (Chuck passed away suddenly in 2003), the *Gambit* cover and feature story captured an amazing, crazy moment in my family's life, and I will be forever grateful for *Gambit's* interest in that slice-of-human-life story, and the wonderful memories it recalls for me and the surviving members of my family, both adoptive and biological. Happy 40th B-day, *Gambit!*

— KENNY TUCKER

*Gambit* is New Orleans. I was 6 years old when *Gambit* premiered, and in the '80s my parents always grabbed an issue because it was the best local paper with news, local businesses, and entertainment for everyone in the family. As I got older, I appreciated it even more as my go-to source for movie and food reviews, the art scene, festivals, classifieds, even the personals back in the day! I would send copies to my cousin after she moved to New York because she loves it too and she can get her NOLA fix! I also save past issues for packing up breakables which is awesome! Funny also because on more than one occasion, I've stopped unpacking to reread some articles and remember that time. Even at crawfish boils, we love using old issues to toss the crawfish on! To say it is in all aspects of my life would be an understatement. Wouldn't have it any other way! Viva the *Gambit!*

— JOHNNIE MESORIO

My wife and I met in New Orleans back in September 1994 thanks to ads that we had both placed in *Gambit's* singles' column. Since we both lived in the Uptown area, we had our first date at Vaqueros on Prytania Street (which, unfortunately, is no longer there), and we've been together ever since! We actually celebrate two anniversaries: our wedding on July 6, 1996, and the anniversary of our first date on Sept. 28, 1994. Thanks, *Gambit*, for getting us together!

— MICHAEL BRAND

Just one year ago I was notified that through an online voting process I was selected as a Women in Small Business honoree, in the Non-Profit Executive Director category." I think it is beautiful how *Gambit* has used their online and print platforms for years to help recognize the local businesses that make up our community. These Women in Small Business awards, 40 Under 40, along with the Best of New Orleans and other public polls provide an engaging platform for residents to share who they love and support. I was truly honored to be recognized, but what matters most is how *Gambit*, a local company, helps so many other local companies in our community. Thank you for being part of the glue that holds us together!

— JENNIFER KELLEY KILLIAN

Back in June, during a long stretch of working from home on the Northshore, I was looking at the *Gambit* digital edition as I always do. I was rarely crossing the Causeway at that time and looking forward to my next meal in New Orleans. I spotted an ad for Kosher Cajun and convinced my husband that we needed to stop in next time we were in Metairie. We went, with my then 9 month old in tow. Upon sitting down to enjoy our Pastrami sandwich, Matzoh Ball Soup, and Dr. Brown's Black Cherry "soda" (soft drink!), our 9 month old spotted the pickle spear, and all fun broke loose. We couldn't stop her! This baby, who normally is very genteel at mealtime was unleashed, not letting go of the pickle. Joel said this is a common occurrence in kids, to the point where parents have to make emergency stops to buy more pickles! We had a delicious meal, a reprieve from our at-home routine, and memories made with our daughter thanks to the *Gambit!*

— CAROLINE GUIDRY