

Medicnews – Katrina Edition



View of Tulane Avenue toward Claiborne Avenue, ten days after Katrina.



A message from Dean Hollier, see page 4.

Emergency medical student housing comes from an unusual source.

THE YEAR YOU PLAN AND THE YEAR YOU HAVE

We closed the office of Alumni Affairs on Friday, August 26th, moved stuff off window sills (windows in the old part of 1542 Tulane tend to leak in wind-driven rain) and prepared to put our plans on hold till perhaps, September 1, 2005.

The plans were of course ambitious since 2006 was to be the Diamond Jubilee. Alumni Committees were busily planning four major events from January through October. We were also designing a commemorative poster, bidding out an expansion of the Isidore Cohn Jr., MD, Student Learning Center and working on a history book, tentatively titled (at that time) "Purple Gold and Diamonds – 75 Years of LSU School of Medicine."

Now perhaps a more appropriate title will be "From Huey to Katrina – 75 Years of LSU School of Medicine". Huey Long was the political hurricane that gave birth to LSU School of Medicine. Katrina is nature's hurricane that is ushering in the rebirth of the School of Medicine.

Just as Huey forever changed the political landscape, Katrina changed the physical landscape. And she did it with water, not wind. The campus sustained minimal wind damage but the break in the 17th Street Canal sent a torrent of water into our part of New Orleans, flooding the campus.

Students in the dorm, residents in the hospitals, faculty and administrators who were staffing the residents or protecting the Medical Center were all suddenly trapped. The wind event became a water event of unbelievable proportions. Eighty percent of New Orleans disappeared beneath the flood.

Heroism was the order of the day. And our history, whenever it is written, will record those stories. Helicopters and boats eventually rescued everyone. A few patients died in the hot, dark hospitals when the generators ran out of fuel, but the students, residents, faculty, and staff all eventually escaped after helping with the patient rescue.

And now we are in Baton Rouge, for a while. Our school, all four years, is up and running, spread out all over, but up and running. All our training programs are intact, our residents are being taken care of.

Our plans to celebrate our first 75 years are on hold temporarily. Our plans to be around for 75 more are going forward immediately.

Sincerely,

Russell C. Klein ('59)

Associate Dean

Alumni Affairs and Development



Coast Guard patrols an inland waterway formerly known as Tulane Avenue.

UPDATES

Admissions: The admissions process for the class entering in August 2006 was slowed down because of the storm. Because some records might have been lost we had to request new records on all applicants from the AAMC. Fortunately they had been able to provide them and the admissions process is back in gear. The applicant pool appears strong and many applicants have contacted the office. They have indicated a strong interest in attending LSU despite the hurricane. The Baton Rouge campus, the largest source of our students, has welcomed us with open arms and the pre-med students have shown high interest in attending the school.

Business Reply Mail: The Post Office has not yet released any business reply mail sent to the Office of Alumni Affairs in August, September, or October. They are holding it temporarily and will release it soon. We are advised that it is safe – so please don't stop payment on your checks!

Student Affairs: Student Affairs has established an office at Earl K. Long Hospital with Ms. Bobbie Millet and Mrs. Carolyn Calvin, there to help students meet their respective academic and personal needs. Dr. Howard Randall, retiring Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Records, has been able to conduct senior interviews via phone and Mrs. Lindy Mills is assisting Dr. Randall finalizing Dean's letters and related student affairs work. Dr. Fred Lopez, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, continues to advise and counsel students in addition to fulfilling his clinical and administrative duties as Vice Chairman of Medicine. Though our situation improves daily in Baton Rouge, we remain committed to returning home to New Orleans.

Reunions: Reunions were originally scheduled for June 15 – 17, 2006 for the classes of '46, '47, '51, '56, '61, '66, '71, '76, '81, '86, '91, and '96 at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in New Orleans. The Ritz suffered heavy damage and will not re-open until late 2006. The Alumni Board is considering other options and affected classes will be notified. You may call the Office of Alumni Affairs at 225-763-9661 for updates.

A Post-Katrina Alumni Association Update

My column, appearing in the regular edition of **MEDICINE NEWS**, was of course pre-Katrina. Some of the things I discussed, such as the black tie dinner planned for January 2006 to commemorate the founding of our school 75 years ago, seem strange now, especially since so many of us are struggling to rebuild our lives, our practices and our school.

The talk about improving our Learning Center may also seem out of place considering that the building was flooded. But a lot of the equipment actually survived, and was hauled to safety and reassembled at Earl K. Long Hospital. It will help educate our students and residents there until it goes back to New Orleans.

Planning for a bigger and better Learning Center seems strange, but that is exactly what we are doing. Not only are we going to restore the one we had but we are going to do the addition. Our timetable may need a bit of adjustment, but we are not abandoning our plans.

In fact, since shortly after the storm the Executive Committee of the Association has been guiding Association activities by telephone of necessity, but the full board will meet probably before you read this. We'll figure out how, when, and where to celebrate our 75th anniversary and importantly plan for the future.

In the meantime we have put out a special appeal to alumni living outside of the hard-hit areas in Louisiana and Mississippi to send a special gift. We plan to use these donations to help alleviate the misery visited on our students, residents, and staff who suffered the most from Katrina. Many lost just about everything they owned and the students especially deserve our support.

We may be down but we are not out and we are coming back. We'll keep you up to date on all we do and we appreciate your support as our school comes back from the greatest disaster of its history.

Sincerely,

Cherie A. Niles ('87)
President
Medical Alumni Association

On The Mend

The *Baltic Transport* is flying a new flag these days—an LSU flag. A 712-foot oceangoing ferry from Finland now calls the port of Baton Rouge home. And its new occupants won't be tourists sailing from Russia to Sweden, but about a thousand displaced students, residents, faculty and staff of the LSU Medical Center who are calling Baton Rouge home, at least temporarily.

And it is only temporary because the LSU School of Medicine is going back to New Orleans. The Resource Building at 433 Bolivar Street, the least damaged site in the LSU Health Sciences Center complex, will be ready for occupancy before Thanksgiving, and other buildings will follow suit.

Hospital care is another story. Big Charity and maybe even University Hospital look like total losses. The short term solution is a prefabricated hospital and Level I trauma center now under construction near University Hospital and slated for completion before Thanksgiving.

Meanwhile we have retained 97% of our students, residents and faculty, and all are doing their job. They are a bit scattered—from Pennington Biomedical Research Center to Earl K. Long Medical Center to unused space on the main LSU campus to private medical clinics and beyond. But we are functioning. We were even able to pull a lot of the moveables out of the Learning Center, so that's up and running, too.

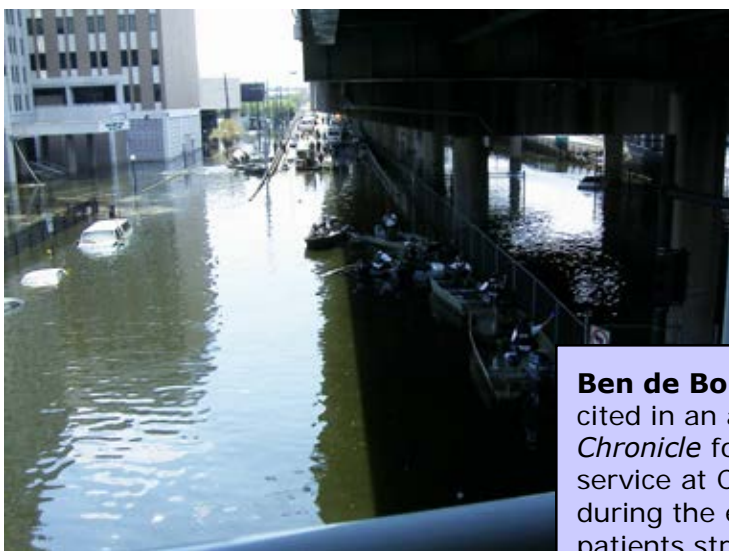
All of this shows ingenuity, strong survival skills, and unprecedented cooperation. We have overcome immense hurdles with more to come, but we'll overcome those, too, especially with your support. We'll come out of this better than before.

I cannot close without paying tribute to the valor and dedication of those students, residents, and faculty who stayed behind at Charity and University Hospitals to care for the sick and injured. In the most grueling circumstances—in stifling heat, without water or electricity—they worked for days to save the patients who had not been evacuated and only when the last of the patients had been rescued did they board the boats and helicopters themselves. They were the true heroes of Hurricane Katrina.

Sincerely,

Larry Hollier ('68)
Dean
LSU School of Medicine

KATRINA TIDBITS



Boats moor under the Claiborne overpass.



Ben de Boisblanc ('81) was cited in an article in the *Houston Chronicle* for his extraordinary service at Charity Hospital during the evacuation of patients stranded in the flood.

John Rock ('72), Chancellor of the Medical Center received an award from the Association of Academic Health Centers on behalf of the faculty and staff of the Health Sciences Center for his work in restoring the center to full operation in Baton Rouge.

Larry Hollier ('68), Dean of the School of Medicine, has been named Acting Vice Chancellor for Clinical Affairs, replacing **Mary Ella Sanders ('75)**, who has relocated to Shreveport, LA.

Dr. Howard Randall, Associate Dean for Student Affairs, is retiring and is being replaced by Dr. Joseph DelCarpio.

Much of the equipment in the Isidore Cohn Jr., MD, Student Learning Center was salvaged and has been set up temporarily at Earl K. Long Hospital. The center itself sustained two feet of flooding and will require renovation.

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Thanks to Dr. James Madara, Dean of Biological Sciences Division and the Pritzker School of Medicine of the University of Chicago, who has generously sent replacement textbooks for the junior class!

The American College of Neurosurgery and the American College of Orthopaedic Surgery have provided financial support to the respective residency programs at LSU.

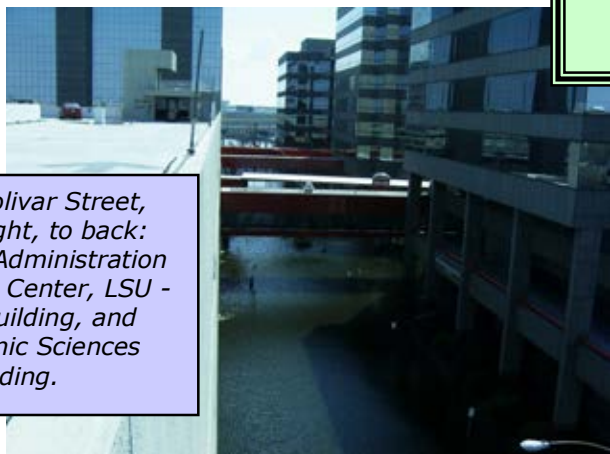
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The Alumni Association is currently housed in rented space at the Louisiana State Medical Society in Baton Rouge.

Floyd Buras ('76) was named President of the Louisiana State Medical Society at a special meeting of the Medical Society Board.

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to the Katrina Support Fund of the Alumni Association.

View down Bolivar Street, from front, right, to back: LSU Library, Administration and Resource Center, LSU - Lions Clinic Building, and Merv Trail Clinic Sciences Research Building.



The neighborhood