



Rhythms

NEW ORLEANS MUSICIANS' CLINIC

A Heartfelt Song of Praise

By Juanita Brooks



Juanita Brooks performing at NOMC's Doctor Appreciation Party.

Thirty years ago, in the prime of my youth, not the wisest of souls could have ever told me I'd be where I am today. But I'm here, and how thankful to God, and a few angels here on earth, I am for that.

A native New Orleanian and most notably, a living miracle; my name is Juanita Brooks. I spent the last 30+ years of my life dually serving as a performing artist and as a single parent of four. Behind my accomplishments in a large part of those years, I suffered with such severe physical pain, that there were many days I could not walk. However, over the years, angels appeared and healed me. I know that where I am today is a testimony of how God loved me enough to send them. In the process I have regained my health and my dignity while shedding a substantial amount of weight.

About 15 years ago, I began the battle with my health. In 1992 my back, legs, and hips began slowly losing movement, due to bulging and herniated discs and deteriorating hip joints. I completely lost use of my left leg for some time. I

(Cont'd on inside panel.)

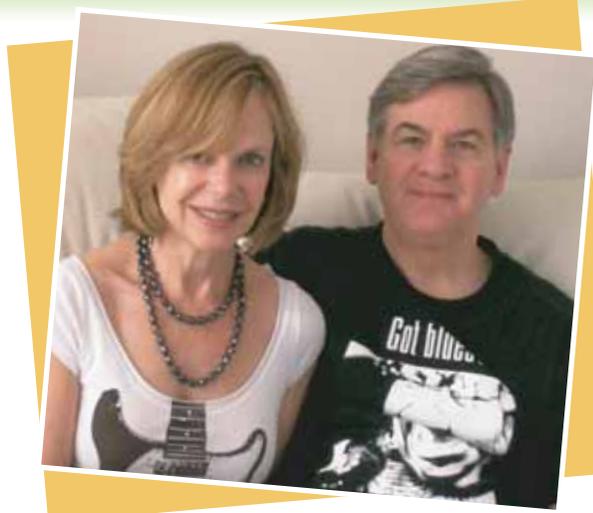
A Mission of Volunteerism

By Paige Royer

Sometimes you have to work hard just to find a way to work for free. Such was my experience when I moved from a New Jersey suburb to New Orleans six months after Katrina. I felt I had to find a volunteer job to help blues and jazz musicians traumatized by the storm. But I knew absolutely no one, and you obviously have to know someone in this town to do what you want. Then one day, I attended a book signing of *Why New Orleans Matters* by Tom Piazza. During this event, Tom's companion Mary Howell mentioned that she ran a musicians' relief fund. Naturally, I approached her about volunteering. Mary said that she didn't need assistance but had an idea. "I know this woman named Bethany Bultman who is always looking for help," said Howell. (Then came the caveat.) "But she is kind of crazy."

Say no more! I called and e-mailed Bethany persistently until I was finally summoned to the Bultman home, which is also the NOMC office. When I arrived, Beth answered the door, showed me to a table, and efficiently explained how to write gig checks to musicians. I wondered why in the world I was writing gig checks for a clinic, and why no one told me that Bethany referred to herself as "Beth." But no matter—I just wanted to help musicians, so I sat for hours writing checks. A few hours later, a tall red-headed woman descended the stairs in a "time-for-your-close-up" manner. Then pausing for emphasis mid-step, she cried, "There you are! We were so afraid that you wouldn't show up. The last volunteer we had writing checks ran screaming out of the house!"

So began my exciting new life as a F.O.B. (friend of Bethany)! I passed the check-writing test and was never asked to write a check again. As I continued to volunteer



Paige Royer and Kerry Clayton

for NOMC, I became an increasingly steadfast supporter. I saw that Johann and Bethany worked endlessly, performing seeming miracles, to find medical care for their beloved musicians. In a town without Charity Hospital, this is no small feat. As I attended the Diabetes Clinic run by MSW James Morris. I realized that so many musicians are plagued by horrendous health problems. At the clinic, many musicians were learning how to eat properly and take care of themselves so they could avoid the horrors that diabetes can wreak. Because of these workshops, some may avoid having glaucoma or even worse, amputations.

At the same time, I've seen how the NOMC gig fund has been a huge lifeline to many struggling musicians and has likely kept the doors open at some local nightclubs.

In time, I convinced my husband Kerry and our 16-year-old son Tim to move to New Orleans. Kerry had retired after running an insurance company in New York City, and Tim was craving a life away from the rich Republican

(Cont'd on inside panel.)

A Heartfelt Song of Praise *(cont'd from cover)*



was unable to walk. At this time, a friend suggested that I visited Dr. Gerry Provance, a local chiropractor. He was completely booked the day I needed to get in, but what a little prayer will do! Dr. Provance made an opening for me in his schedule, and after a year of seeing him, I began walking again. I felt like I could make it. Having financial issues, Dr. Provance allowed me to carry a balance for his services, never threatening to stop helping me because of my late payments. What a great man, and the first of many angels who would come into my life and provide healing.

The next angel would be a holistic therapist named Dr. Geryll Robbins. Dr. Robbins was a healer who cared for me, although I could not afford to pay her as consistently as she deserved. She taught me how to live a healthier lifestyle, particularly better eating habits which led to weight loss and some ease with my physical pain. I know the Creator provided her because when we met I was at my worst. I had begun eating pain relievers like one would eat raisins to relieve my enormous pain. It was in meeting with my friend, Catherine Lasperches in which I would receive my greatest blessing. She was working with the **New Orleans Musicians' Clinic (NOMC)** and suggested that I look into their services. I had heard of the clinic but had categorized them with the others – not believing they could help. Catherine insisted coming into the office for a check-up. I went because I felt she was so sincere. She suggested that I go to Kenner Regional (now Ochsner) to see LSU's world-renowned Orthopedic Surgeon/Spine Specialist, Dr. Evalina Burger, by way of her assistant Dr. Manuel Chavez. It was the best thing that ever happened to me!

The events surrounding Hurricane Katrina separated me from these angels. Yet, we were brought back together post-Katrina. Upon reuniting, Dr. Chavez requested tests, which NOMC helped me get. We conferenced with Dr. Burger and the miracle began. What an angel! Dr. Burger scheduled my surgery in May 2006, two days after I performed with my brothers and nephew at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. She explained that post surgery I would only walk with a walker, but that I wouldn't have the continued pain in my back. What a woman and great doctor!

After the surgery, I met with Dr. Dudossat, one of Dr. Burger's surgery staff. He suggested that I return to Kenner Regional to see Dr. Fred Wilson, LSU world renowned Trauma and Adult Reconstructive Orthopedic Surgeon. My miracle continued. We met in August 2006; he looked at my x-rays and saw that I was a mess. When I began to cry, he sat down beside me and comforted me like a child. He apologized thinking that he'd hurt my feelings. But, the reason I was crying was because I knew my time for complete restoration had arrived. Dr. Wilson performed surgery on October 2006. (Let me say for the record, he is now with the Ochsner Orthopedic Staff of Louisiana.) And just like Dr. Burger, Dr. Wilson turned out to be the best. Yet another angel, I feel the same way about Dr. Wilson as I feel about Dr. Provance, Dr. Robbins, Dr. Chavez and Dr. Burger. They are all a part of my miracle team. I stand (somewhat) tall to sing today because of them. They were and will always be my angels.

I share my story because on November 8, 2007, I was able to properly thank my circle of God's little helpers at the first NOMC **"Doctor's Appreciation Reception"** at the Palm Court Jazz Café. On this night, I sang away years of pain in a melody of appreciation for these wonderful doctors. Although the reception was for doctors, I also send a special thank you to Bethany and Johann Bultman, Beth Fisher, Kathy and Lars Edegran, Nina Buck, and my children. Barbara Harris and Toni Bocage, thanks to both of you for your willingness to assist in all of my endeavors. Karen Grant Hopkins, thank you for taking this important event to the media. Timisha Brooks, thanks for editing these run on sentences and expressing my heart felt words. Kathy Kohl, thanks for assisting me in finding as many of the surgical teams as you could. Last but not least, Lou Irwin and all of the therapy staff, thanks to all of you, "You Mean the World to Me." I could not have done any of it without ya. God Bless.

A Mission of Volunteerism *(Cont'd on inside panel.)*

"all-alikes" in our obnoxious suburban town. Not having suffered through Katrina, we could experience the beauty of New Orleans with fresh eyes. We love the beads dripping from oaks on St. Charles, the banana plants and palm trees, and the sherbet-colored cottages. After living with cold, reserved Northerners, we're delighted at the warmth and inclusiveness of the culture here. You can talk to strangers without arousing suspicion! (And strangers sure do talk to you here.) Cashiers call you "Baby!" And some drivers blink their lights so you can go ahead of them and turn left at the stoplights.

What really makes New Orleans is its music, which is everywhere you turn. I hear Joe Krown from the balconies of Whole Foods on Saturdays, and Big Daddy O' on Royal Street in the French

Quarter Fest. My son Tim and I follow the Black Men of Labor, pied-piper style down Rampart Street, shouting "It Ain't My Fault" to the sounds of Rebirth Brass Band. We scream "Hey Pocky Way" back to Jon Cleary at VooDoo Fest. What other town has its own musical anthems where the line between audience and performer often blurs?

Kerry and I will continue to support NOMC, particularly during NOLA's public-health care crisis. I am also heading the Development Committee at Sweet Home New Orleans, another Bultman venture that helps musicians relocate and provides a one-stop shop for all their needs through partnering agencies. New Orleans' musicians give so much, and get so little in return. We want to do all that we can to ease their pocky way.

Why the NOMC matters to: **JO 'COOL' DAVIS**

"I go to the clinic because being healthy can make or break my career. Being a musician is like being a truck driver. When you get a flat tire, everything stops."

AND WE KNOW HOW TO PUT IT TO GOOD USE!

SATCHMO CLUB STRUT

The NOMC was proud to sponsor musicians at the annual Satchmo Club Strut, an event to benefit to the New Orleans Jazz Centennial Celebration. Jazz fans lined historic Frenchmen Street to hear the soothing sounds of New Orleans' artists, which included exhibits, media installations and book signings, all while celebrating the musical inspiration of New Orleans' native son, Louis Armstrong. Proceeds help to fund public school informances and JCC's upcoming tour of the exhibit "The Passing Parade – The Brass Bands of New Orleans" which was heavily damaged by Hurricane Katrina.



NIGHT OUT AGAINST CRIME

Like so many community organizations helping to rebuild the city, Neighbors United Neighborhood Association hosted its annual Night Out Against Crime on Freret Street in August. Their mission was to build community pride and strength and to celebrate our unique culture with local favorites Da Truth Brass Band, sponsored by NOMC. Great food, entertainment and several raffles including giveaways of 200 book bags filled with school supplies for children, helped pave the road for a greater New Orleans.



SILENT SECOND LINE

A rainy Sunday morning couldn't keep musicians away from the Silent Second Line, a peaceful protest to symbolize what New Orleans would be like without her beloved musicians. Organized by the Musicians Mutual Protective Union Local 174-496, the event brought awareness to the importance of supporting live local music and the potential impact to the city's economy should musicians leave for other cities where career opportunities may be easier to come by. The NOMC is keenly aware of the vital contribution musicians are making to the cultural rebirth of the city, and we were thrilled to participate in this event. The eeriness of watching brass bands walk down the street without a single note being played, without dancing, without the usual second line fanfare, was quite a site to see – for locals and tourists. As one passerby commented "Why have a second line without music?" Our point exactly.



Above: Frank Mayes and 'Gentleman' June Gardner

HEALTHY MUSICIANS

Make a Healthy Culture

Cold Sores - Preventable?

It never fails... you are ready for that great holiday photograph and a couple of days before the big event, you feel that tingling on your lip. You know that you're going to have a cold sore!

Cold sores, annoying and unattractive blisters, appear next to or on your lip. They are caused by a common virus passed from person to person through touch or close contact. The virus is called "herpes simplex type 1 (HSV-1)". There are two types, but the most common cause sores in your mouth. HSV-2 is usually sexually transmitted and often causes sores on the genitals.

Chapped or sunburned lips, stress, illness, poor diet, and not enough sleep also can trigger an outbreak. The best way to prevent a cold sore from recurring is to take care of yourself, eat well, get enough sleep, use sunscreen on your face and lips, and try to relax when you're feeling stressed. There is no medical cure or home remedy for cold sores, but medication may lessen the number of outbreaks or shorten the course of cold sores.

Overweight or Obese?

Recent studies indicate that 30% of Louisiana diabetics are overweight and another 57% are obese. Obesity means having too much body fat. It is different from being overweight, which means weighing too much. The weight may come from muscle, bone, fat or body water.

Both terms mean that the person's weight is greater than what's considered healthy for his or her height. Obesity occurs over time when you eat more calories than you use. The balance between calories in and calories out differs for each person. Factors that might tip the balance include genetic makeup, overeating, eating high-fat foods and not being physically active.

Being obese increases your risk of diabetes, heart disease, stroke, arthritis, and some cancers.

Thanks to a generous grant from *Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals Primary Care Grant*, we can continue our mission of partnering with volunteers and network providers to offer medical, dental, optometry, pharmacy and other social services to our music community. These funds will be dispersed through our new foundation – **The New Orleans Musicians Assistance Foundation** – and will create yet more opportunities for musicians and their families to stay healthy, happy and here! In celebration of our 10th anniversary, **the co-pay for clinic services is only \$10 during the 2008 year**. For more info, visit www.NewOrleansMusiciansClinic.org.

Acadiana by Kathy Richard

The NOMC has renewed its dedication to musicians' health by expanding its Acadiana Outreach program. Like me, the NOMC recognizes the need for outreach across our rich musical state, especially where Louisiana's music roots are strong and 'alive'.

Our musicians have great courage and stamina. They come alive while performing as they pour themselves into every song - both physically and mentally. When I received a call about health issues facing celebrated Louisiana legend Carol Fran, I was again reminded of the importance of our mission. Carol Fran received the Governors Arts Award for Folk Artist of the Year in 2006. As Lt. Gov. Mitch Landreau presented the award to Carol, he remarked, "We honor those that have improved the lives of Louisianians through their contributions to the arts." Now it was our turn to improve her life.

Carol asked her nephew to contact NOMC Acadiana Outreach after she suffered a stroke in March 2007. After several hospital visits, I began helping Carol move into her sister's house and eventually back to her own home. My primary concern was job was assisting Carol with her most immediate needs: her medicines.

Leaving the rehab hospital with several very expensive prescriptions filled Carol with anxiety. That anxiety was eased when I had the most expensive medicines shipped overnight from the NOMC Clinic in New Orleans. At the same time, I enrolled her in the Lafayette Community Healthcare Clinic pharmaceutical program. Then I tackled her other day-to-day requirements like food (collaborating with Meals on Wheels) and filling out financial aid forms from the Jazz Foundation of America and the Society of Singers to help pay her extensive medical bills.

Right: Kathy Richard, Dr. James Falterman, Jr., LSUHSC UMC Medical Director, and Scott Hutchison, Director of LA Cultural Economy Foundation



Left: Opelousas Mayor Don Cravens, blues legend Carol Fran and Kathy Richard.

With high spirits, Carol has made significant progress toward a full recovery. She is playing again and continues to "work hard so she can play hard." Having music around her has been a wonderful lift to her vocal, hand and mental therapy. I was happy to witness her road back to good health and it has been both a privilege and honor to serve our musicians for the last four years. Music and art have always given me inspiration and joy, and 'keepin' the music alive' is more than a saying, it is my mission.

If you are a musician in the Lafayette area and need assistance, contact Kathy Richard at lebayou@bellsouth.net or call (337) 652-5780.

Medical Services

2820 Napoleon Street, Suite 890

at the LSU Healthcare Network

For appointments at (504) 412-1366

If you don't have medical insurance, NOMC will determine if you are eligible for discounted medical services. You will need to provide household records, such as Recording Royalty Statements, 1099s, tax return or a letter from a club owner stating your income. **Any information you provide NOMC will remain confidential.**

For our 10th Anniversary, the clinic co-pay is only \$10.

Rhythms is made possible by a generous grant from Nathan Cummings Foundation.



NOMC STAFF

Founding Director Ellis Johann Bultman	Program Director Bethany Bultman
Medical Director Cathi Fontenot, MD	Clinical Services Director Catherine Lasperches, FNP
Clinic Counselors Helene Greece / Lisa Sherman	Operations Director Meryl Leiva
Communications Beth Fisher	Donor Relations Dinah Daley
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FEATURED ADVOCATES

Through my work as a local musician in New Orleans and on tours in Europe I always tell musicians, jazz fans and festival promoters about the Musicians' Clinic and all the good work it has done to help us health-wise and in our pursuit of work. So many musicians have had major health situations resolved which they could not have afforded without the clinic's intervention.



Lars Edegran - New Orleans Music Ambassador

The clinic is a wonderful organization offering a unique service to a group of people who do so much to enhance the culture of New Orleans. I don't know what the musicians would do without NOMC, and they all love Catherine!"- *Kathy Edegran*

NOMC KEEPIN' new orleans music ALIVE

Our mission is to sustain Louisiana's musicians in body, mind, and spirit by developing access to primary care, preventative health services, as well as social and occupational outreach

You can help keep the music alive by making a donation.

Credit Card donations can be made online at www.NewOrleansMusiciansClinic.org

Please make checks payable to: *New Orleans Musicians' Clinic* and mail to: P.O. Box 58126, New Orleans LA 70158 8126

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