

homes and all 1,800 businesses were flooded.

Our parish is known as a generational community. Ever since we were settled in the 1700s by the Canary Islanders, our tradition has been that if you are born here, in all likelihood, you will live your entire life here. My community is not a particularly mobile one. My best friends in elementary school are still my best friends today. We are family friendly, somewhat stubborn, and fiercely proud of our home.

Post-Katrina life (i.e., after August 29, 2005) is unbelievable. Our population, mostly living in trailers, is now somewhere between 12,000 and 15,000. Families are still waiting for the arrival of their FEMA trailers so they may return home. The bureaucratic red tape is a nightmare. Our first and only post-office opened in February 2006. Our first supermarket opened in October 2006. Our sewerage system is in shambles, and our water distribution system is stressed. The street infrastructure has been significantly impaired due to the weight of the floodwaters and the heavy machinery traversing the roads daily. We anticipate 12,000 to 15,000 homes will be demolished before all debris cleanup is completed. By now, we hope, the picture is somewhat clear.



A toilet is all that's left of this house

Speaking of pictures, it is said that one is worth a thousand words. I was given the opportunity to share the St. Bernard experience with 55 attendees at the AJA conference. A bus tour was arranged and photos were taken. I assure the readers these photographs accurately depict and honestly represent a sample of how my beloved hometown looked in mid-October 2006.

After reading this article and reviewing the photos, please talk to the judges who came to New Orleans and ask them about the existing destruction and devastation. Come to New Orleans to see it for yourselves. Then, query your congressmen and senators,

write to our president, and ask them why the citizens of New Orleans are being treated as though they are from a third-world country—particularly in view of the fact that the negligence of a federal agency caused much of the holocaust.

Many years ago when Texas was a republic, a phrase was coined in connection with the total destruction and devastation of a mission in San Antonio. Taking the liberty of literary license, I am going to steal it for my own selfish purposes and redact it:



A heavily damaged home

REMEMBER NEW ORLEANS

David S. Gorbaty is a judge on the Louisiana Court of Appeals in New Orleans. He is a member of the Board of Governors and Executive Committee of the American Judges Association. 