Subject: Hey, we're over here!
Posted by wunhuanglo on Sat, 05 Aug 2006 13:58:06 GMT
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A DAY TO FORGET?Congress doesn't bother to go through the motions to mark Katrina's anniversarySaturday, August 05, 2006By Bill WalshWASHINGTON -- In the week before leaving for summer vacation, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to honor bicyclists, a college fraternity and a retired baseball pitcher, but it failed to go on record noting the upcoming anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, the most expensive natural disaster in the nation's history.Kevin Madden, a spokesman for House Majority Leader John Boehner, R-Ohio, said no slight was intended."The language is still being worked on," Madden said. "We're looking for agreement on that. There are a lot of discussions still going on."Maybe the House just ran out of time, Madden suggested. The majority leader's spokesman noted that lawmakers were very busy in the final week considering a minimum-wage increase, estate tax repeal and pension reform.But resolutions aren't usually time-consuming affairs. Before leaving, the House quickly passed resolutions expressing support for Hire a Veteran Week and National Bike Month. It also took time to urge states to make sure that driver's license applicants "exercise greatly increased caution" when motoring near a "potentially visually impaired individual."The House zips right along when it wants to. It took only a minute to mark the 100th anniversary of the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity and three minutes to designate the official American Negro League Baseball Museum in Kansas City, Mo.The House got bogged down for seven minutes on a resolution commemorating the 1946 season of Hall of Fame Pitcher Bob Feller. The marathon debate was mostly because the sponsor, Rep. Steven LaTourette, R-Ohio, spent time recounting the many noteworthy accomplishments of the former Cleveland Indian, such as the time "Bullet Bob" threw a fastball clocked at 109 mph." Apparently Democrats favored "Whoa, dude, it sucks to be you" while Republicans favored the more impersonal "Really? Sorry to hear about that".

Subject: Re: Hey, we're over here!
Posted by Manualblock on Sat, 05 Aug 2006 16:23:08 GMT
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They want to plow you under and make a big oil rig platform for all the new drilling they plan on doing to make up for all the lost oil from Iraq.

Subject: Re: Hey, we're over here!
Posted by Manualblock on Sat, 05 Aug 2006 16:44:15 GMT
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Say Charley; with all that money flowing down there and the government obviously doesn't give a crap about you'all; is there some good stuff going on under the radar? Would it behoove a guy to

check out the scene? My buddy has a time share in the garden district; might it be of interest to utilise it?

Subject: Re: Hey, we're over here!
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sat, 05 Aug 2006 18:55:42 GMT
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Apparently Democrats favored "Whoa, dude, it sucks to be you" while Republicans favored the more impersonal "Really? Sorry to hear about that".God, Charlie, you're killing me! On a serious note, there are still hundreds of thousands of displaced New Orleans residents in Texas and Oklahoma; I think the number is something like 200,000 in Houston alone. So the disruption is still huge.How did you make out?

Subject: Re: Hey, we're over here!
Posted by wunhuanglo on Sun, 06 Aug 2006 05:10:17 GMT
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We're fine. Thank you for asking. Still have some work to do around the house but those sorts of things don't seem quite as urgent as they once did.

Subject: Re: Hey, we're over here!
Posted by wunhuanglo on Sun, 06 Aug 2006 05:30:26 GMT
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Well, things are pretty much OK Uptown (they didn't flood there) if you can avoid the rampant lead poisoning, but the utilities are still frequently disrupted.It's rather a misconception about "all the money" - virtually none of the, what $80 some odd billion? has actually arrived here. SBA won't approve any loans (I know people who've been trying to get their business reopened since January - SBA says they qualify for $350K, but the check's always in the mail.Insurance companies other than State Farm are only paying a fraction unless you take them to court. Much of the $80B is payout for flood policies, but the Gov't takes credit for that since it's subsidized. Trouble is, not subsidized enough apparently since many, many claims still haven't been paid.In the city there's a some of gutting of houses, but a lot is done by non-profits and volunteers - not much reconstruction. Most of the 150,000 flooded cars were still in the streets a month ago, along with a lot of boats. Stores and restuarants close very early, some places close mid-day because of utility interruptions. A lot of it falls under the rubric of economic justice since the poor can't get back here, never mind fight the system.They talk about all the people who've returned to the city but I think many, maybe even most, are itinerant labor looking to cash in. You can still drive for

miles and see nothing but rot, not even stray dogs.I wouldn't think of it as a vaction place for quite some time yet.

Subject: Re: Hey, we're over here!
Posted by wunhuanglo on Sun, 06 Aug 2006 05:32:40 GMT
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You want to know what I think?It's pure racism - the face of the hurricane is poor, uneducated and black so the power structure couldn't care less about the place.

Subject: Re: Hey, we're over here!
Posted by Manualblock on Sun, 06 Aug 2006 13:02:13 GMT
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Am I in a disconnect with the world here? The total abandonment of a major American city without a shred of media awareness? The happy face Iraq stories from the administration while the generals are calling for the troops to get the hell out of there. The oil price gouging; the immigration invasion; is this a fantasy we have all made up in our minds? Why aren't people holding this guys feet to the fire; this is freakin' insane now!Let me ask you if I may; what do you see down the road for the city in your opinion; whats it look like will start to change?

Subject: Re: Hey, we're over here!
Posted by Manualblock on Sun, 06 Aug 2006 13:04:28 GMT
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Of course; I wouldn't see it anyother way. But for a while there it seemed that the city was undergoing some kind of revival; investments were up and building and Tulane was on the hot list for schools. Do you think you'll move ever?

Subject: Re: Hey, we're over here!
Posted by wunhuanglo on Sun, 06 Aug 2006 15:20:16 GMT
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You could check in at www.nola.com from time to time to see what's going on. Did you know the

city's essentially under martial law with the Army Reserve patrolling and curfews? We've got murders going four and five a clip on the wekends.What I see is there's no "real" work in the city proper - some companies are not coming back, some who tried to come back are leaving again. Of 22,000 registered business in existence on August 28, 2005 there are now approximately 2000 open (according to the paper) and that includes Popeye's and Burger King.There's little housing available, even where I live (the next suburb north which happens to be 24 miles away across the world's longest bridge) and the prices are really getting up there. When we moved here the majority of nicer, newer houses (brick veneer, 1/4 acre, 3-4 bdrm, 2-3 baths) in the area were running around $150K (we paid a "record" price for our neighborhood of $169K) - two years ago you still could by brand-new small brick veneer ranches "out in the parish" for under $80K. Today all the prices you see are around $350K with dozens of houses within walking distance of my house going for $750K up to $1300K. Remember this is the poorest state in the union - we're talking serious pressure on the housing market. That means that it's nearly impossible for family people to move in here to support the companies that want to stay.A lot of people who were driven out by the storm don't have any resources to rebuild; they lived in generational houses and didn't have mortgages and consequently many had no insurance. Given that, and the lost tax revenue, I see New Orleans repeating its original development starting in 1865. Over many years people and businesses will slowly drift back, reclaiming bits of ground at a time. Meanwhile trying to support police, fire and public utilities (the omnibus utility company has been bankrupt for 11 months and simply provides services no better than temporary connections).At best it will be a "boutique" city consisting of the Quarter and Uptown (the original settled areas, before the levees), surrounded by rot with all the money moving to the suburbs. One more serious flooding incident and you can write the place off. And that's entirely possible - the Corps of Engineers won't have the original flood control re-established until Christmas, and probably later given that they're already 6 months behind their original schedule.

Subject: It's so odd
Posted by wunhuanglo on Sun, 06 Aug 2006 15:27:07 GMT
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how things look when you're in the eye of the storm as opposed to watching it on the weather channel..Tulane, for instance, hardly exists anymore. They've eliminated many (most?) programs (they're tearing down their fanciest dorms next week)and fired many (most?) staff (including tenured profs in the biomedical area, which supposedly will be the core of their programs). They eliminated the sports programs. They want to become a "boutique" school in a "boutique" city to survive. How many parents are anxious to pony up $50K a year so the little cherub can be washed out with the next tide?
