

AKA's offer Las Vegans taste of New Orleans

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Slicing a piece of New Orleans through sumptuous cuisine and soul-stirrin' jazz, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., transformed the Rio Suite Hotel into the Crescent City last Saturday.

The smell of southern delights, like shrimp etoufee, catfish and hush puppies, wafted through the air as local group Strength Inc., pumped out zydeco, blues and jazz for the more than 250 well-dressed guests at the sorority's first Mardi Gras Ball.

Mardi Gras is the last day before Lent, Shrove Tuesday, and is a day of carnival celebrations, especially in Rio De Janiero and New Orleans.

Dr. Al Gourrier, a local educator, emceed the program and helped crown Willa White and her husband, Kenneth, the ball's first king and queen. Gourrier also led the crowd, which was adorned with festive beads and multi-colored masks in a second-line dance.

Guests spent by dancing could refuel on other bayou-area foods: red beans and rice,



Photo special to Sentinel-Voice by John Rhodes
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorors, left to right, Lisa Russell, Tiffany Stevenson and Tamika Bailey of Las Vegas' Theta Theta Omega Chapter, enjoyed themselves at the first Mardi Gras Ball held at the Rio Suite Hotel last Saturday.

sweet potatoes and corn on the cob. Dessert lovers savored the pecan tarts and key lime pie.

The ball proved a popular draw to many notable Las

Vegans, including North Las Vegas City Councilman John Rhodes, KVVU/Fox 5 TV personality Lillian McMorris, Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice

publisher Ramon Savoy, businessman Frank Russell Jr., Economic Opportunity Board Chairwoman Verlia Grice Davis, Las Vegas Fire Department Chief Dave Washington, Professional Black Women's Alliance founder Faye Duncan Daniels; former principal of Lincoln Elementary School James Shipp and Theta Theta Omega President Jacqueline Hall.

The sorority's Theta Theta Omega chapter was founded in 1965. The sorority itself was founded in 1908 at Howard University in Washington D.C., and is the first Greek-letter sorority for African-American women. The sorority aims to provide service to all mankind.

Patti Hester, the Mardi Gras ball's coordinator, said the support for the first annual event was overwhelming. "We're planning to make next year's event even better," she said.

Hall hopes to use the ball as the major fund raiser for the sorority's annual scholarship program for young ladies.



The first king and queen of the annual Mardi Gras Ball, Kenneth White and his wife Willa White, take a few moments to enjoy their new found royalty. Photo special to Sentinel-Voice



Greeting friends during the AKA's Mardi Gras Ball was Marcia Washington, and Dr. Al Gourrier, standing. Gourrier was Master of Ceremonies for last Saturday's event at the Rio Suite Hotel. Photo special to Sentinel-Voice

PPA

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Twenty-one of 36 cadets complained to their supervisors. Four of the cadets were black.

Holley received a verbal reprimand and was required to take sensitivity training classes. Peck was stunned by the discipline the officer was given.

"This is intolerable and we are saddened that he sits as vice president of the PPA," Peck said. "The community must know that these comments are utterly unacceptable."

Rogers, reading from a statement, said, "The members of the Las Vegas NAACP Chapter, feel the PPA leadership has not taken a strong enough stance to condemn this overt bigotry nor do we feel that a powerful message was sent

by the PPA to the community that this type of behavior is unacceptable."

The NAACP would like for Sens. John Ensign, Harry Reid and other local officials and community leaders to contact the association and the sheriff and ask for redress.

The coalition plans to amass support from North Las Vegas and Henderson police officers, and other law enforcement agencies with members in Local 23.

"This man really should not be representing us," Rogers said. "This is not just a black issue ... more of the officers calling for his resignation are white."

Williams said he hopes Keller nullifies the punishment and reprimands Holley more


severely.

He said he knows the sheriff must get the PPA's endorsement for his re-election bid, but that the citizens matter most, and enough of

them resent how the situation was handled to cloud his re-election. The assembly said he would like to police policies and procedures with Keller.

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