



ASK DEANNA!
*Real People,
Real Advice*

Dear Deanna!

I wasn't ready for commitment, so I broke up with my ex-girlfriend 2 years ago. I did a lot of soul searching, working on my flaws and self-improvement. I miss my old relationship and want a second chance. The only problem is the fact she's with someone else. I want to propose and give her a diamond ring for a Christmas present. Am I making a mistake or should I take the risk and see what happens?

Johnathon
Portland, OR

Dear Johnathon:

Regardless of all the work you've done and the changes you've made, this doesn't matter if your ex-girlfriend is on a different page. She's done some changing of her own during your separation and, like you, she's not the same person. If she's with someone else, you should mind your business and don't go around causing problems. She hasn't given you any indicators of interest because she has a relationship. Don't buy a ring, save your money and keep it moving.

Dear Deanna!

My brother turns into a fool during Christmas. He lets his wife pressure him to spend excess money, buy her a lot of clothes for parties and a lot of toys for the children. I have problems with this because he gets into financial trouble and borrows money from the rest of the family. His wife sits on her bank account, doesn't commit any money to the holidays and lets him be burned out and broke. Is it wrong for me to address his wife because I'm tired of this game?

Upset Sister-In-Law
Inglewood, CA

Dear Upset Sister:

Your sister-in-law is selfish but that's not your problem. Talk with your brother first because you're sure to start a family war if you use any other approach. You have the right to share your opinions because you became involved when he begs you for money. It's best to be direct and let him know you will not give him a dime if he decides to max out for Christmas and you're spreading the same message to the rest of the family.

Dear Deanna!

I lost my job 3 months ago, and I feel really bad because I can't participate in the Christmas holiday. I never thought I would be in this position and it's becoming stressful. I'm embarrassed, I feel like less of a man and a failure. What do you suggest I do to take my mind off of my misery as the holidays come around?

Byron
Jacksonville, FL

Dear Byron:

You need to pick up your face and be glad that you have health, strength and breath in your body. There's no excuse for your pity party when people are homeless, hungry and living on the streets. Forget about not having money for the holidays and go look for a job to get back on track next year. You should focus on Jesus instead of shopping, and you'll do yourself a great service to pray, reflect and celebrate instead of being miserable.

Ask Deanna! is written by Deanna M. Write: Ask Deanna! Email: askdeanna1@yahoo.com or 264 S. LaCienega Blvd. Suite 1283 Beverly Hills, CA 90211 Website: www.askdeanna.com.

Residents fight to return home

By Jesse Muhammad
Special to Sentinel-Voice

BATON ROUGE, La. (NNPA) - Traveling from different parts of the country, members of the People's Hurricane Relief Fund, residents of New Orleans and community activists gathered here at the State Capitol to demand that Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco overhaul the Road Home program. The groups also demand she create a more democratically elected body than the LRA, Louisiana Recovery Authority, to oversee the recovery process.

Chants of, "Open the gate, don't discriminate...we demand that you compensate" and "We are here to collect on a promise made" rang out during the midday march. Marchers also protested the attempts to demolish 5,100 units of public housing and waive aspects of the HUD Block Grant Program that provide protections to low-income renters.

The Road Home program is designed to help residents of Louisiana affected by hurricanes Katrina or Rita get back into their homes as quickly and fairly as possible. It is the largest single housing recovery program in U.S. history.

One of the leading criticisms against the plan is its slowness to put actual funds in the hands of those affected by the hurricanes.

"We wanted to impress upon Governor Blanco and the LRA that the people who deserve to receive those funds should receive it," Malcom Suber said. As president of the relief fund, he was the lead organizer of the rally.

"We wanted to make known the slowness of the state in releasing the money to those in need and also to make known that the Road Home Program doesn't truly provide a road home for everyone!"

The People's Hurricane Relief Fund, or PHRF, has been mobilizing supporters in New Orleans and cities across the country to participate in the campaign against Gov. Blanco and the LRA.

The People's Hurricane Relief Fund stated its demands:

(1) that the LRA be disbanded and a representative institution or body is created to oversee and govern the recovery and reconstruction process, (2) that renters are compensated for their losses and be provided with re-

sources to aid with moving costs, deposits and rent assistance, (3) that all of the public housing units in New Orleans be reopened immediately, (4) that there be no demolition of any of the public housing units in New Orleans, (5) that rent-gouging cease and decent affordable housing be made available, and (6) that funds for the total replacement of privately owned homes be made available.

The Road Home program has already received more than \$10 billion from the federal government for the hurricane recovery effort. Nearly 79,000 families have applied for money through the Road Home Program. However, nearly 14 months after hurricanes Katrina and Rita, only

fears, you have, instead, proven them to be true," he added.

Road Home officials say that the way the plan helps renters is by giving money to landlords who agree to keep rents as they were pre-Katrina. Some would say otherwise.

Protester Jejuana Variste was quoted as saying, "The rally is a battlefield in a war to secure more money for renters. Before Hurricane Katrina, I paid \$325 a month for a two-bedroom home in Uptown New Orleans and worked as a housekeeper at Memorial Medical Center. The storm swept away my home and job. My landlord is living in her repaired home."

Variste is living in Hous-

ties for not having flood insurance, and penalties for moving out of the state if the homeowner sells her/his property. As a result, homeowners are left without sufficient funds to rebuild.

"Governor Kathleen Blanco has hijacked over \$10 billion from the federal government," charged Viola Washington of the Welfare Rights Organization. "Congress appropriated this money to assist displaced people and to reconstruct New Orleans and other areas damaged by hurricanes Katrina and Rita."

Two Louisiana Democratic legislatures, Senator Ann Duplessis and Representative Cedric Richmond, attended the rally.

Sen. Duplessis invited protesters to take out their frustration on her. "Throw your rocks right now, because I've got tough skin," she told them. Sen. Duplessis, who is part of Gov. Blanco's legislative leadership, promised to share the rally's rent message with the governor.

Rally organizers feel the message was received clearly by state officials due to the fact that the LRA held a press conference immediately after the rally to announce their intentions of meeting with representatives of the PHRF, while simultaneously correcting false reports that the LRA had previously met with the group prior to the march on the state capitol.

The PHRF and the other organizations fighting on the behalf of the poor and displaced plan to be there in full force to demonstrate their dissatisfaction with the slowness of the entire recovery process.

"We are expecting a massive show of support from the (See Hurricane, Page 10)

"Open the gate, don't discriminate... we demand that you compensate"

28 families have actually received recovery funds.

"After Katrina, Black people in New Orleans began to speak about how there was a conspiracy to prevent Blacks from returning to the city. Government officials and others said that people were overreacting. How can you expect our people to believe that there isn't an effort to keep them out, when the vast majority of the people who were displaced were poor, Black and renters. Yet, the Road Home Program has no compensation plan to directly accommodate renters at all," stressed Nation of Islam New Orleans Minister Willie Muhammad in his remarks to rally participants.

"Every time you had the opportunity to quell their

ton with her 3-month-old son. She wants to come home, but can't find a job that would pay the rent. She said rent would range between \$700 and \$1,100 a month. "We want help," she insisted. "Everyone's saying they're helping, but they're not."

Hurricane Katrina survivors and others have repeatedly called the Road Home Program a fraud and an attempt for developers to permanently displace the working class and poor of New Orleans. They argue that current LRA grant policy prevents those with modest means from rebuilding because the maximum grant of \$150,000 is based on the pre-Katrina value of one's home — minus insurance proceeds, FEMA grants, penal-



Money Saving Coupons

Chemical Services
Relaxer
Hair Coloring
Cold Wave
\$5.00 OFF

FREE
Manicure
with purchase
of pedicure

FREE
ARH
with Facial

1911 Stella Lake St. • Las Vegas, NV 89106 • 702-636-8686