

NEW ORLEANS

& the Metro area

SECTION B
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Judge's order forces bar to close

By COLEMAN WARNER
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Staff writers

Rowdy crowds disturb neighbors

A New Orleans Civil District judge Wednesday forced the closure of a St. Claude Avenue bar that for years has drawn neighbors' ire because of raucous crowds spilling into the street and a string of murders and other violent crimes near the club.

Judge Ronald Sholes did not order Club Rumors, recently renamed GQ21, to close, but set a

condition for its continued operation that could not be met: that it keep a paid detail of three New Orleans police officers.

Police Superintendent Richard Pennington has barred city police from working paid details at alcoholic beverage outlets and refused Wednesday to alter the policy.

"We can't hire the police because the city won't allow it," Club Rumors attorney Frank Larre said.

After hearing testimony on crimes from 5th District Capt. Donald Curole, Sholes said he was persuaded that "there is quite a bit of criminal activity that takes place in and around this location."

Sholes said that, sensitive to the property owner's rights, he was reluctant to explicitly order the bar's closure. But he also said he did not think he had the authority during Wednesday's tem-

porary injunction hearing to intervene in the Police Department's stand against allowing paid details at the business. He left that possibility open if a full trial were to be held on the bar closure.

Wednesday's hearing came on a city request for an order closing the restaurant and lounge, the latest in a series of attempts by City Hall or the Alcohol Beverage Control Board to shut down a business long run by the Dimitri family at the corner of St. Claude Avenue and Press Street.

"We're satisfied with where it is right now because we have them closed," City Attorney Avis Russell said.

The bar previously kept its doors open through appeals to the 4th Circuit Court of Appeal, and it planned Wednesday to seek a new appellate court ruling to overturn Sholes' injunction.

Larre said that although "people have had some crime problems outside of the business, some distance away," the club

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MOVED BY THE WORD

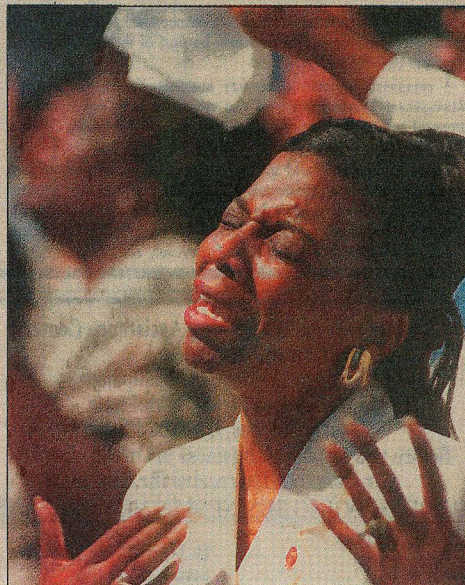


A large crowd showed up for Bishop Paul Morton's speech Wednesday at the Baptist Conference at the Superdome. The meeting, with an estimated registration of 40,000 to 50,000, runs through Friday.

STAFF PHOTOS BY JENNIFER ZDON



Above, Bishop Paul Morton of the Greater St. Stephen Full Gospel Baptist Church moved many to tears in his address. Right, Gwen Collins, visiting with her husband from Tennessee, cries as she sings along with the choir and congregation Wednesday at the Baptist Conference.



It was lunchtime Wednesday, but several thousand Pentecostal Baptists stayed in their Superdome seats to hear Bishop Paul Morton Sr. of New Orleans address the faithful at the fourth annual Full Gospel Baptist Fellowship Conference, which Morton founded in 1993. Morton moved many to tears in his 90-minute sermon. He urged congregants to support the growth of the conference.

S&WB survey almost finished

13% of workers live outside city

By MARK SCHLEIFSTEIN
Staff writer

About 13 percent of the New Orleans Sewerage & Water Board's 1,655 employees live outside the city, according to forms turned in to the board by the employees.

In April, the board approved a change in its rules requiring all new employees to live in the city and all current employees who live outside the city to move into New Orleans before they can be promoted. The policy is the same as City Hall has decreed for other city workers.

The board's employees were given until June 30 to turn in forms designed to determine whether they really live in New Orleans, if they list an address there.

So far, 205 employees have declared they live outside the city limits, including 125 in Jefferson Parish, 43 in St. Bernard Parish and 26 in St. Tammany Parish.

As of July 8, 55 employees had not turned in their forms. Spokesman Joe Puglia said most of the 55 have been on vacation or sick leave. He said a full tally will be sent to Harold Gorman, the board's executive director, in about a week.

Puglia repeated Tuesday that recently promoted employees living outside the city won't be affected by the rule change, as long as they have completed a six-month probationary period in their new position.

There's a chance that workers

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High court asked to stop fence

The city of New Orleans filed an emergency appeal Wednesday