

FROM THE EDITOR

Stories Worth Telling

Warren Johnson sat across from me in the principal's office at Houston's Yates High School, matter-of-factly telling a story that was unbelievable but true. The soft-spoken teacher described wading and swimming through the muck of New Orleans after the levees broke last August. He talked of his experience in the convention center in the days after Hurricane Katrina.

"I've never seen anything like it," he said. "And I was in the Gulf War."

Johnson's story appeared in April's *ASBJ*, part of a package titled "Katrina's Kids" that featured two students and a teacher who had fled to Texas in the wake of the devastating storm.

This month, *ASBJ* focuses on those who have stayed behind. In a series of stories, accompanied by photographs from New Orleans *Times-Picayune* photographer Kathy Anderson, we take a look at six people who are determined to rebuild and renew a city that remains a shell of what it once was. We also have a story about recovery efforts in districts in Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas, along with a first-person account of the heroic efforts to educate children in the East Baton Rouge Parish School System, which added 8,000 students almost overnight.

For some readers, Katrina fatigue is real, but the stories that are told on these pages can be applied to everyone involved with public education. It is a constant challenge for school districts to beat the odds and educate children who are impoverished and deprived, whether it is because of a national tragedy or neighborhood neglect.

For that reason alone, they deserve our attention.

For school districts, it's an annual ritual of change and transition. Starting in early May and ending—hopefully—by late August, human resources depart-

ments are busy filling teaching and administrative positions left vacant by retirements and departures.

This summer, *ASBJ* participated in that ritual as well. The twin retirements of editor-in-chief Sally Banks Zakariya and art director/production manager Michele Sabatier sparked a series of changes in the make-up of our editorial and production staffs. Benjamin Dowling-Sendor, our School Law columnist, also departed after 23 years.

Fortunately, the magazine has been able to fill most of the positions from within while adding new voices and a fresh look to its pages. Kathleen Vail was promoted from senior editor to managing editor, and Carrie Carroll is our new art director/production manager.

Naomi Dillon was promoted from associate editor to senior editor, joining Lawrence Hardy in that role. We also would like to welcome Del Stover and Carol Chmelynski to our staff as senior editor and associate editor, respectively.

Finally, this issue marks the debut of Edwin C. Darden as our new School Law columnist. A former journalist and NSBA staff attorney, Ed has written frequently for *ASBJ*. Now, he'll provide you with a compelling, topical look at legal issues and how they apply to your schools.

In addition, you will note that we have made some changes to our We Ask/You Say column and to our popular Adviser on the back page. We also are reporting results from additional questions available only by being a member of the *ASBJ* Reader Panel.

We hope you like these changes, and we hope you will provide us with feedback. Our goal is to be nothing less than "The Source for School Leaders," and we can't do it without your help.

Until next month ...

Glenn Cook
Editor-in-Chief

