



# Spring Lake Neighborhood Association

January 15, 2009

*Rebuilding Eastern New Orleans One Home at a Time*

## *A Conversation with King Zulu Elect* **Tyrone A. Mathieu, Sr.**

*The Royal Family of the Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club is a Spring Lake Family; and for most Spring Lake residents, this is not a secret. Many residents may recall officially greeting King Zulu Elect, Tyrone Mathieu, at our 2008 Night Out event in August. Shelia Barnes Mathieu, the wife of King Zulu Elect, was royalty in waiting at that time. She has since been officially introduced to the Zulu membership by her husband as his choice for queen. The membership ratified his choice and she is now Queen Zulu Select 2009.*

*2009 is a very historic year for the Zulu Club. This year the club is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. King Zulu Elect, Tyrone Mathieu and Queen Zulu Select 2009 welcomed Gail Armant, Spring Lake resident, into their warm and very quiet Spring Lake home. Queen Zulu Select quietly yet swiftly prepared the family dinner while King Zulu Elect sat down and shared some of Zulu's history and his passion for the organization of which he and his wife will be crowned Zulu's Centennial King and Queen on Friday, February 20, 2009.*

**Gail:** How does it feel to have been elected king?

**King Zulu Elect Tyrone:** It is a great feeling! It was like a relief, because I campaigned so hard. I campaigned for two years, back to back. The first year I lost by 11 swing votes. So it was a great feeling and exhausting. If I had a bed to lie in after they called the results out, I would have done it [lie down] right away.

**Gail:** [laugh] You mean you would have gotten in the bed at the Zulu Club?



**Zulu Royalty 2009  
Centennial King and Queen**

Queen Zulu Select Shelia Barnes Mathieu  
King Zulu Elect Tyrone A. Mathieu, Sr.

**King Zulu Elect Tyrone:** [laughing] Yea! Right there...right there at the Zulu Club...right there in the middle of the street.

**Gail:** How did your family feel about you campaigning?

**King Zulu Elect Tyrone:**

They were supportive --- my wife, my children, my family, my friends, and my Zulu members. They all were very supportive. They came out to the events; they helped out and were very supportive.

**Gail:** What are you looking forward to as it relates to being king?

**King Zulu Elect Tyrone:** I'm looking forward to the Coronation Ball, to receiving the crown on February 20, 2009, and then Mardi Gras day when everybody is shouting out "King Zulu" "Hey, King Zulu", "Give me a coconut. . . King Zulu"!

**Gail:** Will you have coconuts to give?

**King Zulu Elect Tyrone:** Yea, definitely. I will. Actually, I won't be giving out coconuts personally; [smiling] because I'll be waving my scepter and greeting EVERYONE! I will have my warriors.

**Gail:** Oh, so the warriors will give out the coconuts?

**King Zulu Elect Tyrone:** Yes, I will have a warrior on my right and a warrior on my left.

**Gail:** Is there a special coconut for King Zulu?

**King Zulu Elect Tyrone:** We have special coconuts being made. We always go back to the traditional coconut. But we have a custom made coconut with our picture on it.

**Gail:** “We”... meaning you and your wife?

**King Zulu Elect Tyrone:** Yes, me and Queen Zulu 2009. We have ceramic coconuts with our picture on it for the 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary.

**Gail:** Tell me a little bit about your family and how they feel about you being king.

**King Zulu Elect Tyrone:** Well, my immediate family is happy and of course my wife is happy. She is queen! I would not have chosen anyone else to be my queen. The kids are modest kids. But I can tell they are happy. They come down and see us when we are dressed and ready to leave for events. They may not say anything, but I can tell from the looks on their faces that they are happy for both of us.

**Gail:** How many children do you have?

**King Zulu Elect Tyrone:** We have five kids. They are all at home, two boys in college, one boy and one girl in high school and one girl in junior high school.

**Gail:** I often hear you talk about “one love”, what does that mean?

**King Zulu Elect Tyrone:** One love was established in our family. We are called upon to do many things and we don't

say no. My wife says it's just “one love”.

**Gail:** Your family is very close.

**King Zulu Elect Tyrone:** Very, very close. Very, it's like extremely. And my mother is very happy. We are trying to get her to come to the Ball.

**Gail:** Has she ever been to a Zulu Ball?

**King Zulu Elect Tyrone:** Never. But we are working on it. She's happy for us and very supportive. She supports everything we do; but my mother would be just as happy being home looking at the Ball on tape. Shelia is working on getting her to come too. Let Queen Zulu work on it!

**Gail:** I remember attending the Flag Raising when you were Mr. Big Stuff and I understand that there will be another Flag Raising.

**King Zulu Elect Tyrone:** Right. King Zulu. I started from the bottom, Mr. Big Stuff, and now I'm at the top. I'll be leading the parade. Being Mr. Big Stuff was some big stuff, but being king is a different thing. This will be a king-size flag raising.

The flag raising will take place at my home, 7441 Spring Lake Drive. All of my neighbors are invited. There will be local entertainment. It's going to be a lot of fun.

**Gail:** What does the flag raising mean? Why do you have a flag raising?

**King Zulu Elect Tyrone:** The first flag raising was started in

1975 by one of the Kings, King Doley. You give it in your neighborhood because most of the neighbors do not know what you are involved in socially. You invite your neighbors so that your neighbors will know that you are being honored by your club and that there is royalty, which is part of Mardi Gras, who lives at that home.

*Spring Lake will be part of this historic Mardi Gras season. All neighbors are invited by the royal couple to join their family, friends, and Zulu members at the Flag Raising that will be held on Saturday, January 31, 2009 from 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. The centennial flags of King Zulu 2009 and Queen Zulu 2009 will be raised during this historic and fun-filled event.*

*King Zulu Elect extended his gratitude to all neighbors and our president, Bunny, for the champagne he received from Spring Lake and for the recognition he and his wife received at the Night Out event.*

*King Zulu Elect Tyrone is one of the youngest kings of Zulu in recent times. He is a man of great wisdom and wealth. His home is rich with love and lots of patience. As I left the home of King Zulu Elect and Queen Zulu Select 2009, a limo was waiting to bring them to their evening engagement. Not once did they hint to me that they needed to end the interview. But why should I be surprised? With their philosophy of one love, they give unselfishly of their time and kindness in everything they do.*