

A/B

The Times-Picayune

DA

wants

option

to go

broke

Office can't pay damages, he says

By Gwen Filosa
Staff writer

Bracing for a \$15 million federal court judgment that he inherited with the office, Orleans Parish District Attorney Leon Cannizzaro is looking at every option to avoid such a payout — including bankruptcy.

An appeals court last month refused to overturn a verdict against the district attorney's office for prosecutorial misconduct during the 1980s, when Harry Connick held the office.

A jury in 2007 awarded former death row inmate John Thompson \$14 million, plus attorney's fees and interest, as compensation for having spent 18 years of his life in a prison cell after prosecutors hid evidence to improve their chances of convicting him in the 1984 murder of Ray Liuzza.

Cannizzaro wants the option of filing for Chapter 9 bankruptcy, a rarely used legal protection for municipalities that can hold off creditors and possi-

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Tammany

president

won't run

again

Term-limit measure pulled from council

By Charlie Chapple
St. Tammany bureau

St. Tammany Parish President Kevin Davis announced Tuesday that he will not ask voters to approve a term-limit

exemption that would allow him to seek a fourth consecutive term in 2011.

"I have asked the St. Tammany Parish Council to withdraw consideration of the proposition that

would allow me to run for an additional term as parish president," Davis said in a prepared statement. "There is much work to be done in St. Tammany Par-

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Police clear out

church holdouts

2 arrested as archdiocese regains Uptown worship sites



Protester Harold Baquet chants a prayer Tuesday as he is removed by New Orleans police from Our Lady of Good Counsel church on Louisiana Avenue. Baquet, who was issued a civil summons, carries a bucket with tools used to secure the church against police and burglars.

St. Henry parishioner Cynthia Robidoux, left, cries on the shoulder of fellow member Jean Schneider after protesters were removed. 'I want everyone to see what they're doing. I want them to be ashamed,' Robidoux said through tears, referring to Archbishop Alfred Hughes and other church officials.



PHOTOS BY ELIOT KAMENITZ / THE TIMES-PICAYUNE

By Bruce Nolan
and Susan Finch
Staff writers

New Orleans police evicted parishioners from two Uptown Catholic churches Tuesday and delivered the buildings back into the hands of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, apparently ending a 72-day standoff that began when parishioners moved into the churches and occupied them around the clock to save them from closure.

Accompanied by lawyers from the city attorney's office, police arrived almost simultaneously at Our Lady of Good Counsel on Louisiana Avenue and at St. Henry Church, about a mile away on Gen. Pershing Street, around 10:30 a.m.

People at St. Henry said police knocked at the locked door, were allowed entry and told three protesting parishioners to leave or face a civil

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Cao makes splash as Congress sworn in

Parents, wife watch him make history

By Jonathan Tilove
Washington bureau

WASHINGTON — The 111th Congress was sworn into office Tuesday, including Anh "Joseph" Cao of New Orleans, who took the oath on the House floor to become the first Vietnamese-American member of Congress.

Shifting his 4-year-old daughter, Betsy, from his right arm to his left, Cao

raised his right hand as he swore to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States from all enemies, foreign and domestic." His other daughter, Sophia, 5, stood just behind her father on a back bench where newer members of Congress sit.

The oath was administered en masse to members of Congress by Rep. Nancy Pelosi of

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► Rookies have ideas for Obama, A-5



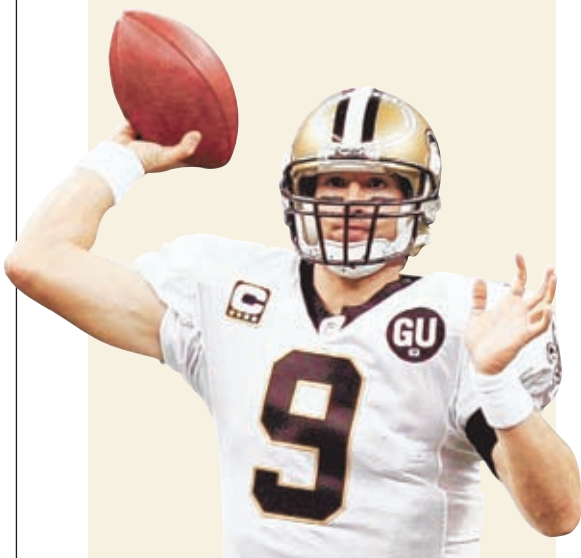
LAUREN VICTORIA BURKE / THE TIMES-PICAYUNE

Rep. Anh 'Joseph' Cao takes an oath Tuesday while holding his 4-year-old daughter, Betsy, on Capitol Hill. Cao is one of three new House members in the seven-strong Louisiana delegation.

Brees named

Offensive Player

of the Year



By Mike Triplett
Staff writer

Saints quarterback Drew Brees admitted he was "a little shocked" when he found out Tuesday morning he was chosen the NFL's Offensive Player of the Year, especially after he hadn't received a vote for the league MVP award last week.

But that's the way Associated Press voters decided to solve the conundrum of Brees' prolific 2008 season, during which he became the second quarterback to throw for 5,000 yards, though his team missed the playoffs with an 8-8 record.

Brees received 22 votes in balloting by a nationwide panel of 50 sportswriters and broadcasters who cover the league. Indianapolis quarterback Peyton Manning, who won the league MVP award last week, tied with Minnesota tailback Adrian Peterson for second place with nine votes apiece.

Brees is the first Saints player to win the league's Offensive Player of the Year award. Linebacker Pat Swilling was the

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► Reggie Bush's knee injury worse than thought, Sports

Citizens raises

insurance rates

by average of 7%

Amounts vary by parish, will decrease for some homeowners

By Rebecca Mowbray
Business writer

Rates at Louisiana Citizens Property Insurance Corp. will rise by an average of 7 percent starting in April, but the increases in some parts of the New Orleans area will be higher and some policyholders could see two rate changes this year.

After much debate, the state sponsored insurer of last resort and the Louisiana Department of Insurance settled on the 7 percent increase, a plan that will put an extra \$15.3 million in Citizens' coffers at a time when many people are struggling with smaller paychecks in the recession.

Insurance Commissioner Jim Donelon said the rate change is necessary to ensure that Citizens' premiums remain higher than what private companies are offering, so that policyholders will have an incentive to get out of the state plan as soon as they can.

"I think it's appropriate for very legitimate public policy reasons," Donelon said. "In order to

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