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Former Governor Edwin Edwards Celebrates 84th Birthday at Hotel Monteleone *Friends “roast” Man of the Hour at private dinner*

New Orleans, LA (July 30, 2011) – Former Governor Edwin Edwards reconnected with the media at a press conference held today at 4:00 p.m. at the Hotel Monteleone, where he is celebrating his 84th birthday at a private party this evening for 560 guests.

During the press conference, Edwards, who served as governor for four terms (1972, 1976, 1984 and 1992) --more than any other Louisiana governor reflected on his lifetime of political service as well as his excitement about his birthday celebration. He also took the occasion to introduce his new wife, Trina Edwards (Trina Grimes Scott). Edwards and Scott were married yesterday by Chief Justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court Catherine D. Kimball at a private ceremony at the Hotel Monteleone.

According to Edwards, “This evening is such a joyous occasion for me and one I have looked forward to for many months. What better way to celebrate a new marriage and 84 years than being surrounded by those who have played such an important role in my political career as well as by those lifelong friends who have supported me in every stage of my life?”

“I am truly fortunate to begin the next chapter in my life in such a positive and caring environment, and want to thank everyone who made this evening possible.”

The birthday dinner, which was organized by Edwards’ brother Marion Edwards and his wife Penny Meaux Edwards, along with longtime family friend and event planner Jennifer Scialdone Leblanc, was held at the 125-year-old Hotel Monteleone. The Monteleone was selected as the venue for the celebration as served as Edwards’ campaign headquarters in New Orleans. Like many other politicians, he considered the Hotel a good luck charm.

He said, “Nearly every significant occasion in my career has been held at the historic Hotel Monteleone. From election night victory parties to countless press conferences, the Hotel Monteleone has been my New Orleans home and in many ways a source of good luck. It is fitting that the next chapter of my life begin here.”

In honor of the occasion, the Hotel Monteleone rolled out the red carpet for one of its most legendary guests. The birthday dinner was held in two separate ballrooms, La Nouvelle Orleans and the Queen Anne, to accommodate the large number of invitees, who paid \$250 per person to celebrate with Edwards. The evening's program was presented through a live simulcast so both areas could enjoy the Man of the Hour "roast" by some of Edwards' closest friends. Marion Edwards served as Master of Ceremonies; roasters are listed below:

Marion D. Edwards, Master of Ceremonies

Marion was involved in all his brother's campaigns and served in leadership positions in the Democratic Party. He was vice president of Freeport McMoRan for over 15 years and was awarded the Marion D. Edwards Fellowship in Hepatic Oncology by M. D. Anderson Cancer Center.

John A. Alario, Jr.

Senator John Alario, from Westwego, Louisiana, was elected to the Louisiana Senate in 2007. He was previously elected nine times to the House of Representatives, serving two terms as Speaker of the House, and as Chairman of the Appropriations and Ways and Means Committees.

Jim Brown

Jim Brown has been one of Louisiana's longest serving public officials, having been elected as State Senator, Secretary of State and Commissioner of Insurance. Today, Jim hosts a nationally syndicated radio show; he writes columns for over 200 newspapers and websites; and his company, The Lisburn Press, recently published Louisiana's biggest best seller, *Edwin Edwards-Governor of Louisiana*.

Joe Delpit

Elected to the Baton Rouge City Council in 1968, Joe Delpit was the first African-American elected in the City of Baton Rouge. A former Louisiana State Representative and Speaker *Pro Tempore*, Joe is currently President of D&W Health Services Inc., WTB Inc. and Chicken Shack Systems, Inc.

Mickey Easterling

Longtime civic, cultural and political activist, Mickey Easterling has long been admired by the Edwards family. For over 50 years, Mickey has been a New Orleans quintessential hostess, graciously opening her Lakefront home to host distinguished artists, politicians and friends with unparalleled style.

Bill Goldring

Chairman of the Sazerac Company, America's largest distiller and one of Louisiana's oldest companies, Bill Goldring has been a close friend of Edwin Edwards for 40 years.

E.L. "Bubba" Henry

Bubba Henry is a lawyer who specializes in governmental relations with the law firm of Adams and Reese.

Ted Jones

Ted Jones is a lawyer, lobbyist, political confidante and "teller of political stories." He is prized as one of the skilled organizers of the famous Washington Mardi Gras Ball. He runs the professional law corporation of The Law Offices of Jones in Baton Rouge.

Edwards press conference and dinner, continued

Claude “Buddy” Leach, Jr.

Buddy Leach is an attorney from Leesville, Louisiana, currently working in banking, farming and land management. He served Louisiana in the State Legislature and the U.S. Congress from 1968-1987. He currently is the Chairman of the Louisiana Democratic Party.

George Rodrigue

George Rodrigue, artist and philanthropist, is best known for his Blue Dog paintings. A Cajun from New Iberia, Louisiana, he strives to enhance the arts in education through the George Rodrigue Foundation of the Arts. Mr. Rodrigue is the generous donor of the evening’s memento posters.

LeAnne Weill

A former professional dancer from Chicago, LeAnne Weill began her career in the advertising industry in the 1980s and has known the former governor since that time. Ms. Weill is president of the successful Baton Rouge PR firm, The Weill Agency. This political pundit is known for her wit on radio talk shows that have entertained audiences for years.

Guests dined on Shrimp Ravigote, Filet Mignon Avoyelles, Edwardian Potatoes, Haricot Vert Bundle and Baked Alaska. A surprise guest was fiddler Doug Kershaw, the first inductee to the Cajun Zydeco Hall of Fame in Louisiana, who sang Happy Birthday to the Man of the Hour.

Guests were presented with commemorative pins reminiscent of political campaign buttons as well as a poster of Edwards by famed Blue Dog artist George Rodrigue. Following the dinner, Edwards and author Leo Honeycutt autographed copies of *Edwin Edwards: Governor of Louisiana*.

To order a DVD of the evening, including the “roast,” visit www.pennimo.com/Store/.

A commemorative book of this historic occasion can be pre-ordered by emailing mr.marco.melano@gmail.com. Delivery is expected late fall.

Since 1886, the Hotel Monteleone, www.hotelmonteleone.com, has proudly stood as one of the first landmarks in the famous French Quarter. The hotel is the Quarter’s largest full-service hotel, featuring 600 comfortable, luxurious guestrooms and suites. Hotel Monteleone is within walking-distance of some of New Orleans most famous attractions and is conveniently located 11 miles from the Louis Armstrong International Airport. Hotel Monteleone is a member of the Preferred Hotels® & Resorts, a consecutive AAA Four Diamond award-winner, and has won the J.D. Power and Associates Upscale Hotel Award for “An Outstanding Guest Experience.” The Hotel Monteleone is celebrating its 125th anniversary in 2011.

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