AP NEWS
Latest local, national & international news from the Associated Press

Sponsored By:
SMH Regional Cancer Center

BREAKING NEWS UPDATES

- Breaking News
- National
- Louisiana
- Louisiana Weather
- New Orleans
- New Orleans Economy
- Business
- Health
- Iraq
- Politics
- Storms
- Technology
- Washington
- World News

SPORTS UPDATES

- Hockey
- NBA
- NFL
- Soccer
- Sports
- Tennis

ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES

- Entertainment
- Fashion News
- Lifestyles
- Louisiana Lottery
- Movie News
- Music News
- New Orleans Entertainment
- Television News

AP LOUISIANA NEWS

- 2 NO police officers convicted in beating death of handyman April 13, 2011, 10:04 a.m. CDT
- New Iberia company expanding into Brazil April 13, 2011, 9:53 a.m. CDT
- Coroner: Homeless woman's death is a homicide April 13, 2011, 8:20 a.m. CDT

More Louisiana »

AP NEW ORLEANS NEWS

Civil War marker in Atlanta stirs controversy

April 11, 2011, 6:38 p.m. CDT
Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — A new plaque unveiled in downtown Atlanta ends more than a century of awkward silence by commemorating the burning of the city during the Civil War, although some black residents want it moved from a street dedicated to the slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr.

State authorities posted the new plaque as part of a campaign to tell the stories of people who were previously ignored — blacks, women, Southern Unionists — when many of the state's 1,000 historical markers were installed in preparation for the war's centennial in 1961. At the time, Southern states were being rocked by the civil rights movement and desegregation. Racial tension in the 20th century at times shaped views about the 19th century struggle.

The new marker dedicated Monday is the first in Georgia to explain one of the war's most important events: the burning of Atlanta on Nov. 15, 1864, by Union forces under the command of Major Gen. William T. Sherman. Modern historians estimate that 40 percent of the city was destroyed.

"This was the beginning of the hard hand of war policy that Sherman decided needed to be brought about if the Confederacy was going to be shown that the war was over," said W. Todd Groce, president of the Georgia Historical Society.

But in their attempt to write a more inclusive history, Groce and others ignited a new controversy.

The monument was placed on the site of Atlanta's old business district, where the fires began. It's now a plaza overlooking Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. Leaders of the Atlanta chapter of the NAACP call the monument an affront to King and are holding a news conference Tuesday to ask that it be moved elsewhere.

"It strikes us as a kind of in-the-face thing," said the Rev. R.L. White, president the local NAACP chapter. "We know that history is history and we seek not to try and get rid of history, but we say that plaque could have been placed in a different place."

After defending the positioning of the marker, Groce said in an interview after the ceremony that he is willing to discuss whether the sign — now cemented to the ground — should be moved.

"I'm trying to figure out what's the right thing to do with this," he said.

Other black leaders who appeared at the unveiling said the marker is in the right spot.

City Councilor Julian Bond, who is black, has ancestors on his mother's side who were slaves until Sherman's army captured the city. An old slave auction house stood just a few blocks away from new marker. After the war, Bond's family lived in a predominately black neighborhood called Shermantown, which was named in honor of the Union general.

"The basic roots of freedom for African Americans effectively began in this spot," Bond said.

Bond posed for pictures beside the marker with a distant cousin of the Confederate mayor who surrendered the city. He pointed to the pin on his jacket, which was emblazoned with the city's motto, "Resurgens" and its official seal, a mythical fiery bird that rises from its own ashes. Both were inspired by Atlanta's rise from ruin after the Civil War.

"It's kind of a schizophrenic idea of acknowledging, hey, we're going to rise from our own destruction but not acknowledging that very same destruction," he said.

LOUISIANA REAL-TIME NEWS

Breaking News
from Times-Picayune

- 2 NOPD officers convicted on all counts in 2005 beating death of Treme man
- Early voting begins Saturday for April 30 tax referendums in Jefferson Parish
- Retired Covington psychiatrist pleads guilty to attempted possession of child pornography

LOCAL FORUMS

Sound Off
- Decrying a "war on workers," labor unions rally... by SirrKlaydon 04/13/2011 12:00 p.m. CT
- Andrew Mellon...a man for today.... by Delcroix 04/13/2011 11:44 a.m. CT
- Paul Ryan, today's Mellon..... by Delcroix 04/13/2011 11:46 a.m. CT

MORE SOUND OFF »

Elections
- Brother can you spare a trillion...??? by dabernathy 04/13/2011 11:07 a.m. CT
- What a shock! The Dems in cahoots with people who... by dabernathy 04/12/2011 6:26 a.m. CT
- Any reason to have parents anymore? by dabernathy 04/12/2011 6:16 a.m. CT

MORE ELECTIONS FORUMS »

Crime & Safety
- Guilty Guilty Guilty by NewSchumi 04/13/2011 10:05 a.m. CT
- Officers better pay attention to this verdict. by postcertifyd 04/13/2011 10:48 a.m. CT
- I Wonder What by NewSchumi 04/13/2011 7:26 a.m. CT

MORE CRIME & SAFETY FORUMS »

America At War
- Rustic Furniture | Log Furniture | Cabin... by p3t0ngs 10/07/2010 1:47 p.m. CT
- Never Ending Story by realistic1 07/03/2010 7:21 p.m. CT
- ~LOVE is the Real Thing~ by CaptainChurch 04/22/2010 1:29 p.m. CT

MORE ON THE HOMEFRONT »

Schools & Education