

RENO HAPPENINGS



R. Grant Seals
President Reno-Sparks NAACP



The Forestry Twins

It is rare that UNR has as many graduates participate in its commencement ceremonies as it did on Saturday, May 17. This was also true of the Black graduates as someone stated that as many as 15 walked across the stage. While all the grads are important, I thought that the "Forestry Twins" really make a great story. Two Black students, Mark Chandler and David Drain walked across the stage as graduates of the Range, Wildlife and Forestry Department of the College of Agriculture in tandem. Da-

vid's name was called out first and then Mark's. This marked the end of college careers of five years for David and seven for Mark.

Mark was recruited by yours truly when I was associate dean of the UNR college of Agriculture in 1979. Jack and Lois Wise, then of Las Vegas, brought him to my attention at their house in fact. Mark had graduated from Southern Vocational-Technical Center in the Spring of 1978 and had been a student of Lois' in junior high school. Jack was an agricultural extension agent for Clark County, and as I utilized their

(the extension office) cars on my recruiting trips he was aware of my being there.

Mark came up on January 8, 1979 and spent the day at our house. Mrs. Seals was a very gracious host. We filled out his admission form and with the application fee dropped it at the admissions office. We then went to the financial aid and obtained the appropriate forms, filled them out and returned them that day except the part that his mother had to complete. We then went to the Special Programs office and had him apply for the Bob Davis Scholarship. These forms were also deposited in the office. All of this took all day. It is my understanding that the financial aid forms are simpler, now. We also made inquiries about housing. But it was too late for Mark to get accepted in the residence halls for the Spring semester.

At the good graces of Mrs. Seals again, Mark stayed with us for the whole semester and enrolled in

school. The Bob Davis Scholarship came through which helped in tuition and fees. I took it upon myself to be his advisor. At the end of the semester, Mark had four B's for four courses and he was on his way. The next fall, his Pell Grant came through and he became a Resident Assistant in Nye Hall, a position which he held for 1½ years. After staying out one semester to work, Mark received a two year Associate of Science degree in Parks and Turf Management in 1982. This is a horticulture related degree which prepares one for managing parks and golf courses. By this time, of course, Mark had decided to get a four year degree and after some time decided on forestry.

In the meantime during the summers, Mark had worked for the Nevada Division of Forestry. The U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service. This last program was a cooperative program wherein he also had to spend an additional semester with the Park Service. He had started this type of summer with such agencies in high school. His reviews and recommendations from his supervisors were always good.

Mark was born in Brooklyn, New York but was raised by his mother, Jeanette, in Las Vegas along with a brother and a sister. In high school he was a member of the junior varsity baseball team. He participated in the high school track team and was a member of the Human Relations Club. In addition to being a resident assistant at UNR, he also participated in the Black Student Organization and was its Vice President in 1985-86.

David Drain came to Reno in 1980 when his father,



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Charles, was appointed the Head of the Nevada office of the USDA's Statistical Reporting Service. The Office is located in the Max C. Fleischmann Agriculture Building at UNR. David also has a younger sister and brother.

David was born in Hugo, Oklahoma while his father was still attending Langston University. After his father joined the USDA, moving around was the rule. He attended elementary school in Oklahoma City and attended Seneca Valley High in Germantown, Maryland when his father got transferred from Texas to the main office in Washington, D.C. However, he finished High School in good old Nevada at Reno High School with a 3.1 G.P.A. He said he always had a love for the outdoors, animals and nature. He was an avid viewer of television wildlife programs and must have read over 100 books on animals. So he entered UNR's Forestry program in the Fall of 1981. He was a member of the UNR Search and Rescue Squad which requires one to be a skier. In this organization, he learned basic survival techniques, CPR, and wilderness survival. He played football

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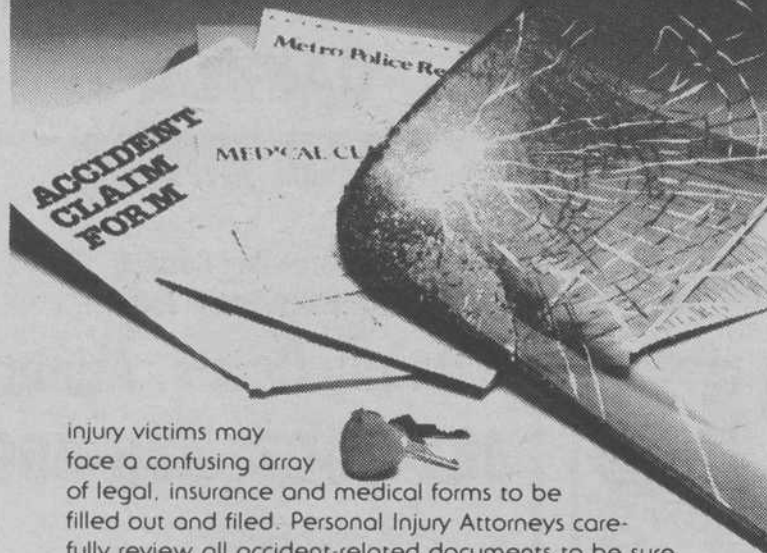
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