

## CHARLES I. WEST

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Missouri. He then became regional surgeon at a Tulsa, Oklahoma hospital.

Dr. West later served in World War II as a field surgeon and was wounded in France. After his discharge from the military, he studied at the London Tropical School of Medicine. Before returning to the United States, he traveled to Liberia, West Africa where he and his late brother, Dr. John West, established a much needed hospital and later opened the first training school for nurses in Liberia.

It was in Detroit, Michigan where he set up a private practice upon his return to the states from Liberia where he met his beloved, the late Dottie West, who became his bride. They had two sons, John and Rocci.

When the West family moved to Las Vegas in 1954, Dr. West involved himself in every facet of

community and political activity. To engender closer communication within the black community, he founded and published the Las Vegas Voice newspaper in which appeared his weekly column "Hidden History", an on-going chronicle of the contributions and accomplishments of blacks from the beginning of recorded history to the present.

Dr. West was the first black physician to take the Nevada State Board of Medicine, the first black doctor to practice medicine in Nevada, and, of course, the first black surgeon on staff of Southern Nevada Memorial Hospital (now University Medical Center). He also served as team physician to Rancho High School for ten years.

He is remembered for yeoman service on the City of Las Vegas Urban Renewal Agency, the Southern Nevada Human Relations Committee,

the Medical Advisory Board of the Nevada Athletic Commission and the Las Vegas branch NAACP. He was also a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

He was appointed by President Lyndon Baines Johnson to the Medical Contingent of the United Nations International Cultural and Education Foundation (UNICEF). In addition, he received a Nevada Gubernatorial Appointment to the Governor's Medical Advisory Board for the Aging, a state project to determine the feasible retirement age of 65.

Among the myriad awards and tributes made to Dr. West were those from the National Conference of Christians and Jews for the promotion of racial and religious harmony (1968), Appreciation of Service Award for the Economic Opportunity Board of Clark County for

services rendered 1970-1982 and the establishment of the Charles I. West Medical Society by his peers.

In 1987, Dr. West also received posthumously the Humanitarian Award from the Las Vegas Chapter of The Links, Inc. for breaking ground in community relations. In 1988, The Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine of North and South America and its Jurisdictions, Inc. presented to Dr. West's heirs their Famous Black American Award in recognition of his outstanding record in medicine, political education, social action and racial self-esteem.

A victim of emphysema, Dr. West lived quietly in retirement enjoying his bridge club "The Group" and taking occasional cruises with his wife and friends before passing away in 1984.

He came. He served. He achieved for all Nevadans.

## NBS

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for providing job skills and training to the disadvantaged.

The companies which

participated in the local effort included: Loral Aerospace, Citizens Area Transit, the Imperial Palace Hotel and

Casino; Harrah's Hotel and Casino; Ocean Spray Manufacturing.

The most prominent

company to participate was the MGM Hotel and Casino, which according to NBS officials is recognized nationally in the effort to hire the disadvantaged. The MGM hired nearly 1500 applicants since it opened its doors last December.



Nevada Business Service Private Industry Council hosted Employer Appreciation Luncheon at Cashman Field. Photo by Victor Ingram

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## MED WEEK

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executive director Diane Fontes. To add an additional marketing flavor, says Fontes, the event was hosted at an art gallery with several local artists in attendance to showcase their talents. The event was held at the Art Encounter art gallery located on Spring Mountain Road and featured paintings and sculptures from area artists.

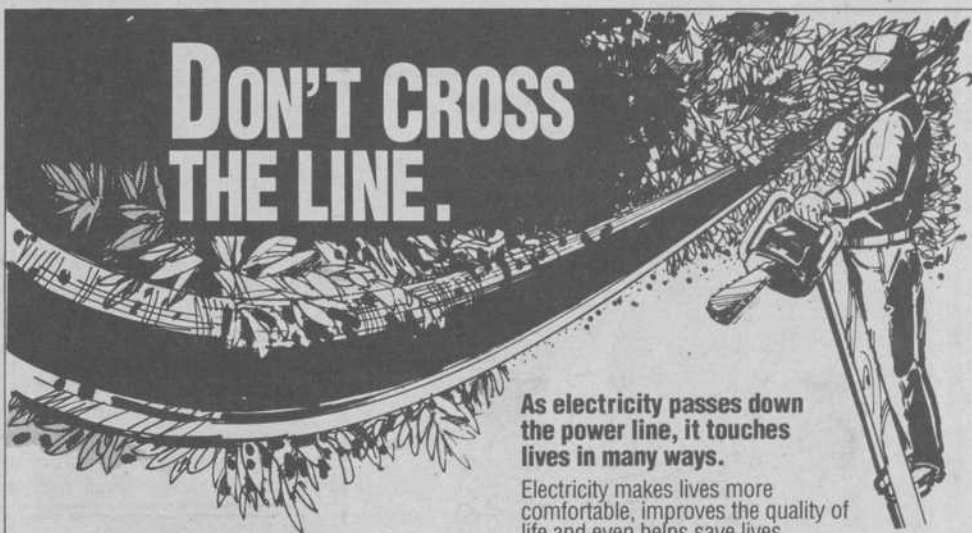
Several prominent businesses such as the Las Vegas Sentinel Voice, Bank of America, Sprint, the Art Encounter, Java Bake and the City of Las Vegas co-sponsored the event. "Next year we hope to have more participation and a larger turnout," says Fontes. She says participation in the council is growing due to the incredible influx of business opportunities in Las Vegas. She does feel, however, that there is still a need for progress. "Minorities are still underrepresented in commerce and industry."

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