

## NEWS CLIPS

### DAVIS NAMED EOB CHAIRWOMAN

Verlia Grice Davis, director of the county's Social Services Department, has been elected to a one-year term as the new chairwoman of the Economic Opportunity Board of Clark County. She replaces North Las Vegas Councilman Theron Goynes, who steps down as chairman but retains a seat on the board. EOB is a private, non-profit community action agency that serves disadvantaged residents of Clark County. Davis has been associated with the agency since 1983.

### MARBLE MANOR TO BE SOLD

The troubled Marble Manor housing complex, at the corner of H Street and Monroe Avenue, is set to be sold to a private Florida management group for \$2.1 million. The 100-unit dilapidated, roach-infested development was condemned by the city of Las Vegas last year and the Las Vegas Housing Authority ordered all its residents relocated. The federal Department of Housing and Urban Development chastised the authority in how it handled the move and subsequent closure of the development. The authority's Board of Commissioners was to approve the sale to Creative Choices Homes of Palm Beach, Florida, Wednesday night. The group has said the development will remain low-income housing with "more effective management."

### WESTSIDE GROUP TO HOST TOWN HALL MEETING

The West Las Vegas Neighborhood Executive Board is hosting a town hall meeting Tuesday, July 10 at the West Las Vegas Theatre at 951 W. Lake Mead Blvd. from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Clark County Commission Chairwoman Yvonne Atkinson-Gates along with new City Councilman Gary Reese are scheduled to attend and will be available for your questions. They along with other city and state officials will discuss the new and proposed development projects on the Westside, including some of the major road improvements and changes, the Enterprise Community Zone, the new childhood development center and the expansion of A.D. Guy Boys and Girls Club. The Executive Board is a neighborhood association made up of Westside homeowners and residents interested in working to revitalize the area.

### BROWN VICTORIOUS IN COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Despite on-going challenges with the Las Vegas Housing Authority elite, Patricia Brown was reelected as president of the Marble Manor Residents Council June 19. Vice President Michele Lewis, Treasurer Jackie Bass and Sgt. at Arms Essie Green complete the rest of the executive board. The elections were the result of arbitration with the agency over resident council Hope grant funds. Brown had accused housing authority officials of improperly using council monies; the agency accused Brown of improperly handling a resident election.

### ACTIVISTS DECRY SIMPSON'S ANTI-VIOLENCE FUNDRAISER

LOS ANGELES — Women's rights activists protested outside O.J. Simpson's Brentwood estate June 27 when he hosted a 300-person anti-violence fundraiser. While activists claimed Simpson was shamelessly trying to rebuild his public image in the same place where Nicole Brown Simpson had been beaten seven years ago, the former-football star said he could not understand their protests. "Who can be against stopping violence? This is about saving lives," he said. "There have been 1,700 murders since Nicole and Ron (Goldman) and who cares about these people? This is about stepping in and helping those families." The fundraiser, an invitation-only event, was held in conjunction with the Stop the Violence-Increase the Peace Foundation, a black anti-gang and domestic violence group from South Central Los Angeles.

### UGANDANS HOLD NO PARTY ELECTIONS

KAMPALA, Uganda — For the first time in 16 years, Ugandans voted for a parliament June 27 under a new system that barred party affiliation. All 814 candidates ran individually in an effort to build a more diverse, cohesive government. A November constitution created the no-party in an effort to involve all facets of the Ugandan populace into politics. The move was considered an advantage to minority groups. Seats will be reserved for 39 women, five disabled persons, five youths, four unionized workers and 10 army delegates in the new parliament along with the 214 deputies elected Thursday.

### NATIONAL PARTY LEAVES SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA — For the first time in 48 years, the National Party will no longer be a part of the South African government. Former President F.W. de Klerk, who launched reforms in 1990 that led to the inevitable downfall of the Nats, announced the move last month. He claimed the party was being ignored by the African National Congress led by Nelson Mandela, and the current power sharing agreement would have ended in 1999 anyway.

## Courageous woman tackles genital mutilation

By Nichole Davis  
Sentinel-Voice

For the past three years, California nurse Meserak Ramsey has been fighting to end the practice of female genital mutilation in the United States among foreign immigrants.

The practice of female genital mutilation revolves around the "circumcision" of sorts of a woman's sexual organs. The American Medical Association (AMA) defines it as the "medically unnecessary modification of

## Protest

(Continued from Page 1)  
discrimination, harassment and inequality — in the U.S., here in Japan, everywhere," she said.

Dempsey, a lesbian, first gained international attention when she and her lover were granted custody of her children in a 1980 court battle.

Patricia Ireland, NOW national president, marched alongside local protestors Thursday. Ireland said black workers at the Normal plant complained of racial discrimination, as well, when she and the Rev. Jesse Jackson toured the plant recently.

"One of the black workers came up to us and said what you have is just the tip of the iceberg," she said.

In a private meeting with workers, they said white co-workers showed up at company parties dressed in black face and in Klu Klux Klan uniforms, Ireland said.

Plant management has been unresponsive to workers complaints which creates "an atmosphere of making people feel unwelcome," she said.

Diversity is not the problem. The Mitsubishi corporate structure is racially mixed, she said. Japanese chair the Board of Directors, and Americans run the plants.

And "it was the American men on the floor of the plant who were harassing the women," she said.

By staging the international protest, NOW officials hope to force the company to clean up its act.

"We want the management of Mitsubishi to make it a safe place to work. We just want it to be a safe environment," Johnson said.

The protest kicked off the 1996 NOW National Conference where 1,300 to 1,500 women were expected to attend over the weekend. The theme of this year's conference was *Celebrating 30 Years*. Election-year issues were the focus of the conference.

Since its inception in 1966, NOW has started 600 chapters in all 50 states and the nation's

(See Protest, Page 5)

female genitalia."

According to the World Health Organization, more than 85 million women and young girls have undergone the procedure which is routinely performed in more than 26 Middle Eastern and African countries.

Through personal research, Ramsey, who was in Las Vegas recently to attend the National Organization of Women conference, has found the practice to be ongoing in the United States for more than 11 years, and "in this country they are going to do it before (the girls) are three months old," she said.

One family at a time, the director and founder of FORWARD USA, an anti-mutilation group, talks to San Francisco Bay area immigrants. She estimates more than 200 young girls have been spared from the procedure due to her efforts.

The Santa Clara, Calif. nurse was one of three women given a Woman of Courage award Saturday during the National Organization of Women annual conference at Bally's Hotel for her work against FGM. Ramsey talked openly and emotionally about the process she underwent at the age of six in her native Addis Abbaba,

Ethiopia.

At the insistence of her maternal grandmother, Ramsey underwent a form of excision on or the removal of her clitoris, labia minora and most of the labia majora. Her recovery took eight weeks. She described the pain as excruciating.

"I couldn't even urinate, because it was burning so much," she said. Thirty-six years later, Ramsey is still in pain.

She has a tremendous amount of scar tissue in the area, which complicated delivery of her son, who is now 21 years old. And a nerve behind her clitoral wall flares up with weather changes.

"When the weather is hot, I can't even sit down or sleep," she said.

The AMA's Council on Scientific Affairs has documented three types of female mutilation: clitoridectomy, infibulation and excision, the process which has complicated Ramsey's life.

Clitoridectomy, appropriately titled a female circumcision, involves the partial or total removal of the clitoris. This procedure of the three mentioned has the smallest long-term impact, doctors said in the December 1995 report, "Female Genital Mutilation."

More damage is done during infibulation, or pharaonic circumcision, where about 66 percent of the labia majora will be removed. Then "the two sides of the vulva are then stitched together by silk or catgut or are held together by thorns," the report said.

Circumcisions were first performed among Arabs in ancient Egypt, but today Christians, Muslims and Jews from every socioeconomic class in countries like Ethiopia, Sudan, Nigeria still continue the practice, because they "want women to have no desire," Ramsey said.

Ethiopian religious leaders say the reason, "is that a man can't satisfy an uncircumcised woman. In this part of the world men marry four to five women. Without mutilation, they can't satisfy all of them," Ramsey said. "It's just for the man."

It also prevents family embarrassment.

"That way the girl can be good. Uncircumcised women are called loose women, because they can run behind their families and embarrass them when they get horny," she said.

The procedure is performed in the name of culture or for the sake of tradition between birth and the age of 14 years. It is

(See Mutilation, Page 7)

THE EOB BUSINESS LICENSE FAIR!

The Economic Opportunity Board of  
Clark County's Micro Business  
Program will host a

**BUSINESS LICENSE  
DAY FAIR**

July 9, 1996 at the  
West Las Vegas Library  
located at

951 West Lake Mead

from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**OPEN FREE TO THE PUBLIC**

**BUSINESS LICENSE REPRESENTATIVES  
FROM THE CITY, CLARK COUNTY, NORTH LAS  
VEGAS, HENDERSON AND BOULDER CITY WILL  
ALL BE THERE TO SATISFY ALL YOUR  
BUSINESS LICENSE NEEDS.**

**YOU DON'T NEED TO TRAVEL ALL AROUND  
TOWN TO GET THE INFORMATION THAT YOU  
NEED. IT WILL ALL BE THERE AT THE EOB  
BUSINESS LICENSE DAY FAIR!**

**RSVP AT 647-7736!**