

NEWS CLIPS

SCHOLARSHIP SENDS LOW-INCOME STUDENTS TO COLLEGE

Thanks to a collaboration between government officials and business owners, 400 low-income high school students will be able to attend the Community College of Southern Nevada. The scholarship is financed federally and through private donations. The federal government will provide \$150,000; tennis star Andre Agassi donated \$100,000 through the Agassi Foundation; and Car dealer Tom Saitta plans to give \$50,000 to \$60,000. The scholarships are reserved for low-income high school students who live in designated areas of the city.

DRIVERS: OBEY SPEED LIMITS IN YEAR-ROUND SCHOOL ZONES

School is still in, at least for a quarter of area schools. Thus Las Vegas Municipal Court Chief Judge Seymour Brown warns drivers to adhere to school speed zones or face a hefty fine. Minimum bail is \$12 a mile for every mile over the speed limit, plus Administrative Assessment and Court Construction fees. The speed limit ranges from 15 to 25 miles per hour. A driver convicted of driving twice the speed limit in a school zone will pay \$610, which includes all fees. Supplemental signs reading "12 Month School" mark the school zones that remain in effect throughout the year.

SHABAZZ UNDERGOES FIFTH SURGERY

Betty Shabazz, the widow of Malcolm X, underwent a fifth surgery Wednesday morning to remove skin destroyed in a June 1 fire in her Yonkers, N.Y., apartment. Shabazz, 61, is still in critical condition at the Bronx's Jacobi Medical Center. She suffered smoke inhalation and third-degree burns over 80 percent of her body. Police said the fire was set by her 12-year-old grandson, Malcolm Shabazz, who is in juvenile custody. Scores of people have donated blood for Shabazz whose skin is being replaced with Integra, an artificial skin that fosters tissue regeneration.

POLL: BLACKS, WHITES PERCEIVE RACE RELATIONS DIFFERENTLY

The way blacks and whites view race relations is as different as, well, black and white. A new Gallop Poll says while changes have occurred, a big gap in perception remains. For example, the poll says most whites think blacks receive fair treatment. Under half the blacks questioned believe that's the case. Whites see themselves as having very little personal bias against blacks. But blacks say whites who think that deceive themselves. Still, whites are more willing to say they would vote for a qualified black candidate for president. In 1958, only 35 percent said that. In this survey, it's 93 percent. Majorities of both groups believe race relations will continue to be a problem.

CLINTON PREPARES FOR RACE SUMMIT; PLANS MAJOR INITIATIVE

President Clinton has been meeting civil rights and religious leaders as he prepares a major initiative on race relations. The president's plans were the subject of a more-than-hour-long meeting at the White House this week. Clinton is to launch his campaign for racial healing at a speech in San Diego on Saturday. Aides say the president is planning to appoint an advisory board on race, to conduct town meetings across the country. Those would lead to a White House conference on the subject in November — and ultimately to recommendations for concrete steps for more racial harmony.

REPORT PROVIDES NEW FACTS ON GUN OWNERSHIP

Whites in the United States are more likely to own guns than blacks, and blacks are more likely than Hispanics said a recent study. About 25 percent of American adults own a firearm and ownership is most prevalent among middle-aged, middle class whites from rural areas. The national survey of private ownership of firearms was carried out for the Police Foundation by professors from Georgetown and Duke universities. The survey also said some 50 percent of American firearm owners and most handgun owners buy them for protection against crime. On a typical day in the U.S., the report said, one million adults carry guns with them and a further two million carry firearms in their vehicles. Where firearms were once used for hunting, now most handgun owners and 46 percent of all gun owners said they possessed weapons primarily for protection against criminals, said the report. The study also found that 20 percent of gun owners failed to follow safe storage procedures for keeping guns locked and unloaded.

LATEST TWIST IN CIA/CONTRA COCAINE SCANDAL

Gary Webb, the *San Jose Mercury News* investigative reporter who extensively documented a pattern of the U.S. government's knowledge and complicity in cocaine trafficking, recently defended his work on "The Madison Show" amid a new barrage of attacks that seek to discredit his findings. Webb informed that since February, the *Mercury News* has been holding four new stories that confirm information in the previous series and even goes further to implicate the CIA and the National Security Council in the cocaine trafficking scandal.

Lawyers say DA playing race card

By Damon Hodge
Sentinel-Voice

Primm Valley Hotel videotape surveillance shows an 18-year-old quickly entering and leaving an arcade bathroom where murder suspect Jeremy Strohmeier is accused of raping and strangling a 7-year-old black girl Memorial Day weekend.

Long beach native David Cash is the principal witness in what several local attorneys believe is a racially tainted case.

Strohmeier, 18, of Long Beach is charged in connection with the May 25 death of second-grader Sherrice Iverson, whose body lie propped up on a toilet in a women's bathroom.

Several local lawyers believe the Clark County District Attorney's Office may be guilty of racial posturing by not charging Cash an accessory to this crime.

"Race has clearly come into play," said criminal justice attorney Lizzie Hatcher who has tried several similar cases. "If Strohmeier and Cash were anybody other than upper middle-class whites, they would be sitting in the Clark County Detention Center or the Los Angeles County Jail."

David Phillips, also a criminal justice attorney and a member of the state University Board of Regents, agreed.

Phillips said the DA's office is trying to "save face" by making Cash their star witness. He said Cash's testimony is immaterial since all the evidence points to Strohmeier as the killer.

Longtime attorney Clarence Gamble is familiar with racially



SHERRICE IVERSON

charged cases. He represented Dr. James Tate in his discrimination suit against University Medical Center. Gamble said the DA's office is guilty of racial posturing, but not in this case.

He compared the situation to the recent case of former Las Vegas Police Officer Ronald Mortensen convicted in the drive-by shooting death of a 21-year-old Hispanic man in December. His friend and former colleague Christopher Brady has not been tried in the case. Brady, who drove the vehicle, provided vital testimony in the trial. He has yet to be charged.

"The DA moved strategically," Gamble said referring to the assumed

strategy the prosecutors office used. "If both defendants were charged, each could plead the fifth (right to refuse self-incrimination). "If neither testify, the case is lost," Gamble said the DA's possible rationale.

Brady has since applied to become a police officer with a local Paiute tribe. Since the trial, one woman has come forward charging Brady with forcing her to perform oral sex during a traffic stop in October.

Metro is reviewing the case. In the interim, community activists are revisiting why Brady was not charged and why Cash isn't facing charges in Iverson's death.

Clark County District Attorney Stewart Bell said it is not a crime to witness a crime and not report it.

"It may be a crime in the eyes of God, but not in the eyes of the Nevada legislature," Bell said.

Elmer "Geronimo" Pratt free on bail

Special to Sentinel-Voice

SANTA ANA, Calif. — Former Black Panther Elmer "Geronimo" Pratt was released on bail Tuesday after spending 27 years in prison for a murder he says he did not commit and he vowed to continue the fight for justice.

"I am contributing to the power of the people; the struggle continues," he told cheering supporters outside the courthouse thrusting their fists in the air in the 60's style "black power" salute.

"The truth is going to come out," he told reporters, when asked about the judge's ruling that overturned his 1972 conviction for murdering a school teacher. "I have 27 years of alienation to deal with."

Pratt was asked to say what it was like being in prison: "It's hard to describe, there's a lot of brothers still in the hole (prison)."

He was also bitter toward the late head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, J. Edgar Hoover, who he said

targeted the Black Panther party and other groups viewed as militant or subversive in the late 1960s. "Hoover and (President Richard) Nixon tried to kill us all," he said.

Then adding a human touch, when asked what he wanted to do first, a smiling Pratt replied: "I need to see my mother, I'm a mamma's boy." His mother, who lives in Louisiana, is 94. Pratt's wife Ashaki, son Hiroji and daughter Shona were at his side as he spoke.

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PRATT

Law Firm of Smith & Williams

ATTORNEY AT LAW



TIMOTHY C. WILLIAMS

Timothy Williams is a member of the Nevada & Illinois State Bar, practicing primarily in personal injury cases.

COMBINED 27 YEARS OF LEGAL EXPERIENCE

EMPHASIS ON PERSONAL INJURY CASES

- Automobile Accidents
- Motorcycle Accidents
- Slips & Falls
- Wrongful Death
- Dog Bites
- Pedestrian & Other Bodily Injuries
- Medical Malpractice

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