

CNN anchor to address administrators

By Sharon Savage
Sentinel-Voice

CNN news personality Lyn Vaughan will be the keynote speaker for the National Forum for Black Public Administrators' annual luncheon.

The Sept. 24 luncheon will be held at the Tropicana Hotel. A silent auction begins at 11:30 a.m., followed by a social mixer and entertainment. Awards will be given to locals who have made significant contributions in public administration.

Vaughan is an anchor on CNN's Headline News. She will address the current trends and issues facing public

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— Cranford Crawford, luncheon committee member

administration.

Quarterly luncheons are held featuring African-Americans in leadership positions.

The national conference took place earlier this year in Kansas City. Its focus as well as the local group's focus: to provide networking and support opportunities to its members.

The NFBPA began in Washington D.C. in the 1970s.

Locally, the group has been around since 1990.

The organization provides members the opportunity to be productive and contribute to the improvement of the quality of life in Clark County, said luncheon committee member Cranford Crawford. "We have a responsibility to let people know that there are African-Americans involved in the public sector that serve in key leadership roles, he said.

Tupac

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witnesses, including 19-year-old Yafeu Fula, a member of Tupac's group, Outlaw Immortalz. The New Jersey rapper - who said he could possibly identify the shooter - was murdered Nov. 9 in an Irvington, N.J., housing project.

The book also contends that members of Tupac's camp were held face down after the shooting and that off-duty police officers worked security for Knight - an assertion Scott says was confirmed by a police official. Manning dismissed the claims as incorrect.

Scott touches on several popular motives behind the crime. They include: a bi-coastal rap rivalry sparked by a 1994 robbery at New York's Quad Studios. Tupac believed that Brooklyn rapper Notorious B.I.G., whose real name was Christopher Wallace, orchestrated the shooting attack on him. Wallace and Bad Boy Entertainment CEO Sean "Puffy" Combs were inside the building during the attack. Wallace was gunned down March 9 in Los Angeles outside a party for the 11th annual Soul Train Music Awards.

Others think top record company executives, whom Scott said dispose of rappers when they are no longer useful, might have killed Tupac to boost sales. His posthumously released CD, "Don Kiluminati - The 7-Day Theory" tallied first week sales of 664,000 units and hit the 2.5 million mark in April.

Yet others point to a scuffle prior to the Tyson-Seldon fight inside the MGM hotel. Videotaped surveillance shows Tupac's entourage beating Orlando Anderson, alleged by Compton police to be a Southside Crip. California police allege Knight to have ties to the Bloods. But Las Vegas police have since ruled out gang retaliation. Anderson has not been fingered as a suspect.



Photo special to Sentinel-Voice

Tupac relaxing at an awards show in 1995.

Tupac's murder appears to be the result of a personal vendetta, police have said. They have concluded that the unsolved murders of Shakur and Wallace as well as the Fula killing are unrelated and consistent with drive-by shootings.

The book's trump card undoubtedly is an autopsy photo showing a prostrate Shakur ripped open and lying on a coroner's table. Scott said the photo was intended to prove Tupac was dead.

While in prison, Tupac changed his name to Makaveli after the Italian philosopher Machiaveli who talked of faking his own death. On the cover of the "Don Kiluminati" CD, Tupac hangs nailed to a cross much as Jesus Christ, who is said to have been resurrected. Many cite these

circumstances as proof he is alive.

Huntington Press Publisher Anthony Curtis said Tuesday that the media have questioned his decision to publish the picture. He said he did it to dispel prevailing rumors that Tupac was alive. "I didn't do it to titillate," he said.

Curtis said he jumped on the opportunity to publish the book because it was a "good manuscript" that finally told the story of the artist's killing rather than focusing on his career. Curtis said he heard other companies had shied away from the book because of the topic.

Though she has more than a decade of journalism experience, Scott has had to sidestep barbs thrown at her by blacks who questioned how a white woman could write about

The organization is comprised of people working in public administration or in fields administering social programs. Initially, members were county and state employees.

Now, the membership includes workers in the school district, city government and social services.

Students majoring in public administration or considering working in social services are encouraged to join the group which offers a mentor program and scholarships

To find out more about the NFBPA or for ticket information, call 251-5746.

a black man. "I don't need to be a rap expert to do the story," she said.

Scott said she had passing knowledge about Tupac before the killing. But, the subsequent 10-month information gathering and book-writing process gave her broader insight into the life of the slain rap and film star, she said.

"Tupac was incredibly talented," she said. "He was a good actor and rapper, but was tugged a lot as an individual. He was confused and had a lot of hangers-on." She said the case might never be solved.

The New York-born Shakur burst on the rap scene in the early 1990s with Oakland-based group Digital Underground.

He debuted on the big screen in the movie Juice. He would later co-star in Poetic Justice, Gridlock'd, Bullet and Above The Rim. His career skyrocketed after he signed with Death Row following his release from prison.

The day after

By Damon Hodge
Sentinel-Voice

I remember Sept. 8, 1996 vividly.

I was watching CNN Headline News inside the TV room at my Baton Rouge alma mater, Southern University, when the anchorwoman reported that Tupac Shakur had been shot the night before in Las Vegas.

News reports said assailants in a light-colored Cadillac showered with bullets the black BMW Shakur and Death Row Records CEO Marion "Suge" Knight were riding in, headed to Club 662 after the Mike Tyson-Bruce Seldon heavyweight championship fight.

Pac and Suge - as they were known - were injured; Shakur critically and Knight with graze wounds to his head, the reports said.

I remember thinking, "Man, not again." Pac was shot multiple times in a 1994 robbery outside New York's Quad Studios. His situation was touch-and-go for awhile, especially after he checked himself out of the hospital early.

Immediately, I began asking why this happened?

Had Pac made enemies serving time in a New York prison on a sexual abuse charge? Was the media's much-hyped "beef" between Pac's Death Row camp and Bad Boy Entertainment to blame? What about Suge's alleged gang ties?

Up until his death, Pac insisted that Bad Boy CEO Sean "Puffy" Combs and rapper Notorious B.I.G., whose real name was Christopher Wallace, knew about the assault outside Quad Studios since both were inside the building during the attack.

Wallace - who never responded directly to Shakur's tirades and taunts - was slain March 9 outside a party following the 11th annual Soul Train Music Awards.

Later that day, I learned that Pac and Suge were caught on MGM hotel videotape beating Californian Orlando Anderson, of Compton, Calif. Anderson allegedly has ties to that area's Crips gang members. Several Crips were shot following Shakur's death in what some believe was retaliation by Knight whom it is alleged has ties to the Crips' rivals, the Bloods.

CNN's night report indicated that everyone surrounding the incident, including Las Vegas police, was being tight-lipped, thus hampering the investigation. (Key witnesses later said that Las Vegas police failed to interview them; a claim Metro denies).

I went to bed that night, hoping Pac would survive just as he did three years earlier. Five days later he died at University Medical Center. Three-hundred and sixty-five days hence, we still have no answers.

Ever since Sept. 8, we've been bombarded with theories about why someone would want the immensely talented but troubled entertainer dead. I wrestle with all of the theories. Still am.

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