

Million Woman March plans moving along

By Penni Roberts
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Although The Million Woman March has received unfavorable press recently for being too vague and unorganized, officials say things are going as planned for the Oct. 25 rally.

At a press conference recently Asia Coney, aco-chair of the March, announced that Winnie Mandela, the ex-wife of South African President Nelson Mandela and Julia Wright, daughter of Harlem Renaissance author Richard Wright, will be participating in the event. But Coney said organizers are not focusing on celebrities to draw the big gathering they anticipate.

"It doesn't matter whether we are national figures," she said. "It matters that we are together."

As part of their mission statement, organizers said they wanted to focus on issues that have adversely affected the

black community. "Women of African descent who reside, struggle and interact in grassroots communities have analyzed and assessed unlimited issues and problems, many of which have resulted in the deterioration of African-Americans and African people overall," according to a statement issued by the organizers.

"The Million Women March provides us the opportunity to prioritize the human and environmental issues. It will collectively enable us to develop an assertive and aggressive movement to ensure the participation and impact of people of African descent," the statement said.

Organizers recently unveiled the platform issues that some had contended were non-existent.

They include:
• National support for

Congresswoman Maxine Waters, in an effort to probe the CIA's participation in and relationship to the influx of drugs into the African-American community.

• The development and completion of independent black schools from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade.

• Forming mechanisms that will address the development and advancement of black women upon leaving the penal system.

• The development of health facilities that can offer preventive and therapeutic treatment, and a major emphasis on alternative and traditional medicine.

• The formation of Rites of Passage centers which provide continual programming in addition to assigned enrollment periods.

• Further development of black women, who are or who
(See March, Page 7)



Photo special to Sentinel-Voice

ROAD WARRIORS

North Las Vegas City Councilman John Rhodes joined officials from the Regional Transportation Commission recently for an awards ceremony in Chicago by the American Public Transportation Association. Rhodes also serves as RTC commissioner for North Las Vegas. At left is David Wood, RTC vice-chair and Henderson City Councilman. Pictured in the middle is RTC director Kurt Weinrich. The association presented its Outstanding Achievement Award to Ciitizen's Area Transit (CAT) for its fixed route service. Consideration is based in part upon demonstrated achievement in efficiency and effectiveness, customer service and satisfaction, safety performance, maintenance, innovation and agency policy and administration.

Little Rock Nine: The real celebration begins

By Janetta Kearney
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Last week we commemorated the survival, maturity and prosperity of nine black children who on Sept. 25, 1957, braved the doors of Central High School in Little Rock, Ark., and won a victory for integration.

On Sept. 19, a week-long schedule of official events began focusing on Central High School, the City of Little Rock, the "Little Rock Nine" and remembrance of a crisis 40 years hence.

Though the "Nine" deserved recognition, many residents disagreed on the significance, if any, of the celebration.

They asked: Why was it taking place? What were we celebrating? How much was this party costing and who was paying for the glitter?

Even members of the

"Nine" questioned the program. But they praised the "other program."

The "other program," as some dubbed the event at Philander Smith College on Sept. 27, was the real celebration with the "Little Rock Nine," their families and representatives from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

The event, spearheaded for the African-American Coalition by Leta Anthony, was also dubbed "the People's Celebration." It was a place where those from the grass roots community could come together to remember and celebrate the strides achieved since 1957 because of the "Nine."

"Note that all (of the "Nine") left Arkansas and returned as successful business adults," Anthony said.

She stressed the need for commemoration by the entire community. She said that too much focus had been placed on the school, distracting from the accomplishments of the "Nine," their families, the NAACP, churches and others supporting desegregation.

Annie Abrams, who participated in planning an event for Central High

Museum, Inc., said before the celebrations began that "the community must applaud ... the black leadership of Little Rock for ensuring that they are included in this event. It is clear that the celebration of the birthday of Central High School is no more inclusive in its 70th year, than at the beginning. It is also clear that the grass roots community is

not an inclusive part of the scheduled celebrations.

"We have had to take this separate and unequal event and produce an inclusive, quality program for those omitted and left out of the general events," she said.

The "Little Rock Nine" should be applauded for sharing themselves and their families with the community.

They are our heroes and sheroes, our examples and our role models. They show us what we can accomplish despite a tumultuous beginning, with encouragement from friends, faith in God, hard work and the will to endure to the end.

Janetta Kearney is publisher of the Arkansas State Press.

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