

# NEWS CLIPS

## LES BROWN TO CONDUCT BOOK SIGNING AT BORDER'S

Motivational speaker, author and radio and television personality Les Brown will be signing his latest book, "It's Not Over Until You Win: How to Become the Person You Always Wanted to Be—No Matter What the Obstacle" at 7 p.m. at Borders Book Shop & Cafe, 2323 S. Decatur Blvd. The one-time host of his own self-titled television show is still enjoying the success of his first book, "Live Your Dreams." In the new paperback book, Brown attempts to present a plan to inspire people to confront life's challenges without fear, overcome its inevitable defeats and tragedies and rejoice in its successes, laid out in his new paperback. For more information call 258-0999.



LES BROWN

## U.S. POPULATION NEARS 269 MILLION AS 1998 BEGINS

More Americans than ever before rang in the New Year, 268,921,733 to be exact, a 2.4 million—or .9 percent increase from last year, the Commerce Department's Census Bureau reported. The Census Bureau based its figure on a projected 3.9 million births, 2.3 million deaths, net international migration of 827,000 and net return of American citizens (including armed forces) of 40,600. "The level of births occurring in the United States each year has been declining since 1990, when 4.2 million births occurred," said Census Bureau analyst Lisa Kuzmeskus. "The number of deaths in 1997 were slightly higher than the number in 1996," she said. America's population is projected to grow by an additional 2.3 million persons during 1998, primarily because of natural increase—the excess of births over deaths. The New Year's Day population total represents an 8.1 percent increase over the April 1, 1990 census total of 248,765,170. The projections do not include U.S. citizens —armed forces or civilians — who live abroad.

## RENO DELAYS HATE CRIME DECISION PENDING LOCAL TRIAL

Attorney General Janet Reno has postponed any decision about whether the burning and beheading of a black man was racially motivated until two white men, Emmet Cressell, Jr. and Louis Ceparano, accused of the crime have been prosecuted. The notification came in a December letter to state Attorney General Richard Cullen, who asked the Justice Department in August to allow the state to pursue its case first. "At the conclusion of the state proceedings and the federal investigation, federal prosecutors will consider all the evidence and determine whether any further federal action is warranted," Reno wrote. Federal authorities are investigating whether the July 25, 1997 death of 40-year-old Garnett Johnson, Jr. was a racially motivated hate crime. Such a finding could result in the filing of charges under the Federal Civil Rights Act. Investigators say Johnson was doused with gasoline and set afire and then his head was cut off, after an all-night drinking party at the rural Grayson County home of Ceparano. Cressell was charged with first-degree murder while Ceparano faces capital murder. Both were also charged with robbery for stealing the victim's watch. If convicted Ceparano faces a possible death sentence and Cressell life in prison. Ceparano's trial is set for April 1.

## FIRST BLACK-OWNED THEATER CHAIN OPENS IN CHICAGO

Alisa and Donzell Starks, owners of Inner City Entertainment, Inc. (ICE), the first African-American-owned theater chain in the country, have brought more than a touch of Hollywood to Chicago. The three \$40 million state-of-the-art multiplexes financed by the husband and wife team also brought more than 400 jobs, family-oriented entertainment and hope for economic revitalization in Chicago's underserved communities. Inner City Entertainment, along with their Toronto-based partners, Cineplex Odeon Corporation, will operate the Chicago multiplexes. Mayor Richard M. Daley praised the project for generating "much needed" economic growth in the city's rebuilding of Lawndale, Chicago Lawn and Chatham neighborhoods, as well as providing a job training program for area youth. The Inner City Entertainment/Cineplex Odeon Theatres premiered with the opening screening of Steven Spielberg's film "Amistad."

# Simpson remark raises red flags

Special to Sentinel-Voice

O.J. Simpson, the ex-football star acquitted of killing his ex-wife in summer of 1994, is back in the news.

Simpson told Esquire magazine: "Even if I did do this, it would have to have been because I loved her very much, right?"

The question merited a 10-page cover story in the February issue of the magazine.

"I think about the remark all the time now, but I'm not sure what it means," Celia Farber wrote. "O.J. would angrily deny that it means what you may think it means. He has never come close to confessing that he murdered his ex-wife."

Farber said Simpson told her, in that same conversation, "Listen, I would love to get my hands on whoever did this. Love to." And, talking about Nicole Brown Simpson, she quotes him as saying: "If I'm hurting right now, it's not because I've done anything wrong. It's because I

*"Even if I did do this, it would have to have been because I loved her very much, right?"*

— O. J. Simpson

miss her."

Simpson was acquitted of the June 12, 1994 slaying of his ex-wife and Ronald Goldman on June 12, 1994, but was found liable for the deaths in a wrongful death trial in 1995 and ordered to pay \$33.5 million.

Farber recalled one phone conversation with Simpson.

"Suddenly, with no explanation or prompting, he says something that makes me stop breathing for a second: 'Let's say I committed this crime,' he says, 'Even if I

did do this, it would have to have been because I loved her very much, right?'" she wrote in the article.

Farber said she questioned Simpson about the remark again when she encountered him in New York, asking him if he remembered it, but he does not.

Later, in a telephone interview, Farber said, "There was nothing about it in conversation that was a confession. He said it in the same offhanded way he says everything ... I can't be responsible for forcing him to explain what he meant."

Fred Goldman, Goldman's father, said Tuesday that Simpson's remark is an example of his arrogance and belief that he has done no wrong.

"He as much as says that he has committed the crime. He is laughing at the world," Goldman said. "And certainly, in his mind, I think, believes that what he has done is perfectly acceptable."

# Hearings in Oprah defamation case begin

Special to Sentinel-Voice

AMARILLO, Texas—Pretrial hearings began Tuesday in a federal lawsuit filed against talk show host Oprah Winfrey by cattlemen who say her show on mad cow disease hurt their business.

Muffled by a gag order, attorneys from both sides declined to comment on what was discussed during a meeting U.S. District Judge Mary Lou Robinson's chambers, a meeting Winfrey did not attend.

Attorneys left the courthouse without comment after 5 p.m. Trial is set for Jan. 20.

Among the many motions currently pending before Robinson is one by Winfrey's defense team to either lift the gag order or move the case to Dallas because Amarillo is central to the world's largest concentration of cattle feeders.

The issue of whether U.S. cattle feeding techniques is conducive to mad cow disease lies at the heart of the lawsuit.

The case traces to April 16, 1996, when Howard Lyman, a consumer activist on meat issues, made comments on Winfrey's show that Amarillo cattle feeder Paul Engler considered defamatory.

Lyman said—among other things—that mad cow disease in the United States "absolutely" could rival AIDS as an epidemic.

Winfrey responded: "It has just stopped me cold from eating another burger. I'm stopped."

A Winfrey endorsement has led to skyrocketing sales for many self-help books.

Engler and other plaintiffs who later joined the suit claim her admonition had a reserve effect: a steep dropoff in already slumping cattle prices. Engler's Cactus Feeders Inc. lost about \$7 million during the spring '96 slump.

Engler's lawsuit is based

on a 1995 Texas law that protects agricultural products from slander. Twelve other states have similar laws, but Texas is the only state where Winfrey faces a challenge.

After the show aired, Winfrey released a statement saying: "I asked questions that I think that the American people deserve to have answered in light of what is happening in Britain. We gave them (cattlemen) a chance to respond."

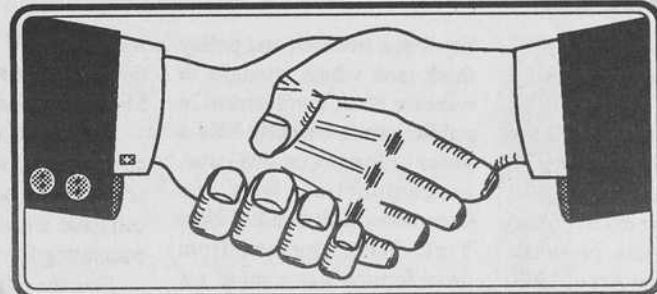
Mad cow disease, or bovine spongiform encephalopathy, has not been reported in the United States. It is a brain-destroying malady that has ravaged cattle in Britain since the late 1980s, where it is believed to have been spread by cattlefeed containing ground-up sheep parts.

Last year, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration ordered an end to feeding livestock meat and bone meal to other livestock.



OPRAH WINFREY

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