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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"



Sentinel-Voice photo by John Broussard

Black gaming pioneers Joe and Sarah Ann Preddy, former owners of the Moulin Rouge hotel / casino stand with BET Holdings President and CEO Robert Johnson who has proposed to build a \$250 million hotel designed for African-Americans. (Below) Johnson speaks during the Martin Luther King, Jr. Committee's banquet.

Johnson stresses family values, announces plans

By Sonya Douglass
Sentinel-Voice

In keeping with the theme Martin Luther King Jr. week, BET President and CEO Robert Johnson told the crowd at the committee's banquet last Saturday that education, family and self-reliance are key to restoring the black community.

Speaking at the Caesar's Palace banquet, themed "Living the Dream by Restoring the Family Nucleus," Johnson also shared his plans to build a \$250 million casino, BET SoundStage, in conjunction with Hilton Hotels Corp. The 800-room hotel would contain a television studio. Johnson lamented that the casino would factor Blacks into the gaming equation, much like the black-owned Moulin Rouge did in the 1950s.



ROBERT M. JOHNSON

Johnson, whose audience included a slew of Las Vegas dignitaries, also used the platform to announce plans to spearhead a fund raising campaign for Rose McKinney-James, the owner

of a solar power company who recently declared her candidacy for lieutenant governor.

The banquet, in its 17th year, was hosted by the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Committee and was one of a series of week-long events designed to honor and celebrate the civil rights activists' ideals.

Parade Grand Marshals Beverly Mathis and Andre Denson were among the guests. Other dignitaries present at the event included: Sen. Joe Neal, D-North Las Vegas, District Judge Lee Gates, Clark County Commissioner Yvonne Atkinson-Gates and North Las Vegas City Councilman John Rhodes.

King-week activities are slated until Monday. For information call 631-1913.

Wall Street to honor King holiday by closing

By Kendall Wilson
Special to Sentinel-Voice

The New York Stock Exchange will not only cease its traditional policy of doing business on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, but will also pursue other initiatives that were part of King's crusade for economic parity.

The Wall Street Journal reported that the Big Board will close Jan. 19, a move that was met with great satisfaction from Rev. Jesse Jackson, other civil rights leaders and some Blacks on Wall Street.

Jackson, who is credited with leading the lobbying effort for the holiday observance, also has Wall Street listening to his campaign to achieve greater diversity in the nation's

financial picture.

From the platform of his Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, which opened on Wall Street — near the Big Board — in early 1997, Jackson has persuaded NYSE chairman Richard Grasso and Travelers Group chairman Sanford Weill to sponsor several days of workshops and a fund raiser on the floor of the exchange to raise awareness and money for the lobbying effort, known as the Wall Street Project.

The attendance of Federal Reserve Board chairman Alan Greenspan at one of the workshops between Jan. 14 and 16 and the involvement of Weill reportedly has attracted much attention.

Jackson's contention has been that the securities industry is still dominated by White

males, and in lobbying for greater diversity at the exchange he is pushing for more upper-level jobs and greater access to capital for Black- and other minority-owned businesses. He is also seeking to raise the level of sophistication of Black consumers, who traditionally have not invested heavily in securities.

Officials of Salomon Smith Barney say their interest in the Wall Street Project is driven by one simple motivation, "...we think it's good for business."

"We support diversity in the workplace," the officials said, adding that the workshops will help minorities and women meet executives of major Wall Street firms. A

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Cop's trial spotlights 'profiling'

Special to Sentinel-Voice

ORLANDO, Fla. — A black police major hit with pepper spray, wrestled and arrested after a traffic stop last April thinks the Orange County Sheriff's Department, not him, should be on trial.

The Monday trial of Aaron Campbell, a 25-year veteran with the Metro-Dade Police Department, on charges of felony assault and resisting arrest with violence charges was postponed until next month after a hearing on defense objections filed last week about how the jury pool was selected — by voter rolls, instead of motor vehicle lists as required under a new state law.

Last April, Campbell was pulled over on the Florida Turnpike by white Orange County sheriff's deputies. The traffic stop ended with him getting hit by pepper spray, being wrestled to the ground and arrested. The encounter was recorded on police videotape, which has been shown on television across the country.

Campbell's lawyer James Cheney Mason said the only thing his client was guilty of was "DWB" — driving while black — and fitting a profile that Orange County deputies use to identify motorists to be stopped and searched for contraband.

"I think race is a part of it," Mason said. "It's not exclusively. They stop people with Miami tags heading north, but minority status is obviously a part of the profile."

Said Campbell in an interview last year: "I was angry. I truly resented the reason I was stopped."

Mason said Campbell was a victim of profiling, a technique that uses race, age, dress,

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Black men clamoring for more prostate funds

Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON — Black men are two to three times more likely to die of prostate cancer than white men, and doctors today are powerless to explain why or reduce the risks.

Calling the figures "a disgraceful tragedy," the American Cancer Society and 100 Black Men of America urged a national attack on prostate cancer Tuesday — hoping to emulate activists who successfully raised millions of research dollars to fight breast cancer and AIDS.

At the top of the agenda is increasing federal research. The government spent about \$80 million on prostate cancer research last year, one-twelfth what is spent on AIDS research and about one-sixth of breast cancer research and prevention funding — even though all three diseases kill about the same number of Americans yearly.

"This country hasn't even paid lip service to prostate cancer," said Jay Hedlund of the National Prostate Cancer Coalition, calling not for reduced spending on other diseases but for equalizing prostate money. "They are going to

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