

# NEWS CLIPS

## CUOMO WILL NOT TESTIFY IN BRAWLEY CASE SAYS JUDGE

POUGHKEEPSIE, N.Y. — Former Gov. Mario Cuomo will not testify at the defamation trial of Tawana Brawley's advisers, a judge ruled Tuesday. State Supreme Court Justice S. Barrett Hickman denied a defense request to call Cuomo and former state Attorney General Robert Abrams as witnesses. Defense lawyers wanted to prove the grand jury investigation ordered by Cuomo was tainted and Abrams was unprepared to investigate Miss Brawley's claim that she was attacked by a group of white men in 1987. Cuomo appointed Abrams as special prosecutor to investigate the black teen-ager's story. The grand jury found evidence that Brawley made up her story and specifically exonerated Steven Pagonos, who was named by her advisers as an attacker. Pagonos is suing the advisers — Alton Maddox, C. Vernon Mason and the Rev. Al Sharpton — for defamation. Hickman said testimony from Cuomo and Abrams would serve to "prolong the trial" and would duplicate testimony that could be given by lesser state officials and the defendants.

## DRUG-RELATED EMERGENCY ROOM CASES ON THE DECLINE NATIONALLY

Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala released data late last year showing an overall six percent decline nationally in drug-related emergency room cases from 1995 to 1996 (from 517,800 to 487,600). The number of cases had steadily increased from 1990 through 1994 and remained level in 1995. "These results are another hopeful sign of progress in our efforts against drugs. But they also signal that our work to prevent substance abuse and treat addiction is far from finished," Shalala said. The data from the Drug Abuse Warning Network, an ongoing national survey of hospital emergency departments, provided emergency department estimates from 21 metropolitan areas. Between 1994 and 1996 decreases were seen in five cities: Boston (20 percent—15,200 to 12,100), Denver (28 percent—5,000 to 3,600), New York (10 percent—43,100 to 35,400), San Francisco (12 percent—11,800 to 10,400) and Washington, D.C. (20 percent—14,200 to 11,300). On the other hand, increases were seen in two cities during the same time period: New Orleans (19 percent—4,700 to 5,800) and Newark (seven percent—9,400 to 10,100). Fourteen cities were statistically unchanged: Atlanta (9,800), Baltimore (15,400), Buffalo (3,100), Chicago (22,700), Dallas (5,000), Detroit (20,200), Los Angeles (19,200), Phoenix (7,200), St. Louis (6,100), San Diego (5,300) and Seattle (8,300). Nationally, the most frequently recorded reason for a drug-related emergency department visit was "overdose" (239,100).

## NAT'L ALLIANCE OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN ATHLETES TACKLE EMPOWERMENT

The National Alliance of African-American Athletes, will host its 9th annual African-American Male Empowerment Day on Sunday, Feb. 1, with a kickoff in Washington, D.C. The event first began in 1990 when the alliance sought to bring attention to the dilemmas facing African-American males. Its goal remains the same: to create a political mandate via events and educational programs to encourage public officials, schools, corporate America and individuals to initiate activities to address issues facing African-American males as well as activities that will ultimately empower them. Participating cities include: Harrisburg, Pa., Indianapolis, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Chicago, Cleveland, New York, Erie, Pa., Dayton, Oh., Dallas, Boston, and Atlanta. For details about the day's events call F. Willis Johnson at 317-233-3854 or Nathan Pringle at 717-783-2590.

## MAGAZINE REVEALS CAUSE FOR CONCERN ABOUT BLACK AMERICA'S HEALTH

When it comes to the health of African Americans, there is more cause for worry than celebration. The news worth applauding is that African-Americans have experienced a general improvement in their health in the 1990s, compared to a decade ago. The bad news is that Blacks still find themselves lagging behind Whites in almost every health category, according to the cover story in the Jan./Feb. 1998 issue of *HealthQuest: The Publications of Black Wellness*. The article, titled "The State of Black Health," examines the similarities and differences between the health of Black and White Americans. For both groups, the leading causes of death are heart disease, cancer and stroke. The similarities end there. Deaths associated with HIV/AIDS have become a more prominent health issue for Blacks than for Whites, according to the article. The HIV/AIDS-related mortality rate declined to the second leading cause of death for White men between 25 and 44 years old and the fifth leading cause of death among White women in the same age group. However, it ranks as the top killer of Black men and women in the same age group.

# Poultry-giant fined \$4 million for gifts to Espy

*Special to Sentinel-Voice*  
WASHINGTON — U.S. District Judge Ricardo Urbina on Monday fined Tyson Foods Inc. \$4 million and told the food giant to comply with the terms of its four years' probation or risk losing government business.

Urbina also directed on Monday that the Arkansas-based poultry producer pay \$2 million to cover the costs of an investigation by independent counsel Donald C. Smaltz.

Tyson pleaded guilty last month to giving former Agriculture Espy tickets worth \$2,271 to a 1994 National Football League playoff game, a \$1,200 scholarship for Espy's girlfriend, air fare worth \$2,556 for Espy and his girlfriend to

attend an Arkansas party and tickets worth \$6,000 to President Clinton's first inaugural dinner.

As part of the deal, the Agriculture Department agreed not to bar Tyson from selling chicken, pork and other food to school cafeterias and military bases.

The company, which is the nation's largest poultry processor, sold food worth \$10.5 million to the Defense Department alone in 1996.

Urbina said if the company fails to honor the terms of its four-year probation, he might stop it from doing business with the government.

Tyson also agreed to implement a company-wide ethics training program, will

keep a log of contacts made by senior officials with federal agencies and submit its books and records to unannounced examination.

"This case of corporate criminal liability reflects senior management's disregard and arrogance toward corporate accountability," Smaltz said in a statement.

The agreement, he said, "imposes on Tyson Foods those internal safeguards that companies must implement to protect against management's misdeeds."

An official at Tyson headquarters in Springdale, Ark., refused to comment on the sentence.

The company agreed to cooperate with Smaltz's



MIKE ESPY

prosecution of Espy, who is awaiting trial on charges he sought and took illegal gratuities from Tyson and other large agribusinesses that were regulated by the Agriculture Department.

Espy, who resigned three years ago, has pleaded innocent.

# Judge orders Winfrey case to stay in Amarillo

*Special to Sentinel-Voice*  
AMARILLO, Texas — A federal judge on Monday refused to move Oprah Winfrey's beef defamation trial to Dallas and reinforced the gag order he has on the case.

U.S. District Judge Mary Lou Robinson judge's decision wasn't unexpected. Winfrey, who asked Robinson to either lift the gag order or move the trial, already has made plans to tape her show here over the next month.

The case is the first test of a 1995 Texas law holding people liable for falsely disparaging food products. Twelve other states have similar statutes. The trial, which pits a group of Texas cattle feeders against Winfrey and a vegetarian activist, begin Jan. 20 in Amarillo.

Paul Engler and other area cattle feeders sued Winfrey and anti-meat activist Howard

Lyman shortly after the April 19, 1996 "Oprah Winfrey Show" in which Lyman said that beef industry practices could promote "mad cow"

disease, or bovine spongiform encephalopathy, a brain-destroying disease that has ravaged cattle in Britain since the late 1980s.

It is believed to have been spread by cattle feed containing ground-up sheep parts, but it was not until 1996 that British

(See Winfrey, Page 14)

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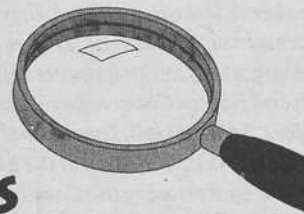


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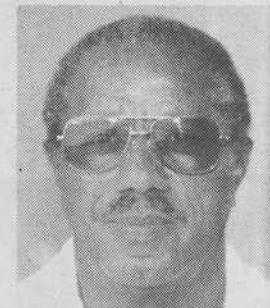
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