

LAS VEGAS

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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

Neal scores well at Democratic convention

By John T. Stephens III
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Gubernatorial candidate Joe Neal received a standing ovation after delivering a powerful fiery speech at the Democrats state convention at Bally's this weekend. More than 300 Democrats poured in to kick off election '98.

Neal used the opportunity to push his platform: increasing the state gaming tax on casinos; repealing the per-employee tax count on all business; supporting HMO-managed health care reform; and protecting Nevada's utility rate payers from pay hikes.

Andrew Barbano, Neal's campaign manager, contends Neal can ride those issues to the frontrunner's spot in the race for Carson City.

"Two major polls were taken by Steve Wynn

and Kenny Guinn," Barbano said, and "both polls showed Neal beating Kenny Guinn statewide."

Barbano could not produce copies of the polls, but said Speaker Joe Dini and Gov. Miller's public disavowing of Neal signal the 25-year North Las Vegas senator's strength.

"They had to stop the virus before it spreads," Barbano said of both democratic leaders, contending the gaming industry pushed them to criticize Neal.

Neal said the gaming industry wants to control Democrats and Republicans.

"I abhor this type of activity and feel that it needs to be challenged," Neal said.

U.S. Senators Harry Reid and Richard Bryan have also joined the anti-Neal fray. Both cite his stance on storing nuclear waste at Yucca

Mountain, 125 miles from Las Vegas.

"I have never campaigned to bring nuclear waste in this state," Neal said. "If the waste is going to come here then we must be paying for it because there is \$14 billion involved."

Said Bryan, "I will not endorse any candidate whose position on the nuclear waste dump is not supportive of its opposition."

The prayers of Neal's detractors were answered Monday when Las Vegas Mayor Jan Jones threw her name in the hat on the last day to file for the office.

Convention goers received the news with a luke warm reception, her indecisiveness to run early on and her loss to Governor Miller in the 1994 gubernatorial race still fresh on many Democrats' minds.

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JOE NEAL

Memorial walk set for younger victims

By Deborah Kohlen
Sentinel-Voice

A walk this Saturday will commemorate the one-year anniversary of the death of Sherrice Iverson. The Los Angeles second-grader was raped and strangled May 25 in the bathroom of the Primm Valley Hotel, 43 miles southeast of Las Vegas on the California-Nevada border.

Californian Jeremy Strohmeyer sits in the Clark County Detention Center

awaiting a June trial on rape, kidnap and murder charges. Now 19, the Long Beach native, extradited to Las Vegas after hotel surveillance



SHERRICE IVERSON

the Iverson family's church, will participate. Members of the girl's immediate family are also expected to attend the memorial.

After the walk, a plaque will be placed at the foot of the tree. Two bouquets of carnations set at the sides of the pine tree will offer condolences and solidarity to people grieving for children killed or injured in Jonesboro, Ark., Pearl, Miss., and Paducah, Ky., and Pennsylvania.

At last year's service, a 15-foot Mondale pine tree donated by Star Nursery was planted. Troutman said park visitors have been tying

red and pink ribbons to the tree's branches as a memorial and homeless people who sleep there guard the tree. Also following last year's script will be a balloon release. A large bouquet of red and pink balloons, symbolizing love and understanding and hope lost, will float skyward. Organizers plan to release 800 balloons this year since Iverson would have celebrated her eighth birthday this year.

Crockett and Troutman are asking for donations and participation.

"It's a way to work through my own pain, and for the community to do the same," Troutman said. "The loss of any child is a loss to us all."

Help from on high



Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

Speaking out in defense of Yvonne Atkinson Gates, County Commissioner Chair, Rev. Willie Davis, president of the Ministers Alliance Association of Southern Nevada held a press conference Tuesday at the West Las Vegas Library.

Ministers' alliance backs Atkinson Gates

By John T. Stephens III
Special to Sentinel-Voice

"District D has spoken! District D is not for sale!"

That theme permeated a Tuesday press conference held by the Ministers Alliance Association of Southern Nevada to galvanize support for embattled Clark County Commission Chairwoman Yvonne Atkinson Gates.

"We support Commissioner Gates and we want her to fulfill her tenure in office as our representative," said Rev. Willie Davis said, chairman of the alliance.

The clergy-backed rally at West Las Vegas Library drew more than 30 Atkinson Gates supporters. The past few months have been rather harrowing for the commissioner: she was reprimanded by the Ethics Commission for violating two

ethics laws in seeking to open a daiquiri business in casinos she regulates and faces an ethics investigation into whether she awards concession at McCarran International Airport's new D terminal to friends.

Alliance member Willie Jacobs, a minister at True Love Missionary Baptist Church said he supported Atkinson Gates because he felt the rules weren't being applied even-handedly. It seems "we have different rules for different people," he said.

Other commissioners and Las Vegas Mayor Jan Jones have also come under the ethics microscope, but Atkinson Gates supporters say, haven't had to endure the media-driven onslaught to smear their reputations.

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