

NEWS CLIPS

AGENCY GETS \$757,000 GRANT TO HELP YOUTHS

CARSON CITY, Nev. — A state agency will receive \$757,000 from the U.S. Department of Justice for programs aimed at reducing youth violence and delinquency. The grant is being awarded to the Nevada Division of Child and Family Services, which will distribute funds throughout the state, Sens. Harry Reid and Richard Bryan, both D-Nev., said in a joint news release. Funding from the grant can be used to improve coordination among juvenile justice systems, to provide improved educational and vocational opportunities for youth, and to enhance gang prevention activities.

COURT OKS INTERNATIONAL DAMAGES FOR DENNY VIDEO

SAN FRANCISCO — A news service that videotaped the beating of trucker Reginald Denny during the 1992 Los Angeles riots is entitled to damages for unauthorized overseas showings, a federal appeals court ruled Monday. A judge had narrowed Los Angeles News Service's copyright lawsuit against Reuters to domestic infringements on the grounds that U.S. copyright laws don't apply in foreign countries. But the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said damages are available if an unauthorized copy is made domestically, then transmitted abroad. William A. Bergen, lawyer for Los Angeles News Service, said the ruling could mean \$6 million in damages and greater protection against the transmission of unauthorized copies on satellite feeds and the Internet. "Up until today, infringers have been allowed to infringe by broadcasting it on a satellite feed" so that all broadcasts take place in foreign countries, he said. Louis Petrich, lawyer for Reuters America Inc., wouldn't comment, saying he had not seen the ruling.

HOWARD UNIVERSITY TO CELEBRATE MANDELA'S 80TH BIRTHDAY

Ambassador of South Africa Franklin A. Sonn, NAACP President and CEO Kweisi Mfume and Howard University President H. Patrick Swygert recently announced they will host an 80th birthday celebration honoring South African President Nelson Mandela. The reception will be held at Howard University in Washington, D.C., on July 17. Swygert pointed out that, "during his historic 1994 tour, Nelson Mandela visited only one institution of higher learning: Howard University, where he received an honorary degree." "I can think of no one more deserving of this great tribute than Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, who emerged from almost 29 years of imprisonment without bitterness and worked tirelessly and without equal for reconciliation and nation-building in South Africa," Sonn said. "President Mandela is a beacon of light that shines around the world. His greatness is unparalleled in the struggle for freedom, human kindness and self-determination. It is indeed an honor to salute Mr. Mandela on his 80th birthday," Mfume said. Mandela was born July 18, 1918.

REPORT WARNS OF HEALTH REVERSALS AS MINORITY TEEN SMOKING INCREASES

Rapid increases in smoking by minority teenagers threaten to reverse the progress against lung cancer among minority populations made during the early 1990s, according to a report from the Surgeon General. The report is the first in the 34-year history of surgeon general's studies to focus on tobacco use among ethnic and racial minorities. "We are witnessing the first steps of a potentially tragic reversal for the health of American minorities," said Dr. David Satcher, the new surgeon general. The report surveyed tobacco use and its health consequences among all four major U.S. racial and ethnic minority groups: African-American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian-American/Pacific Islander and Hispanic. According to the report, cigarette smoking is a major cause of death and disease in all four groups. Death rates from lung cancer are 50 percent higher among African-American men than among White men. In recent years tobacco use among adolescents from racial and ethnic minority groups has begun to increase rapidly. Though their rates remain considerably lower than those of Whites, cigarette smoking among African-American and Hispanic adolescents has increased in the 1990s after several years of substantial declines among adolescents of the major racial and ethnic groups. African-American youths had the greatest decline of the four groups during the 1970s and 1980s, but the steepest increase in use in the 1990s. Cigarette smoking among African-American teens has increased 80 percent over the last six years — three times as fast as among White teens. For a copy of the report call 1-800-CDC-1311.

Abiola's daughter points finger at Nigeria

Special to Sentinel-Voice

ATLANTA — The daughter of Nigeria's most prominent political prisoner told an NAACP audience the Nigerian government is culpable in his death last week.

Hafsat Abiola, 23, also called on black Americans to pressure Washington to help end Nigeria's military dictatorship.

"The military conveniently took him out," she said, adding that she and others in her country believe her father was poisoned despite initial autopsy reports that 60-year-old Moshood Abiola died of natural causes.

She told Associated Press Television last week that she suspected her father was poisoned.

"There is a deep crisis in my country," she said Monday. "What are a people to do when they have tried all nonviolent means to bring democracy?"

Her remarks came at the annual convention of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Moshood Abiola died last week, falling ill while meeting with a group of visiting U.S. officials shortly before he was expected

to be released.

Abiola's death touched off riots among his supporters, who believe he was murdered by the military government. At least 55 people were killed in the upheaval.

An autopsy found that Abiola died naturally of an apparent heart attack, but pro-democracy groups still hold the government responsible for the death, saying he received poor treatment while in prison.

A program coordinator for the Special Olympics in Washington D.C., his daughter said she plans to return to Nigeria to help bring political change.

She said black Americans should know they can help by pressuring black leaders who give aid and comfort to Nigeria's leaders by accepting money or meeting with military leaders there. Abiola was the apparent winner of annulled presidential elections in 1993.

After declaring himself the rightful president, he was jailed a year later for treason by Nigeria's late dictator, Gen. Sani Abacha, who died in early June.

Parents settle lawsuits in son's death

By Sonya M. Toler
Special to Sentinel-Voice

The parents of Jonny Gammage, the Black motorist who died while in the custody of suburban Pittsburgh police, did not come to town on June 11 to formally announce the acceptance of a \$1.5 million settlement offered by the defendants in a civil lawsuit they filed as a result of their son's death. The Syracuse, N.Y. couple was unavailable because of a recent death in the family.

On hand was local attorney William King, who represented the family in the lawsuit. He said the Gammages will return to Pittsburgh for a later press conference.

"We felt it was time to settle," said King. "It at least gives them something they can live with."

None of the defendants in the lawsuit admitted any wrongdoing in Gammage's death. However, the suburban communities of Brentwood,

Whitehall and Baldwin as well as the Brentwood EMS will each pay one-fourth of the settlement.

King spoke briefly to the *Courier* prior to the cancellation of the scheduled press conference. He said the settlement proves that Black attorneys can successfully represent clients in complicated cases.

Gammage, a 31-year-old businessman and cousin to former Pittsburgh Steeler Ray Seals, was stopped by Brentwood Lt. Milton Mulholland on Oct. 12, 1995, approximately one mile inside the Pittsburgh city limits. Gammage was driving Seals' Jaguar through a predominantly White community.

Reports say four more officers converged on the scene and a scuffle ensued. An autopsy revealed Gammage died of compression to his upper torso. His body showed signs of a beating.

A coroner's inquest recommended that all five officers be charged with homicide, but then-district attorney Robert Colville only filed charges against three officers (Mulholland, Brentwood Sgt. John Vojtas and Baldwin Officer Michael Albert) and reduced the charge to involuntary manslaughter.

Vojtas has since been acquitted, and after two trials, a jury has yet to decide on the innocence or guilt of Mulholland and Albert.

In earlier interviews, Narves and Jonny Gammage Sr. have repeatedly stated they wanted closure in the case. But the community, which has no direct connection with their son, is still concerned about the future of the officers involved. However, University of Pittsburgh law professor Robert Harper said the focus must be on what is in the best interest of the family.

"When you have a suit like this, the question that comes

up most often is to look at the parties and the parents and their desire.

"The policy of the law is to favor settlements and, if the parties can agree, you don't have to go to court and have prolonged representation... This is in the best interest of the family and brings closure," Harper said.

He further explained that he could not speculate on whether or not the civil suit would have been successful.

"When you go to court and you have to prove individual liability, it is difficult in this case. You would have to prove that the government condoned the wrongful death..."

"It's really impossible ever to put a value on a human being's life. Therefore, you have to go to the party and ask for what you would accept. If they've agreed upon it, it has to be a good settlement," he said.

But Dorothy Urquhart, who organized many protests in the

(See *Lawsuit*, Page 20)

"A Midsummer Night's Magic"

hosted by Earvin "MAGIC" Johnson

FRIDAY, JULY 31
CONCERT

7 PM **UNIVERSAL AMPHITHEATRE**



FRANKIE BEVERLY
FEATURING **M A Z E**



MARY J. BLIGE

TICKETS: \$250, \$100, \$75, \$50, \$25

PLUS AARON HALL & KEITH WASHINGTON

TITLE SPONSORS

Coors

PIC-N-SAVE
BARGAINS • CLOSE-OUTS

MAJOR SPONSORS

AT&T

AA
American Airlines

Sheraton Gateway Hotel
LOS ANGELES AIRPORT

MAGIC'S ALL-STAR GAME
featuring **NBA Super Stars vs. '98 College Draft Picks**
SUNDAY, AUGUST 2
Great Western Forum, Inglewood

For Information: **888-MAGIC-05**

TICKETS ON SALE NOW: TICKETMASTER 213-480-3232 • 714-780-2000