

Woman claims to be a descendant of Washington

CHICAGO (AP) — An Illinois woman hopes publicity about Thomas Jefferson's relationship with a slave will bolster her claim that she is descended from George Washington and a slave.

Janet Allen, 44, of Peoria said her ancestors include the nation's first president and a woman named Venus.

Allen and her family went public with the claim two years ago but have been inspired of late by scientific research that suggests Jefferson fathered a child with one of his slaves, Sally Hemings.

"We're trying to prove who we are," Allen said in today's *Chicago Tribune*. "This is where the battle lines are going to be drawn."

Researchers for Washington's estate in Mount Vernon, Va., have found evidence confirming that Allen's slave ancestors played an important role in Washington's family.

But the estate maintains Washington never fathered children and criticized Allen's paternity claim.

"It does put a slight tarnish, ever so slight, on the reputation of the most important person in the history of America," said James Rees, resident director of the estate. "Of all the leaders we've ever had, he deserves to have a character that's unblemished."

Like the controversy surrounding Jefferson, the third president, the Washington claim rests on a long oral tradition and may ultimately be solved using a mix of historical sleuthing and new genetic technology.

The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, which manages Washington's estate, has denied Allen access to hair samples that purportedly belonged to Washington and might help solve the puzzle through DNA tests.

The method used in the Jefferson study used DNA of surviving family members, comparing the Y chromosome, which passes mostly unchanged from father to son. That has prompted Allen and her relatives to try to locate males descended from one of Washington's three brothers or his three uncles.

Eugene Foster, a retired pathologist who organized the Jefferson study, told the *Tribune* he knows of a direct male-line descendant of one of Washington's brothers.

The Allen family's theory involves an alleged liaison between Washington and Venus that would have begun in 1784.

That year, Washington's youngest nephew on his brother's side died at the plantation where Venus lived.

Allen's sister, Linda Allen Bryant, who lives in Colorado, said Washington would have met Venus when he went to comfort the family of his brother, John Augustine Washington.

Washington's brother wrote at the time asking George to visit, although no other record of the trip exists.

Sometime in the next two years, Venus gave birth to a mulatto son named West Ford, the Allen sisters' great-great-great-grandfather. Ford moved to Mount Vernon when Washington's wife, Martha, died in 1802. Washington died in 1799.

The estate said Ford had privileges that were denied slaves around him: He was taught to read, received a primitive vaccination for smallpox, and eventually was freed and given land.

Still, researchers for the estate say Washington was too busy rebuilding Mount Vernon after an eight-year absence during the Revolutionary War to visit his brother's plantation at the time when Ford would have been conceived. No record survives of Washington visiting the plantation between 1783 and 1787.

Some scholars also believe the first president was sterile. In some letters Washington appears to have blamed Martha for their lack of children, but she had two children in her first marriage. She was widowed at age 26 and married Washington about two years later.

Many historians have concluded John Augustine Washington or his son Bushrod are the most likely candidates to have been West Ford's father, the *Tribune* said.

URI minority students have meeting with federal mediator

SOUTH KINGSTOWN, R.I. (AP) — Federal mediator Josephine Carabello met with about 20 minority students at the University of Rhode Island last week to discuss a controversial cartoon in the student newspaper and other incidents that have provoked cries of racism.

Carabello works for an arm of the U.S. Justice Department that responds to incidents of racial tension and attempts to form resolutions agreeable to both sides.

"We're here to see what the problem is and offer assistance," Carabello said.

The cartoon depicted a white professor insulting a black student. It was intended to satirize a professor who denigrated the academic abilities of blacks and Mexican Americans. The incident happened over a year ago in Texas, and few students here understood the context.

Minority students said the cartoon's publication was racist. They held several protests. Editors of *The Good 5 Cent Cigar* newspaper, all of whom are white, refused to apologize for publishing the cartoon. They wrote that they regretted any

misunderstanding.

Last Monday, students complained to Carabello about several incidents in recent years, including racist graffiti being painted on the walls of a dormitory bathroom and racist chanting by students last year.

"There's no sensitivity here," said senior Michelle-Ann Small.

Carabello said she will meet with university faculty and administrators, then recommend steps to help reduce racial tension.

The Justice Department asked for the meeting after reading about the turmoil that erupted three weeks ago.

As part of protests over the cartoon, the mostly black group Brothers United for Action demanded several things, including expanded courses in Native American, African-American, Latin American and Asian studies.

University President Robert Carothers said he supports all of the group's demands.

Also last Monday, a task force set up to address concerns of the university's minority community asked Carothers to commit to a timetable to meet the demands and other recommendations.

Roll In The New Year With CAT



The new year is here, and what better way to get around town than with a Rolling CAT Pass. CAT has over 40 routes across the city. And with 30 days of unlimited rides, there really is no better way to get where you need to go. Plus, a Rolling CAT Pass is only \$20 (\$10 if you are 6-17 years, 62+ years or disabled). So get the new year rolling by picking up your pass at any of the following locations:

Transit Reduced Fare ID mandatory for discounted price. Children 5 years or younger ride free when accompanied by a fare-paying, responsible person.

NOW OVER 50 VENDOR LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE GREATER LAS VEGAS AREA

DOWNTOWN

Downtown Transportation Center
300 North Casino Center Blvd.

By Mail:
CAT PASSES
P.O. Box 1480
Las Vegas, NV 89125

NORTHWEST

Cash to Go
Rancho & Cheyenne

Cash to Go
Valley View & Sahara

Continental Currency Check Cashing
Owens & H Street (Nucleus Plaza)

Mail Link +
Rainbow & Washington

Meadows Mall Information Desk
Meadows Lane & Valley View

Nationwide Check Services
515 Fremont Street (east of Las Vegas Blvd.)

Postal Junction
Lake Mead & Rampart

Postnet Express
Jones & I-95 (in Smith's Food Ctr.)

Rancho Check Cashing
Rancho & Washington

Supermercado
Rancho & Washington

Turtle Stop #6
Rancho & Craig

Westside Federal Credit
Union #1
418 W. Madison (West of D Street)

Westside Federal Credit
Union #2
1100 N. Martin Luther King & Monroe

SOUTHWEST

Community College of So. NV
W. Charleston & Torrey Pines

Postal Express Plus
E. Decatur & Twain

Postnet Express
W. Tropicana & Jones (in Smith's)

The Mail Stop
S. Martin Luther King & Alta

Senior Dimensions Service Center
Rancho & West Charleston

Mail Center USA
W. Desert Inn & Arville

Mailboxes Etc.
Buffalo & Flamingo

NORTHEAST

Community College of So. NV
Cheyenne & Van Der Meer

Gourmet Cafe
Third St. & Lewis

Mario's Fine Foods
Cheyenne & Marydee

Mr. Postman Plus
Eastern & Sahara

My Office
Lamb (Between Washington & Bonanza)

Mario's Westside Market
Cheyenne & Marydee

Pack and Mail
Eastern & Bonanza

Continental Currency Check Cashing
Eastern & Bonanza

Mail & More
Civic Center & Lake Mead

Package Plus II of Las Vegas
E. Bonanza & Nellis

AOK Mail Center
E. Charleston & Nellis

SOUTHEAST

Abell's Pack & Mail
Nellis & Vegas Valley

Abell's Pack & Mail
E. Desert Inn & Mojave

Advantage Check Cashing
E. Sahara & Lynnwood

Cash Plus
Boulder Hwy. & Flamingo

Copy & Mail Center
E. Tropicana & Morris

Continental Currency Check
Cashing
E. Tropicana & Mojave

Foreign Money Exchange
S. Las Vegas Blvd. & Convention
Center Dr.

Kwiky Mini Mart
Nellis & Sahara

Kwiky Mini Mart
Tropicana & Spencer

J-Mar's Records
Maryland Pkwy. & Sahara

Mailboxes Etc.
Charleston & Bruce

Mailboxes Plus
Paradise & Flamingo

Plaza Market
Charleston & Lamont

Supermercado #2
Maryland Pkwy. & Tropicana

Twain Check Cashing
Twain & Swenson (South side)

UNLV (Moyer Student Union)
Maryland & University Ave

BOULDER CITY

Nevada Drug
1220 Arizona St.

Expedition Depot
1297 Nevada Highway, Boulder City

HENDERSON

Checks Plus
1210 N. Boulder Hwy

Community College of So.
NV, HD
700 College Dr.

Desert Willow Community Center
2020 W. Horizon Ridge & GV Pkwy

Green Valley Drugs
Sunset & Green Valley Pkwy.

Postnet Express
Boulder Hwy & Palo Verde (in Smith's)

LAUGHLIN

Palace Jewelry & Loan
3030 S. Needles Hwy. #300

Flamingo Hilton Gift Shop
1900 S. Casino Dr.

All Check Cashing
2311 S. Casino (Tom's Plaza)

MESQUITE

City Hall
10 E. Mesquite Blvd.



For information call

CAT-RIDE 228-7433

Hablamos Español



TDD 455-5997

CAT... Let's Ride