

1998 *The Year in Review*

By Lee Brown, Sentinel-Voice

Though many may have their attentions set on the fast-approaching millennium, one cannot forget the many events — from politics, to business, to sports — that helped to shape the year 1998.

Even though the recent impeachment hearings against President Bill Clinton and the U.S. military's bombing of Iraq have grabbed national headlines of late, numerous events have taken place both locally and nationally, making this past year a memorable one.



In keeping with the theme of the 17th annual Martin Luther King Week festivities, BET President and CEO Robert L. Johnson told banquet attendees that education, family and self-reliance are key to restoring the black community.

1998 began, as it traditionally does, with the annual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration. Aside from the parade — the largest of its kind in the state — the highlight of the 17th annual slate of activities, was a banquet held at Caesars Palace. Robert L. Johnson, chairman and CEO of BET Holdings, Inc., who at one point had ideas of opening a \$220 million hotel in Las Vegas in conjunction with the Hilton chain, was keynote speaker for the banquet themed: "Living the Dream by Restoring the Family Nucleus."

The City of Las Vegas got good news in January when it was awarded \$6.1 million through four different U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant programs, a three percent increase from 1997-98 fiscal year, and aspiring entrepreneurs were afforded a

place to test market their businesses when the City of Las Vegas' Neighborhood Services Department opened the Las Vegas Business Center and Small Business Incubator at the corner of Lake Mead and Martin Luther King blvds.

Also in January, a slew of activities took place when the Western Region Economic Summit came to the Flamingo Hilton, teaming political and business professionals together for three days of discussions on entrepreneurial opportunities.

As is often the case, police activities made headlines in 1998 when upset that an officer, Dan Holley, kept his job after making a racial slur in front of corrections academy cadets at the Clark County Detention Center, a group of concerned citizens contacted state officials in hopes of having him removed from the force. Holley referred to Martin

Luther King as "Martin Luther Coon."



Senator Joe Neal, (D-NLV), ran unsuccessfully for the state's top job as Nevada governor.

Several weeks later, two officers, responding to a family disturbance call, reportedly beat 40-year-old Eric Payton before fatally shooting him four times. The victim's wife,

Tammie Payton, disagreed with a police report about a scuffle between her husband and police, saying her husband wasn't a violent man. A jury of four white females, three white males and a black



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female later ruled the shooting was justified.

In February, KCEP Radio's general manager Sherman Rutledge was charged with withholding vital information from the community, scant programming during Black History Month, and possibly cancelling popular community-based shows, by a group of concerned citizens. In March, Rutledge was exonerated of any wrongdoing by the the Economic Opportunity Board of Clark County, which manages the sta-

tion.

In April, Clark County Assistant District Attorney Johnnie Rawlinson made history with her confirmation as a federal judge in U.S. District Court. The confirmation made her the state's first black woman to sit on a federal court bench.

Other women making headlines

during 1998 were Sandra Redding, a seven-year veteran of the Clark County Fire Department, who became the state's first African American woman promoted to Deputy Fire Marshal. Also, Eldorado High School student Victoria Franklin, became the first Nevadan to make it to the finals of the Miss Teen USA National Championship. She was selected second runner-up. The 17-year-old cheerleader was crowned Miss Nevada Teen in November 1997.

Also in April, Gen. Colin Powell issued an official



Clark County Commission Chairwoman, Yvonne Atkinson-Gates, was the subject of two failed recall attempts by the group "Citizens for Honest and Responsible Government."



The North Las Vegas City Council ruled not to renew Linda Hinson's contract, ending her tenure as North Las Vegas City Manager. Hinson was the first woman and first African American city manager in state history.

membership charter to the Andre Agassi Boys & Girls Club of Las Vegas. The dedication represented the Las Vegas site as the 2000th Boys & Girls Club established in the U.S.

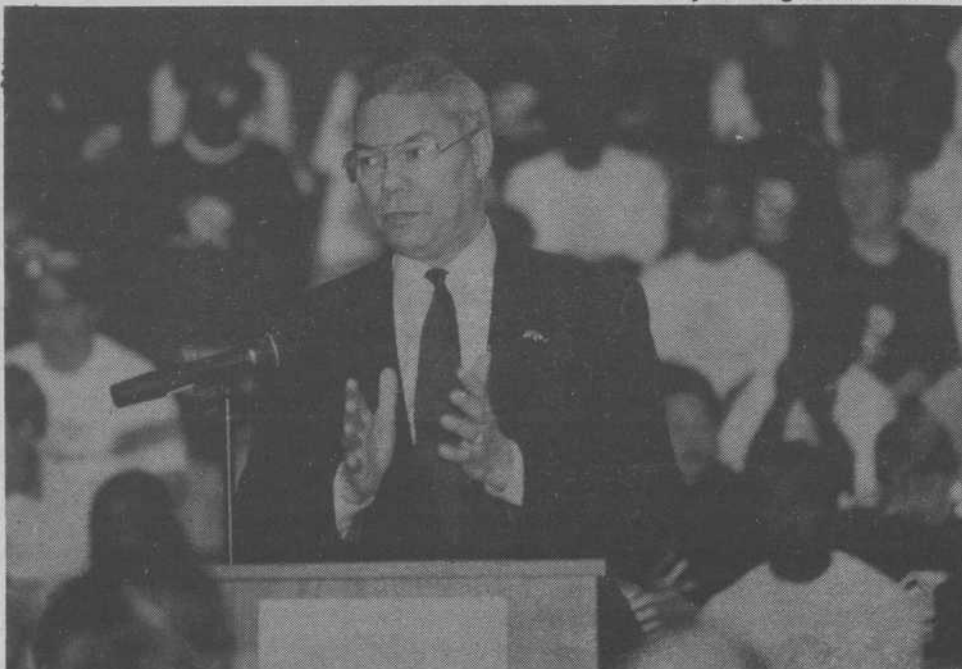
As expected, politics made headlines over the past year, as familiar faces ran for office and old faces were asked to step down from their posts.

State Senator Joe Neal threw his hat in the ring for the state's governorship, before losing in a primary election to Las Vegas

Mayor Jan Jones — all this despite a good showing at the Democratic Convention.

Rose McKinney-James, president and CEO of the U.S. Department of Energy-funded Corporation for Solar Technology and Renewable Resources, was the first Democrat to announce her candidacy for the office of Lt. Governor. Despite a good showing in the general election, James' bid fell short to Republican Lorraine Hunt.

The biggest news story of the year, however, involved Clark County Chairwoman Yvonne Atkinson-Gates. After an Ethics Commission ruling



Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of "America's Promise — The Alliance for Youth," delivered remarks after dedicating the Andre Agassi Boys & Girls Club the 2000th of its kind in America.