

Past president or former legislator to lead NAACP into future

Catisha Marsh
Sentinel-Voice

Either a former president of the Las Vegas NAACP or a former state assemblyman will lead the local branch for the next two years.

Elections will run from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday at Matt Kelly elementary school, 1900 N. "J" St.

The Rev. Jesse Scott, who lead the Las Vegas branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People from 1985 to 1993, says the civil rights group is needed now more than ever in the face of widespread discrimination and, if elected president, plans to get more people involved in the group.

"We need people who can barely read and write to people with Ph.D. degrees," he said. "We've got to do



JESSE SCOTT

exactly what the Mormons and the Jews do — roll up our sleeves and help each other solve problems regardless of our individual circumstances."

Scott, who said he would boost membership by talking to people and urging members to recruit family members, has a 5-point program to generate activism.

The first points concern boosting membership and meeting attendance. Members will work on committees, encourage friends and family to align themselves with the NAACP and take part in a fund-raising effort to pay for full-time salaried employees and computers.

In keeping with its history, the NAACP, Scott said, will open its arms to all people and continue to fight for what's right.

"The NAACP fought for Social Security benefits, regulated child labor and helped get a minimum wage increase," he said. "Locally, we opened up the Strip and the Hoover Dam to jobs and patronage by blacks and other non-whites."

Collins wants to run the

NAACP as a business. Part of his vision is to hire an office manager and at least two clerks.

The small business owner and former state assemblyman said the first thing he'll do is revamp membership procedures. Membership cards would be issued on the spot rather than weeks later and a system would be set up to keep track of membership and reminders sent out to members who need to pay dues.

Collins wants members to know that the NAACP's primary function is to fight for human rights, then civil rights and finally struggle against racism and discrimination.

His plans include forming an exploratory committee of past presidents to serve as



GENE COLLINS

adjunct advisers and enlisting young college graduates in an effort to reach out to younger children. "We're going to make the youth wing of the Las Vegas NAACP functional," he said.

To improve West Las Vegas' economic viability, Collins said he would push to bring in at least 10 businesses to the area each year and

would fight for a share of the monies available via a recent law requiring Pacific Rim immigrants to pay \$500 to \$1 million to start businesses in America. A portion of the funds are earmarked for community redevelopment projects in depressed areas.

Collins said his business savvy and his experience as a legislator make him the best candidate. He shot forth a short list of achievements: blocking passage of the "Fire at Will" bill, pushing the first Martin L. King holiday bill through the House, helping to build the West Las Vegas Library and founding a little league baseball program.

"I will fight to change things," he said. "Personally, he's a great man (Scott), but under his leadership, the NAACP hit an all-time low."

FBI investigating Riverside shooting

By Samuel Williams Jr.
Special to Sentinel-Voice

A coalition of individuals and community groups in Riverside, Calif. are turning up the interrogation lamp on the Riverside Police Department to fully investigate last month's shooting of 19-year-old Tyisha Miller.

Family members, community churches and groups exerted pressure, first, filing a complaint with the U.S. District Court Central District of California against the police department "for deprivation of federal constitutional rights of due process and equal protection." The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) also organized a rally on the steps of city hall and in front of the police department Monday.

According to Vermont McKinney, regional senior director for the Community Relations Service of the Justice Department, Attorney General Janet Reno has authorized an FBI investigation.

Miller, who is black, was shot repeatedly Dec. 28 as she sat in a car with a handgun near her. Four officers, three white and one Hispanic, practically emptied their guns into the young woman firing at least 27 shots.

Apparently, Miller had pulled into a gas station parking lot that Monday with a flat tire. Relatives who came to help her said they called police after the young woman, who had a gun in her lap, appeared to be having a seizure and was foaming at the mouth.

The police said they found the car locked, the windows rolled up and the engine on. They identified themselves and yelled to her, but she didn't respond.

The accounts of what happened conflict at this point. The officers contend that Miller woke up from unconsciousness, grabbed the gun from her lap and fired at them. Later, police said that she did not actually fire the weapon. Witnesses say that Miller was passed out and never touched the gun.

The investigation will be headed by Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Gennaco who runs the civil rights division. The FBI is currently reviewing the forensic and physical evidence, as well as testimonies from witnesses according to Gennaco.

Vandals hit Hoggard, Doolittle over holiday weekend

Catisha Marsh
Sentinel-Voice

The holidays weren't kind to Mabel Hoggard Elementary's Greenhouse Garden nor Doolittle Senior Center, both of which suffered more than \$10,000 in damage via weekend vandalism and break-ins.

Authorities do not have suspects in either of the crimes.

This is the second time the garden at Hoggard has been destroyed. As with the first time, local business



LV Sentinel-Voice photos by Ramon Savoy

(Above, left to right) Fifth graders Candace Monroe-Moreno, Alicia Holmes and Jamal Jackson of Mable Hoggard Elementary School inventory the remains of the campus green house after holiday vandalism. Examining the new security measures at the Doolittle Senior Center is Jerlys Baker, director.



people funded the restoration. Hoggard principal Bill Evans thinks neighborhood youth are responsible for damage to plants and equipment from the Greenhouse Project, a business that Hoggard students run.

A group of fifth-graders, the Green Thumb Kids, run the greenhouse as part of the Youth Entrepreneurship

Program. The program partners the Bank of America and UNLV's Economics Department with the school to teach the children about running businesses.

"It seems that that's just the way the world is going," Evans said, "These kids were not brought up to respect anything." Evans (See Vandals, Page 2)