

NEWS CLIPS

MAYORS CONFERENCE RECEIVES \$100,000

During a recent board meeting in Washington, D.C., The World Conference of Mayors, Inc. received a check for \$100,000 from the government of Gabon, which will help fund the annual meeting in that country in November. The money was presented by Marguerite Makaga Virginius, director of communications and culture for the government. Board members said their primary issues will be trade, debt-relief and the HIV/AIDS epidemic. "The journey to Gabon will be a very historical conference dealing with the six goals of the World Conference of Mayors. These goals, which are called the six T's, are Trust, Trade, Tourism, Technology Transfer, Twin Cities and Treasury," said Johnny Ford, founder and director general of the WCM.

100 BLACK MEN OF AMERICA GRANTS

100 Black Men of America has awarded grants, ranging from \$4,500 to \$40,000, to 35 of its chapters nationwide. Administered by the national office, the money is part of a \$3 million fund provided by Nike, Inc. Each chapter that receives funds is expected to raise an additional 40 percent in matching funds. "The Nike 100 Strategic Covenant Alliance Program is an extraordinary partnership between a vital, proactive, community-based nonprofit organization and a concerned corporation which has demonstrated, through its community investments and outreach activities worldwide, that it cares about education, enterprise and sports," said Thomas W. Dortch, Jr., chairman of 100 Black Men. "This year alone, through this partnership, we have awarded more than \$484,000 to chapters across the country, reaching more than 16,500 people." The grants fund a wide variety of programs that vary from chapter to chapter. For example, there's the Juvenile Mentoring Program in Jackson, Miss., the Entrepreneurial Initiative in Pittsburgh, Pa. and the Better Boys Initiative in Denver, Colo.

BAPTIST CHURCH BREAKS NATIONAL TIES

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (AP) — A Baptist congregation is severing ties with the Southern Baptist Convention after years of unhappiness over the denomination's increasingly conservative policies. Members of Wake Forest Baptist Church voted in January to end its affiliation with the convention, but the congregation didn't make the vote public until Tuesday due to recent publicity over its endorsement of same-sex ceremonies. "We wanted the community to know where we stand," said the Rev. Richard Groves, the pastor of the congregation that meets on the Wake Forest University campus but is independent of the school. Only one member voted against the split when about 100 of the 325-member congregation voted, Groves said. In a letter sent to the convention, congregation leaders said they were unhappy over the church's stand on women in ministry, targeting Jews and Mormons for evangelism, a literal interpretation of the Bible and isolation of congregations that reach out to gays and lesbians. A resolution by the convention last summer calling in part for wives to "submit graciously" to their husbands sparked the formal break for Wake Forest Baptist.

FEDS REVIEW 'BABY T' CUSTODY RULING

CHICAGO (AP) — Federal officials want to determine if a judge handling the custody case of a black child broke a law prohibiting the consideration of race when placing children with adoptive and foster parents. Judge Judith Brawka two weeks ago ordered the 3-year-old boy known as "Baby T" returned to his former drug addict mother. In doing so, Brawka cited a state law that favors placement of children with their birth parents as well as mother Tina Olison's successful drug rehabilitation. However, the judge also criticized state child-welfare officials for placing too little emphasis on the boy's race when they recommended that he remain with city Alderman Edward Burke and his wife, state Appellate Judge Anne Burke, who are white. "Unless the position of the department is that there is no such thing as African-American culture, this issue deserves more attention than to check a box that says not applicable," Brawka told officials from the Department of Children and Family Services in her March 8 ruling. In 1996, Congress voted into law a ban preventing states from considering race when placing children with adoptive or foster parents.

Clinton offers Africa debt relief

WASHINGTON (AP) — Harking back to his journey to Africa a year ago, President Clinton urged the world's richest nations last week to relieve the debt burden of Africa's poorest countries. "Let us move beyond words, and do what needs to be done," he said.

Addressing a meeting of African government officials, Clinton said he would propose that the world's largest industrialized nations work together on a plan to forgive an additional \$70 billion in debt held by developing nations when he goes to the annual Group of Eight economic summit in June.

"Our goal is to ensure that no country committed to fundamental reform is left with a debt burden that keeps it from meeting its people's basic human needs," Clinton said. "The more debtor nations take responsibility for pursuing sound economic policies, the more creditor nations must be willing to provide debt relief."

The proposal was welcomed by the African officials, who have long said the debt makes it harder for them to build upon economic development that comes their way.

"The results of growth, Mr. President, are still absorbed in large part by debt repayment. It is time, then, to go to the heart of the matter, debt cancellation," said Burkina Faso Foreign Minister Youssouf Ouedraogo, chairman of the Organization of African



BILL CLINTON

Unity's council of ministers.

The president spoke as his wife — who paved the way for his visit to Africa — prepared to make her third trip to the continent. Hillary Rodham Clinton departs Saturday for an 11-day goodwill tour of Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia.

During a tribute by the United States Agency for International Development, the first lady said she hoped her latest trip would teach Americans about the culture and history of the region's Arabs, and — as in the Clintons' sub-Saharan travels — promote them as "closer friends and partners in building a better future."

In Egypt, the first lady will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Egypt-Israeli peace treaty. She said she wanted to highlight Tunisia's "enviable" record on women's rights and Morocco's "unique experiment with political pluralism" and religious tolerance.

To finance the debt relief package, Clinton suggested selling some of the gold reserves held by the International Monetary Fund,

"Let us move beyond words, and do what needs to be done"

— President Bill Clinton

an idea the United States had not embraced before now. Britain, Germany and France all have proposed recently that the 103 million ounces of IMF gold be tapped to provide funds for a debt relief initiative by the IMF and World Bank. The gold reserve has a current market value of \$34 billion.

Citing a saying by the Kanuri people of west-central Africa — "Hope is the pillar of the world" — Clinton said it is possible for Africa to experience the same type of economic transformation that has taken place in Asia and Latin America.

"It has nothing to do with latitude and longitude, or religion or race. It has everything to do with an equal chance and smart decisions," Clinton said. "The last decade proves that hope is stronger than despair if it is followed by action. Let us move beyond words, and do what needs to be done."

The president tried to assure the ministers that, even though the trade proposals he advocated during his Africa trip have yet to materialize, the United States is committed to Africa "for the long haul."

"No one is saying it will be easy, but we are resolved to help lower the hurdles left by past mistakes," Clinton said. "For too much of this

century, the relationship between the United States and Africa was plagued by indifference on our part. ... We must end that by building a better common future."

Clinton had hoped he could back up his rhetoric with the African Growth and Opportunity Act, the trade legislation he pushed last year. But the bill, which seeks to promote growth by forgiving debt and lowering tariffs on some African imports, is stuck in the House Ways and Means Committee due to a dispute over costs, and Clinton again urged lawmakers to pass it.

"There are many friends of Africa in Congress, and many strong opinions on how best to help Africa," Clinton said. "I hope they will quickly find consensus. Africa needs action now."

The debt relief plan was one of the goals Clinton explained to the U.S.-Africa Ministerial Partnership for the 21st Century, a three-day conference on the burgeoning relationships between the United States and sub-Saharan nations.

Officials from 46 sub-Saharan countries were invited to the meeting — the first of its kind. Also invited were representatives of four North African nations: Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia.

Farrakhan

(Continued from Page 1) Farrakhan is "like Superman, who is used to scaling tall buildings in a single bound. Now it takes two bounds. But to mere mortals like you and I, he's still Superman."

Leonard Farrakhan Muhammad, chief of staff of the Chicago-based group and Farrakhan's son-in-law, brushed aside questions about any successor to Farrakhan, saying the man who has led the group for more than 20 years "is 100 percent in

control of the Nation of Islam and all of us."

In response to a reporter's question about concerns that Farrakhan was poisoned, the doctor said that tests were negative, but noted that there are sophisticated toxins that cannot be detected.

Farrakhan's chief of staff noted that the organization is always concerned about the possibilities of poisoning. As for the time of return, he said the Nation of Islam leader will return when he's ready.

Davey Deals

AUTOS • BIKES • BOATS

2980 S. Sandhill

E-Z FINANCING & LOW PAYMENTS

HOME OF THE \$300 DOWN

WE SELL 'EM FAST
CUZ WE SELL 'EM CHEAP

474-7777



SHeldon WELCH

NEVADA BUSINESS SERVICES



Helping Southern Nevadans
obtain job skills and a job!

If you need training or other assistance
to help you find employment,
call our offices today.

646-7675

(TDD 638-1159)



A Human Resource and Career Training Service
Equal Opportunity Employer/Program; Auxiliary aids and services available upon request to individuals with disabilities.