

BUSINESS

L.A. touts corporate logos for poor

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Mayor Richard Riordan has unveiled the newest spin on corporate sponsorship — using company logos to rescue blighted neighborhoods of Los Angeles.

His plan is to solicit \$250 million, in part from the private sector, by promising to name redevelopment projects after corporations. It's been done for big venues — the new downtown sports arena is called the Staples

Center — but not on such a large scale for poorer areas, the mayor said.

Little, however, has been pledged for the project so far, which the mayor unveiled last week, and Watts, one of the city's most neglected communities, isn't on the list of 12 project sites.

A city councilman and some community leaders in Watts said they were not consulted and knew nothing about the plan until last week. Riordan said he never

intended to slight anyone and briefed council members before holding his news conference.

Genesis L.A., the name of the new initiative, is an approach that has failed before.

Rebuild L.A., begun after the 1992 Los Angeles riots, eventually disbanded after falling far short of its goal to raise millions of dollars to restore businesses and create jobs.

For big cities considering

alternatives to publicly funded urban renewal, Riordan's new plan may provide a blueprint for success. Or failure.

After two years of planning, Riordan's sponsor-raising efforts have so far snagged only Washington Mutual Inc., BankAmerica Corp. and Wells Fargo & Co., three banking firms involved in financing affordable housing.

Each pledged up to \$10 (See Corporations, Page 14)

Y2K affects N.J. food stamps

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) —

An overhaul designed to protect New Jersey's main welfare computers from the so-called Y2K bug may have caused a glitch that enabled thousands of food stamp recipients to access their April benefits a week-and-a-half early. Technicians were scrambling Sunday night to correct a computer error that incorrectly credited the electronic accounts of thousands of recipients with money that should not have become available until April 1.

State officials did not know Sunday night how many people actually withdrew funds that were posted to their accounts in error. An estimate will not be available until Monday.

About 90 percent of the 200,000 families who receive food stamps in New Jersey participate in the electronic

program.

Human Services spokeswoman Jacqueline Tencza said the state's main welfare computer underwent an upgrade and an overhaul two weeks ago to improve its capabilities and to protect against the so-called "millennium bug," a situation in which computer systems may interpret the last two digits of the year 2000 to actually be 1900, causing unpredictable consequences.

Because of an error in that upgrade, the computer wrongly sent a message to an electronic benefits transfer company telling it to credit benefits as of April 1, 1990 instead of April 1, 1999, Tencza said.

Tencza said no decision has been made yet about whether to penalize anyone who improperly drew on benefits wrongly posted to their accounts.

Real Estate Perspective

By Loretta Arrington
Licensed Real Estate Broker



Fair housing legislation has helped level field

Special to Sentinel-Voice

April has been proclaimed as Fair Housing Month in the State of Nevada, joining the Nationwide recognition of the passage of the important legislation of Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, popularly known as the Fair Housing Act.

As African-Americans, we should be aware of the effects this legislation has had on housing discrimination. Can you imagine not being able to live where ever you choose to live?

Housing discrimination still exists, but before 1968, when the law was passed, African-Americans routinely had their civil rights violated. The Fair Housing Act is extremely significant in our lives. We should do whatever we can to help ensure that deliberate discriminatory practices are eliminated and enforced, not only for us, but for all people.

A brief history on the creation of the Fair Housing Act: In 1968, Congress voted that discrimination in housing based upon race, color, religion or national origin is against the law.

In 1974, Congress prohibited discrimination based on sex. Recognizing that the enforcement of Title VIII had not been adequate, Congress amended it in 1988 to prohibit discrimination against handicapped persons and families with children and to authorize the federal government to bring cases against people accused of discriminatory housing practices. The amended law also provides the same statutory protection to victims of AIDS.

The majority of Realtors and builders are committed to complying with the Fair Housing Law. They understand that there's no room in our industry for housing discrimination. Fair Housing isn't just a matter of good business. It's a matter of basic human rights. People have the right to live where ever they can afford to live, and Realtors and the entire housing industry have an obligation and commitment to protect that right.

If you feel you have been discriminated against, please contact your local U.S. Attorney Office.



As always, please contact a professional for all your Real Estate needs or write to me c/o REAL ESTATE PERSPECTIVE, Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice Newspaper, 900 East Charleston Blvd. Las Vegas, Nevada 89104 or send me an E-Mail at griot@vegas.infi.net.

Loretta Arrington, Owner/Broker, Arrington & Associates Realty Group and a Member of the National Association of Realtors.

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Regina's

Q & A

By Regina Lynch-Hudson

Black businesses waltz onto world wide web

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Q. Dear Regina: My partner and I own a unique ethnic mail order business which represents various artists, sculptors and designers of unusual art objects.

We are considering getting a web site, but we have no idea about how to market or find someone to design it. Please give us some marketing and public relations tips relating to Web sites. Is the World Wide Web an effective marketing tool for ethnic products?

A: More than 5,000 new commercial web sites pop up every month. Studies rank the number of African-American Internet users at somewhere between 5 million to 6 million, a fertile market. You can advertise, sell, build prospect lists or experiment with hundreds of ideas utilizing a web site.

Visitors to your site can be notified about new products and services or special sales. E-mail and Web sites enable you to maintain contact with a lot of people nationwide without paying for telephone calls, postage and the labor of expensive mass mailings.

A web site may cost thousands of dollars to design, but it can wire you for some large cost savings and pivot you ahead of your competition on the global playing field.

It can pay for itself in a relatively short period of time, says Dr. John W. Wilson, a noted Atlanta psychologist who has launched the VIPRoom.com, one of the most state-of-the-art Web design businesses in Cyberspace.

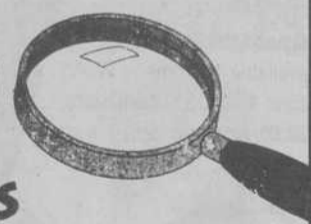
Web culture moves more quickly than the rest of the business world, and reaches more people. Savvy entrepreneurs who have Web visibility are doing business with clients from Utah to Uganda.

The catch phrase for the new millennium is: "What's your web site address?"

African-American business owners who aren't on the web are simply out of step with technology.

Contact Regina Lynch-Hudson at The Write Publicist, c/o Regina's PRemedies, 6129 Queen Anne Court, Norcross, Ga., 30093, (770) 717-7020 or thewritepublicist@mail.com. Visit our Web site at: <http://www.theviproom.com/> [thewritepublicist](http://thewritepublicist.com)

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