

NEWS CLIPS

UNLV HOSTING CHILD WELFARE CONFERENCE

The UNLV School of Social Work will host its second annual Child Welfare Conference from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday in the Moyer Student Union. Dave Pelzer, youth service worker, author and counselor will deliver the keynote address, "The Real Heroes," at 9 a.m. Pelzer is the author of "Lost Boys" and "A Boy Called It." His presentation will recount his experiences as an abused child. A 1:15 p.m. panel will discuss the "Impact of temporary assistance to needy families in child welfare" and will be lead by Myla Florence, a state welfare administrator, Kirby Burgess, director of the county's division of family and youth services, Steven Shaw, a child and family services division administrator and Vick Albert, a UNLV social work professor. A second panel discussion on "Issues in child welfare" starts at 2:30 p.m. and will be headed by UNLV social work professors An-Pyng and Ramona Denby. Registration is \$50 for human services professionals and \$25 for the public. Those interested in registering can call 895-3394.

BLACK WOMAN ELECTED MAYOR IN TRENTON, N.C.

TRENTON, N.C. (AP) — A black woman was selected mayor of this small town where no black has ever before held office, succeeding a white man who resigned after saying blacks are unfit to govern. The Town Council unanimously selected Sylvia Willis last week. She will complete former Mayor Joffree Leggett's term, which expires in November. Leggett resigned in March after saying blacks were not leaders and would rather be led by whites. He made the comments amid criticism over the farming town's refusal to annex three black neighborhoods that have about 100 residents. Trenton at the time had 200 residents, about 50 of them black. After the NAACP got involved and blacks boycotted Trenton businesses, all of which are white-owned, the Town Council agreed to annex the neighborhoods. Willis' husband, activist Daniel J. Willis, had threatened another boycott unless a black person was named to the council. "This is the beginning of a coming together — or trying, anyway," Willis said.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE CALLS FOR NYPD COMMISSIONER TO RESIGN

Months after the shooting of Amadou Diallo by four white police in New York, public advocate Mark Green is calling for the resignation of Police Commissioner Howard Safir. Green criticized Mayor Rudy Giuliani's administration, which includes Safir, for its response to Diallo's death. He said the mayor and police commissioner lack "credibility" on issues of police misconduct, especially regarding people of color. "The police commissioner must be able to work effectively with all communities," he said. "Commissioner Safir has served the people of the city well, but he needs to move on so that new leadership at the NYPD can meet the challenge of police misconduct while continuing to reduce crime."

MAGIC JOHNSON FOUNDATION HOSTS BENEFIT FOR BREAST CANCER

The alarming imbalance between the low incidence rate and high mortality rate of African-American women with breast cancer has lead the Magic Johnson Foundation to launch a National Breast Cancer Awareness Initiative.

The campaign, designed to help women in urban communities, especially women of color, obtain breast cancer education, screening and treatment services, will be launched at a celebrity fashion show on Saturday in Beverly Hills, Calif.

The fundraiser, "A Salute to African-American Designers," will include fashions from Karl Kani, Dada, FUBU, Perry White and Dion Scott. Celebrity models will include Loretta Devine, Tia & Tamera Mowry, Deborah Cox, Shemar Moore, Tichina Arnold and Warren G.

"African-American women — our mothers, siblings, daughters and friends — are dying from an illness that when detected very early, is often very treatable, and yet we are still dying more often than any other ethnic group," said Cookie Johnson, vice president of the foundation's board of directors.

"For that reason, I wanted the foundation to get involved in this ongoing fight against breast cancer."

Democrat Bradley pushes racial unity

NEW YORK (AP) — Digging into his own past, Democrat Bill Bradley on Tuesday recalled wincing at racist remarks uttered by a beloved aunt and feeling uncomfortable about the special attention he received as a white basketball star.

"That's my story," Bradley told an audience of college students. "What's yours?"

Bradley, so far the only Democrat to challenge Vice President Al Gore for the party's presidential nomination, made clear that racial harmony will be a central theme of his campaign and would be a central goal of a Bradley administration.

"When Ronald Reagan was president, everyone knew that if you wanted to please the boss, you cut taxes, increased military spending and fought communism," he told an audience of 200 at The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in New York City.

"If I'm president, I want one thing to be known: If you

want to please the boss, one of the things you'd better show is how your department or agency has furthered tolerance and racial understanding."

Bradley was speaking in a city where the shooting death of an unarmed African immigrant by four white police officers has ignited a storm of protests and caused a major political headache for Mayor Rudolph Giuliani.

Bradley did not join the chorus of criticism of the officers.

He called the shooting "a grievous error by those charged with protecting the very person that they shot."

But he added that on a broader level, the case shed light on twin phenomena — "white indifference and black suspicion."

Bradley recited a litany of prejudices and injustices: church bombings, incidents of people beaten or killed because they were of Chinese descent or gay, the police practice of pulling drivers over because they are

members of racial minorities. "For me the quest for racial unity remains the defining moral issue of our time," he said.

Addressing the issue can take many forms, he said. "Among black children, 40 percent are destitute. There is no reason why a multiracial coalition cannot be built to lift up our poorest children."

Bradley did not mention Gore or President Clinton but did refer at one point to "the pain on the faces of Asian-Americans stigmatized by the false suspicions in the 1996 presidential fund-raising scandals."

Clinton also talked about race from personal experience during a series of town hall meetings. He is working on a book on race, stemming in part from the findings of an advisory council he appointed.

Harvard University professor Cornel West, author of the 1993 bestseller "Race Matters," introduced Bradley as "my brother and friend" and endorsed him as

"the worthy next president of the United States."

West praised Clinton for holding town meetings on race but said Bradley ties the topic to concrete issues like child poverty.

"Clinton tends to be more like cotton candy — bite down, tastes good, but nothing there," West said.

Race relations have been a lifelong interest for Bradley, whose choice of basketball as a passion and occupation led him to the intersection of black and white America.

He refused to do commercial endorsements as a New York Knick in part because of discomfort about being hailed as basketball's "great white hope."

In 1992, when white Los Angeles police officers were acquitted of state charges in the beating of black motorist Rodney King, Bradley walked to the floor of the Senate, denounced the verdict and slapped a pencil against the podium 56 times to dramatize how many times King had been hit.

Court: Juries should get race identification data

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) — The New Jersey Supreme Court has ruled that juries in some mixed-race criminal cases should be told that witnesses have a tougher time identifying defendants of another race.

Prosecutors had argued there isn't enough scientific evidence to prove witnesses have more difficulty identifying members of another race.

But the court rejected the argument last week, saying there have been ample studies and that most jurisdictions accept the concept.

"Indeed some courtroom observers have commented that the ordinary person's difficulty of 'cross-racial recognition' is so commonplace as to be the subject of both cliché and joke: 'they all look alike,'"

Defense wants dragging death trial to be moved

JASPER, Texas (AP) — The second trial in the dragging death of a black man should not take place in Jasper because residents want to clear their town's image with a conviction, defense lawyers argued Tuesday. During a hearing before state District Judge Monte Lawlis, attorneys for Lawrence Russell Brewer, 32, insisted publicity and bias would prevent their client from getting an impartial trial in Jasper. Prosecutors said Brewer could get as fair a trial in the east Texas town as anywhere.

Lawlis planned to rule Thursday on the request. Brewer, one of three white men charged in the June 7 killing of James Byrd Jr., is scheduled for trial May 17. His friend and former prison mate, John William King, was sentenced to death by a Jasper jury in February for his role in the slaying. The third defendant, Shawn Allen Berry, will be tried after Brewer.

the court wrote.

The court ordered a new trial in the rape case of a white Rutgers University student who identified a black man, McKinley Cromedy, as her attacker. The court said the jury should have been given a "cross racial instruction" alerting jurors to pay close attention to the possible influence of race in identifying defendants.

The woman had not recognized a photograph of Cromedy that she was shown a few days after the rape. However, she alerted police eight months later when she spotted Cromedy on a street corner. She identified him as the rapist after he had been taken into custody.

No forensic evidence was admitted during the trial. Court documents said it was not possible to link Cromedy

to the rape through blood and sperm samples, and no fingerprints were taken by police at the scene.

The trial court did not allow the jury to be advised that "cross racial identification" could affect the victim's ability to identify her assailant, a decision upheld by an appeals court and overturned this week.

"It's an important decision," said Sylvia Orenstein, who argued the

case on behalf of Cromedy. "Science has shown, unfortunately, that most people tend to better recognize people of their own race. This is another factor a jury should be alerted to consider."

The court said a cross-racial instruction to juries should only be given when identification is critical to the case, and there are no other eyewitnesses to back up the victim's charges.

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