

NNPA president one of Nestle's 'Women of Courage'

Special to Sentinel-Voice
Dorothy R. Leavell, President of the National Newspaper Publishers Association editor-publisher of the Chicago and Gary CRUSADER Newspapers, is one of 28 African-Americans Nestle USA honors in a new publication, "Women of Courage II."

The book features the true stories of 28 women who overcame great odds in their pursuit of excellence.

"Women of Courage II" is an important public service offering understanding, hope and strength to women from

ACLU

(Continued from Page 3)
racial profiling.

DEA officials in Washington did not immediately return calls for comment.

The ACLU's 43-page report is largely a collection of case studies from 23 states rather than a statistical analysis.

It was released to rebut

all walks of life. The first edition of "Women of Courage" was published in 1994, and since then thousands of copies have been given to schools and community groups across the country. The highly anticipated second edition was available by request last month.

"Young people need to know that you can be successful no matter what obstacles you face in your life," said author Kenneth W. Bentley, vice president of Community Affairs for Nestle. "Women of Courage

II" has 28 examples of this. It is our hope that young people will read these profiles and say "if they did it, so can I."

Leavell exemplifies a "woman of courage." A member of NNPA for more than 30 years she was elected President of the trade organization of more than 210 African-American newspapers in the United States in 1995 and re-elected to a two-year term in June, 1997 to another two-year term. She is the second female President of NNPA.

She has served in other capacities in the association,

which has a combined readership of more than 15,000,000.

Highlights of her tenure as president include leading a delegation of 19 to Nigeria from September 26 - October 3, 1995 and creation of the "Newsmaker/s of the Year" awards in 1996.

She has been a spokeswoman for the Black Press of America and has traveled extensively on NNPA's behalf.

Leavell has also served as editor and publisher of the CRUSADER NEWSPAPERS — in

Chicago and Gary, Ind. respectively — since 1968, upon the death of her first husband, Balm L. Leavell, Jr., co-founder of the publications.

Prior to being editor-publisher, Leavell served as office manager. As business manager, she enhanced the production and effectiveness of the newspapers and stabilized her holdings by purchasing the buildings which house each of them. The Chicago newspaper will celebrate 59 years of news

gathering in June while the Gary newspaper celebrates 38 years of service. Leavell is involved in the day-to-day tasks of the operations.

She is founder and sponsor of the "Odyssey Club," a teen club at Holy Name of Mary Church, is a subscribing life member of the Gary NAAC, and serves as Secretary of Amalgamated Publishers, Inc., an advertising sales representative firm serving some 90 African-American newspapers throughout the country.

Diversity

(Continued from Page 16)

community.

In Raleigh, N.C., reporters focused on working with member newspapers to diversify coverage of the state.

"We're active in big cities and rural areas, and it's essential that our coverage reflect all the aspects of these communities," said AP Managing Editor Jonathan Wolman.

APME president Pam Johnson, the vice president of news and executive editor at *The Arizona Republic*, said diversity is fundamental to the industry. "I think for the good of newspapers, this is important for all of us to discuss," she said. "Our credibility is on the line."

police denials that racial profiling exists, said David Harris, a law professor at the University of Toledo in Ohio and an author of the report.

"By laying out the facts in such detail in this report, we hope that we can now get beyond 'Is there really a problem?' to 'What are we as a nation going to do about it?'" Harris said.

"We don't suggest that this will be easy, only that it is necessary if we are to call ourselves a democratic nation."

The ACLU is calling on police departments to voluntarily begin documenting incidents of racial profiling. Some already have, such as the departments in San Diego and San Jose,

Calif.

In April, North Carolina became the first state to pass a law requiring data collection on all traffic stops. Similar bills have been introduced in Congress and in Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Florida, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas and Virginia.

Blood

(Continued from Page 17)

is considered high.

While genetics play a role in determining who develops the condition, there are additional contributors. Other risk factors include obesity, high salt and alcohol consumption, a sedentary lifestyle and family history.

In people ages 35 to 44, high blood pressure is two times more prevalent in African-American men than white men. It kills African-American men at a rate of more than 15 times higher than white men.

Dewey recommends that healthy African-Americans over age 18 have their blood pressure checked at least once every two years. Those in higher-risk groups should have it checked more often, even if at a local drug store or supermarket machine.

"For the most part, blood pressure elevation is a slow, chronic process that can be detected early," Dewey said. "Everyone needs to be aware that the associated problems can be adequately prevented through diet, exercise or medication."

While managing hypertension is a lifelong process, it does not mean endless check-ups and expensive bills.

Guilt

(Continued from Page 12)

Americans, especially people of color, have been victimized by rogue police officers and the pernicious policies that have given them leeway to do their dirty work.

These are, as writer Joe Davidson noted in an article evocatively titled, "The Scales on Injustice" in the May issue of *EMERGE* magazine, among the "disparities in the criminal justice system (that) are fuel to the fire of U.S. racial tensions."

American society cannot afford to assume that admitted guilt of Justin A. Volpe in any way addressed the larger issue of police disrespect and mistreatment of people of color.

It remains to be seen whether the Federal government, and state and local governments, and more state and local police forces have gotten the message that a broad coalition of Americans has mobilized to ensure that all police officers extend to all law-abiding citizens the courtesies and presumption of innocence they deserve.

The disgrace of Justin A. Volpe, rogue cop and sadist, must be used as another stepping stone to the establishment of proper relations between police departments and the American citizens—including people of color—all law enforcement officers are sworn to protect and serve.

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