

# Memphis mayor facing 20 potential challengers

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — A scion of a powerful Memphis political family is challenging the city's first elected black mayor in a race observers say may very well get personal.

Mayor Willie Herenton faces 20 challengers in the Oct. 7 election, an eclectic list that includes a professional wrestler and a former football coach. But political observers see the race coming down to Herenton, the two-term incumbent, and City Council chairman Joe Ford.

Ford, 45, is a brother of former congressman Harold Ford Sr., and an uncle of current Rep. Harold Ford Jr., D-Tenn.

Harold Ford Sr., the state's first black member of Congress, represented the 9th Congressional District for 22 years.

He runs one of the state's most active political organizations, and he and

Herenton have made it clear they don't like each other.

"It's deep and long-standing," said Marcus Pohlmann, a political scientist at Rhodes College in Memphis. "I get the impression it's more than just political, that it's personal."

Herenton, 59, claims his opponent is part of a power-hungry family bent on controlling Memphis.

"The Ford family is moving in the direction of trying to occupy all major elected positions in our system," the mayor said. "They've shown how ruthless they can be in wielding power."

The challenger counters that Herenton "is more interested in enriching himself than the city of Memphis" and is beholden to special interests.

The two have clashed several times but this is their first head-to-head political contest.

Memphis, with 650,000 residents, is 55 percent black.

Pohlmann said he thinks Herenton and Ford will split most of the black vote. How that split breaks down — and how many white votes each attracts — will be the keys to victory, he said.

Herenton has gotten along well with the city's predominantly white business establishment, so that will help him, Pohlmann said.

Conversely, Ford may be hurt by brother Harold, who angered many whites over the years with an us-against-them bid for black votes, Pohlmann said.

And there's two other Fords seeking a political future. Ophelia Ford and her brother Edmund are among the candidates seeking to replace their brother Joe on the City Council. Edmund didn't even know his sister planned to run.

"Everybody has a right to

run. I don't have a problem with anybody running," he said.

Perry Bond, who's seeking a City County seat in the same district, said there might be some anti-Ford backlash.

"I think some people will

look at it and say, 'There are too many Fords on the ballot,'" Bond said. "I think it's really starting to rub people the wrong way. Every time there's a vacancy, they (the Fords) look down the family tree to find a candidate."

Other mayoral hopefuls who beat last Thursday's filing deadline for the October election include wrestler Jerry "The King" Lawler and former football coach Pepper Rodgers, who led the city's failed bid to land a National Football League franchise.

## Coast Guard honors 'Roots' author

BALTIMORE (AP) — The U.S. Coast Guard on Saturday honored Alex Haley, Pulitzer Prize winning author of "Roots," by commissioning a cutter in his name — the first military vessel named for a journalist.

"By seeking his own roots, Alex Haley enlarged the world for millions of Americans, connecting us with a history we thought was lost," said Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater, who was the key note speaker at an invitation-only ceremony at the Coast Guard yard in Baltimore.

Among those in attendance were members of Haley's family, Sen. Paul Sarbanes, D-Md., and actors from the mini-series based on "Roots."

Haley, who died in 1992, spent 20 years in the Coast Guard, rising from ship's steward to become the first head of the Guard's public affairs office.

The yard recently completed an 18-month, \$20 million overhaul on the one-of-a-kind 283-foot cutter, formerly the Navy rescue and



'ROOTS' AUTHOR ALEX HALEY

salvage vessel USS Edenton.

"Alex would have been so happy today because he loved the Coast Guard. And by honoring him, it shows you also loved him," said Doris Haley, wife of Alex Haley's brother George, who serves as Ambassador to Gambia and couldn't be present for the ceremony.

The commissioning of a vessel marks the entry or

reentry of a Coast Guard cutter into the fleet. Names are usually selected from a category, such as cities or battles, that includes other ships of its kind.

The cutter will be based in Kodiak, Alaska. It will be used for fisheries enforcement and search and rescue missions in the Bering Sea, Gulf of Alaska and the northern Pacific Ocean.

# MOTOWN ALIVE

**ON SUNDAY JAZZ COMES ALIVE**  
featuring the contemporary jazz sound of **COLOR COATED BROWN (CCB)**  
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Doors open at 11:00 p.m.

**Thursday, July 22nd**  
Motown comes alive with Hot Dance Music by DJ Danny Cohen  
No cover. Drink specials all night long.  
Dancing starts at 11:00 p.m.

**Wednesday, July 28th**  
Martinis at Motown  
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## Youth

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program ran June 7th through July 9th, Monday-Friday 1pm-6:30pm. In its 10th year locally and 15th year nationally, participants receive many benefits.

The summer camp first of all is free and none to this day has been turned away. Free transportation to and from UNLV, free medical examinations, free accidental and medical coverage, free USDA

approved lunch and snack, free training on the internet, and an opportunity to interact with UNLV students and staff. As a special bonus to the program this year, US Senator Richard Bryan and US Congresswoman Shelley Berkley were on the UNLV campus to talk to the children about the importance of education in their lives. For more information please call 895-3369.