

Redistricting topic of public forum

Catisha Marsh
Sentinel-Voice

The public will get a chance to weigh in on redistricting city wards 6 p.m. Tuesday during a meeting at City Hall, 400 East Stewart Ave. The meeting will take place in City Council Chambers.

A vote on the boundaries is expected in September. Council members will then select two appointees, one for Ward 5, another for Ward 6 before January 2000.



JOE NEAL

Black lawmakers championed legislation adding two wards. They insisted that additional wards were needed to increase the chances of a minority presence on the City Council.

The city hired retired Wisconsin Judge Frederick Kessler to create the new boundaries. The city also used Kessler in 1996 during its first redistricting effort.

That effort, minority advocates contend, weakened minority political clout by lumping together Blacks and Hispanics — the city's two largest ethnic groups — into Ward 3. Minorities said the move stifled the political power of each group.

Minorities aren't monolithic. In 1993, black bank executive, Ken Brass was appointed to heavily Hispanic Ward 3. He was trounced by Gary Reese in his re-election two years later. North Las Vegas Sen. Joe Neal sponsored SB 38 which called for expansion of the City Council. Theoretically, the additional wards would dilute the minority concentration in Ward 3, shifting the majority of Blacks and Hispanics into separate wards and enhancing the chances of a Black person and Hispanic getting elected. No minority has ever won

(See Redistrict, Page 6)



KING OF THE JUNGLE

Stephen Childs of the Lohan School of Shaolin performed the Lion Dance Saturday during the PIANGE (People in America's Natural Growing Environment) 5th Annual "It's a Kid Affair 99" at the Community College of Southern Nevada.

LV Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

Mayor touts work on diversity, revitalization

Catisha Marsh
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Oscar Goodman's two months into his new job as Las Vegas Mayor.

During his campaign, the 35-year criminal defense attorney said, if elected, he would be "the people's mayor" and surround himself with a rainbow coalition of people "from all walks of life."

To black Las Vegans, he promised to bring business to West Las Vegas with business development and he recently threw his support behind rebuilding the historic Moulin Rouge.

He also said he'd put African-Americans in positions of visibility and power.

To date, he's made some efforts to keep his promise, he says, but acknowledges he's got a ways to go.

"Right now, we have a higher percentage of blacks working for the city than other ethnic minorities," Goodman said in an interview with the Sentinel-Voice while he vacationed from his new job. "It's really a colorblind workforce and as far as I know, we haven't had any



OSCAR GOODMAN

problems here."

Presently, 18.8 percent of the 2,985 city employees are African-American, with 66.9 percent White, 9.7 percent Hispanic and 3.4 percent Asians.

Goodman appointed former law school dean and freelance columnist Barbara Robinson to his advisory council, dubbed the "Kitchen Cabinet."

"Barbara is a close, personal friend. She's very smart and I rely very much on her," he said.

Goodman said he relies on Loretta Hall, aide to Ward 3 Councilman Gary Reese, and Ward 3 liaison Lawrence (See Goodman, Page 5)

Montel Williams has multiple sclerosis

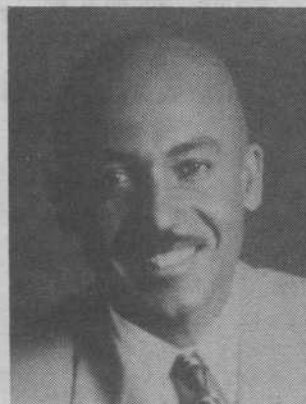
NEW YORK (AP) — Talk show host Montel Williams held back tears as he revealed that he has been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, a debilitating neurological disease that has no cure.

"We don't know how long I've had it for, but I've been misdiagnosed for 10 years," Williams, 43, said Monday at a Manhattan news conference. "There have been some mornings when I thought it would be better if I stayed in bed."

But he vowed: "This disease is not going to stop me."

The host of the nationally syndicated "Montel Williams Show," which has been on the air for eight seasons, said he will continue to work as long as he is physically able.

Williams, a former naval officer who



MONTEL WILLIAMS

vaulted into television after a career as a motivational speaker, said he recently informed his immediate family of his condition and told his staff Monday, shortly before the news conference.

His physician, Dr. Michael Olek, said they have been discussing several recently approved drug therapies.

Throughout his illness, Williams said he had been working 18-hour days to direct his first feature film, a drama titled "Little Pieces." He maintained his commitment to his career as a talk show host.

"Even if this gets worse in five or 10 years from now, I will still force myself out of my bed," said Williams.

"The hardest part Montel has with this (See Williams, Page 2)

School board OK's station's cuts

Sentinel-Voice

In a nearly unanimous decision last week the Clark County School Board voted to cut 11 jobs and 13 shows from KLVX-TV Channel 10's lineup.

Channel 10 first announced the proposed cuts in July. The station proposed the cuts in response to the loss of state and federal funds it received in years past.

In 1995, the Legislature allotted one-shot funds for the University and Community College System of Southern Nevada, which contracted with the public television station to produce remote learning courses.

The station had been receiving \$150,000 until the legislature cut the money for distance learning programs

in its last session.

The Legislature also took away \$400,000 that it traditionally gave to the state's Commission on Educational Technology which gave it to KLVX to train teachers.

Board trustees Mary Beth Scow, Susan Brager, Ruth Johnson, Larry Mason and Sheila Moulton voted in favor of this plan — one of three that involves cuts to compensate for the budget deficit.

Lois Tarkanian abstained and called for an investigation into the station's financial management.

Trustee Shirley Barber wasn't present, but in phone comments questioned the station's accounting history. She missed the final vote.

Channel 10 manager Tom Axtell presented three plans. Programming and job cuts were involved in each plan. Black-oriented programs that were axed include "Community Matters" and "African-American History Challenge."

"As staff, I'm not in a position to comment on whether the board's decision was the best or not," said Axtell, adding that he is seeking funding for the shows that were cut.

"We have proposals going out," he said.

"We've put together funding for half of the cost of 'Varsity Quiz.' We don't have a commitment, but people are interested in funding 'African-American History Challenge.'"