

NEWS CLIPS

BLACK CALIFORNIA OFFICIALS HOLDING ANNUAL MEETING

The Black American Political Association of California will host its 21st annual state convention Oct. 1-3 at the Radisson Hotel Sacramento, 500 Leisure Lane, in Sacramento, Calif. BAPAC was founded July 6, 1978 by 60 Black leaders and activists meeting in San Francisco and Los Angeles to plan a historic collaboration between California's African-American leaders. BAPAC's goals was to map out a strategy for the political survival for Blacks in the 1980s. The event's theme is "Unity, Empowerment, and Reviving Our Political Spirit." At the convention, BAPAC plans to expand the 5-year plan approved at last year's convention and to identify issues critical to the appointment and election of African-American politicians. Topics will include voter registration and participation, the role of the African-American family, the importance of the labor movement, census and reapportionment issues, education, economic development, the role of the Black press and the viability of the Black church. BAPAC has 55 chapters with more than 60,000 members statewide. Those interested in more information can call (213) 628-9201 or visit the group's web site, www.bapac.com

NAACP WANTS ANSWERS IN CASE OF MISSING BLACK ALABAMANS

The NAACP has asked Alabama law enforcement to step up its investigation of the disappearance of six adults last seen May 8 riding in a 1986 Chevrolet Caprice near Opp, Ala. "Law enforcement is investigating the case, but perhaps more resources are needed," said Kweisi Mfume, who has assigned Nelson B. Rivers III, national director of field operations, to monitor the investigation. "We think that as a result of our involvement, authorities have stepped up their investigation. A car full of people can't just vanish into thin air. Somebody must know something." Rivers, the Rev. R.L. Shanklin, NAACP state president, and other local officials met recently with the Alabama Bureau of Investigation (ABI) and Enterprise, Ala. police officials to discuss the case. Military personnel from Ft. Rucks have also participated in the search. The victims have been identified as Eula Josett Lee, 27; Lamar Junior Stackhouse, 25; Tamara Monique Ward, 22; Valeria Genieta McCoy, 27; Angela Roberts Young, 26; and James Anthony Reynolds, 28. The car they were in is described as faded maroon in color with Alabama license plate 34BM771. Anyone with information should call the Alabama Bureau of Investigation or the local police.

JACKSON ENDORSES NATIONAL BOYCOTT AGAINST CROWN OIL

In a joint press statement, PACE International Union, Rainbow/Push Coalition and the AFL-CIO announced that Rev. Jesse Jackson has endorsed the national boycott against the Baltimore-based Crown Central Petroleum Company for its alleged unfair treatment of workers and unsafe environmental practices. "We are asking consumers not to spend their dollars at Crown gasoline stations and convenience stores, until Crown stops its abuse of workers and addresses its race and gender problems," Rev. Jackson said. Rev. Jackson and Rainbow/Push join a long list of leaders and organizations supporting the boycott including: the Rev. Al Sharpton, the NAACP, National Baptist Convention, Baltimore City Council, National Black Caucus of State Legislators, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, several ministerial alliances and numerous environmental groups. The campaign against Crown Oil began in 1996 when 252 workers at its Pasadena, Texas refinery were removed from a contract negotiation affecting the one-third minority workforce. Since then, African-American and female employees have filed a discrimination lawsuit against the company. It is also being sued for environmental violations. In 1998, Crown received the largest air pollution fine in Texas history. The company denies the allegations and faults the employees' union for the negative publicity.

Districts get money for violence prevention

WASHINGTON (AP) — With Americans increasingly concerned about school violence, the government Saturday awarded 54 school districts \$106 million to put into practice plans to make classrooms safe.

Children in two of the districts — Jonesboro, Ark., and Springfield, Ore. — know firsthand the horror of random gun attacks in their schools.

President Clinton, who announced the grants in his weekly radio address, said the program comes as the nation's largest and most diverse student population to ever start the new school year.

"It's a time of hope and excitement for students, parents and teachers alike," he said.

"But in many communities, it's also a time of concern — concern that

when our children walk through the schoolhouse door they won't be safe from the threat of violence."

He said the increased number of shootings in the past two years makes clear the need to address youth violence. The administration has worked for tougher gun laws and launched a grassroots anti-violence campaign, he said.

"These steps have made our schools safer, more disciplined, better learning environments," Clinton said. "But when it comes to protecting our children we must do more."

The grants are part of the Safe Schools/Healthy Schools Initiative, a joint project of the departments of Education, Justice and Health and Human Services to develop methods to identify troubled youths and prevent

violence.

Rep. J.C. Watts Jr., R-Okla., chairman of the House Republican Conference, commended Clinton "for highlighting this important issue" but disagreed with the president's renewed demand for stricter gun-control laws.

In a statement, Watts said he just led a tour "to see firsthand what educators are doing to teach our children and make our schools safer." He said local officials pressed on him a need "for more freedom and flexibility from federal regulations — not more laws and new government bureaucracies."

The 54 communities awarded grants are among hundreds that applied for help in developing local programs to attack youth violence.

At Jonesboro, two pupils at Westside Middle School killed four others and a

teacher and wounded 10 people in March 1998. Jonesboro plans to offer in-home counseling for families with children deemed vulnerable to violent behavior.

A troubled 15-year-old in Springfield pulled a rifle from his trench coat in May 1998 and killed two students and wounded 22 other people. Clinton said that city's grant is to build on strong relations that developed between its schools and law enforcement in the aftermath of the attack.

"In the face of terrible loss, the good people of these towns have pulled together to protect their children," Clinton said.

"They're an inspiration for all of us."

A list of districts and projects available on Wide World Web at www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS/

U.N. web site to help fight worldwide poverty

NEW YORK (AP) — Three world leaders clicked on their computer controls last week to launch a new Internet site that aims to fight hunger and poverty worldwide.

The NetAid site from the United Nations was designed to make it easier for donors to contribute time or money and learn more about conditions that foster poverty.

"The launching of this Web site represents a truly new front in the struggle against poverty," President Clinton said in a satellite appearance from the White House.

Former South African President Nelson Mandela, speaking from Johannesburg, said most of the developed world "has the economic capacity to solve the problems of poverty, yet the gap between rich and poor is growing."

He said the Internet should help poorer communities gain knowledge and resources to improve their conditions.

From London, British Prime Minister Tony Blair urged Web visitors to pay special attention to helping refugees in light of turmoil in East Timor and other parts of the world.

Three rock concerts on Oct. 9 in London, Geneva and East Rutherford, N.J., will boost the U.N. fundraising effort. Unlike the 1985 Live Aid concert to fight famine in Ethiopia, organizers say, the Web site will encourage giving long after microphones go silent.

"It's the NetAid technology that really makes a difference," NetAid spokesman Bob Chlopak said. "It empowers people to participate and contribute in many ways besides contributing funds."

U2's Bono, David Bowie, George Michael, Counting

Crows and Jewel are among the musicians scheduled to perform. VH1 and MTV cable networks will broadcast in the United States, while British Broadcasting Corp. will carry the concerts in the United Kingdom.

Before the U.N. concerts, visitors to the site can make donations and register to help at www.netaid.org. Ultimately, organizers expect to offer such features as online pen pals, discussion groups and direct links to organizations that fight hunger and poverty.

The U.N. Development Program will run the site.

Digital

(Continued from Page 3) the level of investment that goes into developing technology," said Ivan Seidenberg, head of Bell Atlantic.

His company and some other regional Bells are seeking to enter the long-distance market — a move which they argue will enable them to make greater investments in rural areas at lower costs.

Newer telecommunications businesses say they are willing to expand their reach to underserved areas, but it cannot be cost prohibitive for them to do so.

"We need a little help in making sure the cost of entry is conducive to making investments," said Robert Knowing of COVAD Communi-

cations. "I'm poised to go anywhere I can if it makes sense."

Some of the smaller companies described how they have successfully introduced high-speed Internet services even to the sparsely populated areas they serve.

Averaging about a customer per square mile, Valley Telephone Cooperative Inc. of Texas began offering Internet access over high-speed digital phone lines several years ago to serve just a few dozen customers.

Representatives from the wireless industry say using that technology to deliver Internet services may provide a way around the distance problems posed by offering them over traditional landlines.

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