

NEWS CLIPS

DAMAGE FROM ADVOCATE BREAK-IN MINIMAL, NO ARRESTS YET

JACKSON, Miss. (NNPA) — A break-in occurred May 28 at one of the nation's most stalwart Black newspapers, *The Jackson Advocate*, the NNPA News Service has learned. Although no one was injured in the incident, financial documents, records and pictures were stolen and there was evidence that files had been closely examined. Rocks thrown through the Advocate's windows caused property damage. No arrests had been made by NNPA press time. *Advocate* officials declined to comment on possible motives. *The Jackson Advocate*, respected for its tradition of investigative reporting, had been researching several stories, including possible fraudulent activities among city officials and drug trafficking within the police department, according to reports developed by the newspaper's radio program "Views From The Black Side." The show airs on Friday nights on WMPR 90.1 FM. "When I saw the file cabinets knocked over, the computer knocked over and everything different from the way I left it, I felt violated," said M.C. Gallion, an *Advocate* staff writer. "I guess it was done to intimidate us, but I don't feel intimidated. But they are becoming more vigilant." The paper met its deadline and will "continue to inform people about being conscious of their surroundings and their voting rights," Gallion said. The *Advocate*, a 63-year-old tabloid, is the longest running Black-owned newspaper in Mississippi. It has undergone a number of attacks in recent years, including a 1998 firebombing, which destroyed over \$100,000 in property and shotgun attacks staged by the Ku Klux Klan in the late 1980s.

NNPA CELEBRATES 60 YEARS OF PROVIDING NEWS

WASHINGTON (NNPA) — The National Newspaper Publishers Association is celebrating its 60th birthday this year with its convention in Chicago, its founding city. Its birth father is a Chicagoan—John H. Sengstacke, publisher of *The Chicago Defender*. The first meeting of what was then called the Negro Newspaper Publishers Association was designed, in Sengstacke's words, to "harmoniz[e] our energies in a common purpose for the benefit of Negro journalism." New times demand new organizations. The old, original NNPA — the National Negro Press Association, founded in 1909 — was fading. Both the strengthening of Jim Crow since World War I and the coming Second World War brought with them a stronger sense of the need for Black unity. So the first day of the first meeting — February 29, 1940, at the Wabash Avenue YMCA — brought old and new passages of time together when *Defender* owner Robert S. Abbott died in the early morning hours prior to the gathering. A bridge had emerged.

BUSH UNDER PRESSURE TO REVIEW CASE OF BLACK DEATH ROW INMATE

WASHINGTON (NNPA) — The case of Gary Graham, a 36-year-old Texas death row inmate sentenced to be executed June 22, continues to draw national attention, particularly in light of Gov. George W. Bush's earlier statements declaring that no innocent person has ever been executed on death row during his tenure. A May 26 press conference here, hosted by U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr., D-Ill., and Rubin "Hurricane" Carter, called for the Republican presidential candidate to review the case and consider clemency. Graham is accused of slaying Bobby Lambert, in 1982. He was sentenced to be executed despite several witnesses providing an alibi and a no-match ballistics report on the gun in Graham's possession when he was arrested. Each of Graham's five execution dates was stayed on appeal. Graham's last appeal to the Supreme Court was denied early last month. Jackson — who has written a book with his father, the Rev. Jesse Jackson Sr., on the death penalty — has introduced legislation calling for a national moratorium on executions. "Since 1976, there have been 600 executions in the United States," Jackson said. "During this same period, 87 people who were sentenced to death were later proven innocent. That means for every seven persons executed, our criminal justice system has found an innocent person was wrongly condemned to die. The system by which we impose the sentence of death is rife with errors." Carter, the subject of the critically acclaimed film "Hurricane," spent 19 years in prison in New Jersey before he was proven innocent.

LAPD chief's granddaughter mourned

LOS ANGELES (AP) — In a pink-trimmed casket covered with roses, the granddaughter of Police Chief Bernard C. Parks was mourned Saturday by hundreds. Meanwhile, a dozen detectives continued searching for her killer.

Police believe the intended target wasn't the chief's granddaughter, but a passenger in 20-year-old Lori Gonzalez's car.

During the funeral, held in an auditorium large enough to accommodate the 1,400

mourners, Mayor Richard Riordan read messages from several lawmakers, including President Clinton.

"People across America have been shocked and saddened that yet another one of our young people has lost her life to gun violence," Clinton wrote.

Parks, who hadn't spoken about the shooting, sat stiffly in the front row, occasionally smiling at comments during the service. Afterward, he helped to carry her casket.

"This is a very, very sad day for the family, and we'll relive this incident forever," Parks said at a reception after the funeral. "I think the only joy in it is that we had her for these (nearly) 21 years and we'll basically cherish every minute of that."

Parks declined to discuss the investigation.

He said he would not take any time off from work and said "you just have to keep living" to cope with the death.

A blanket of white and

pink roses covered the coffin, flanked by two dozen flower arrangements, including two shaped liked six-pointed police badges. Two uniformed police officers sang "Wind Beneath My Wings."

Gonzalez was a Sunday school teacher who worked two jobs, attended Saddleback College in Mission Viejo, where she lived, and did occasional missionary work in Tijuana, Mexico. (See *Mourning*, Page 15)

Report praises Minnesota's welfare program

BLAINE, Minn. (AP) — People in a welfare reform program that pushed recipients to find work but preserved many of their benefits wound up with more stable lives as well as more money, according to a nonpartisan report released Wednesday.

The Minnesota Family Investment Program's participants found and held jobs in greater numbers, had more stable marriages and saw their children do better in school than people who were on traditional welfare, the report from the New York nonprofit Manpower Demonstration Research Corp. found.

Experts said the report,

commissioned by Minnesota and federal agencies, helped address one of the biggest concerns about welfare reform: whether people leaving the rolls are really better off.

"This is the first study that has shown (positive) impacts on family composition, on domestic violence and on children," said Ron Haskins, staff director of the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee panel that rewrote welfare laws.

The Minnesota program, which ran in seven counties from 1994 to 1998 before being adopted statewide, was unusual because it aimed to

simultaneously encourage work, reduce dependence on public assistance and reduce poverty.

Over that time, 14,000 welfare cases were randomly split into two groups, one that received traditional assistance and the other that was switched to the new program.

The reform increased employment by 35 percent, increased earnings by 23 percent and reduced poverty by 68 percent.

Nonfinancial factors improved as well. By the end of the third year, 10.6 percent of reform recipients had gotten married, compared with 7 percent of parents still in the traditional program. Twenty percent more of those already married stayed wed, and domestic abuse of mothers was 18 percent lower among reform participants.

More than 40 states now have incorporated variations of Minnesota's "make work pay" approach into their welfare programs.

The state's caseload has dropped from 64,400 families at its high in 1994 to 41,000 today.

The reform program cost taxpayers substantially more per family than the old sys-

tem, at least in the short run: an additional \$1,900 to \$3,800 a year over five years. The study did not estimate government savings that may accrue in the long run because of things like reduced child poverty or domestic violence.

The incentives had the greatest effect on single-parent families, most of whom moved into full-time employment and brought home significantly bigger paychecks.

For example, a single mother of two in the reform program who chose not to work would receive a grant of \$789 per month. Working full time at \$6 an hour, she would make \$1,032. Combining her earnings with a \$228 Minnesota Family Investment Program grant, her total income would be \$1,260 — \$471 more than if she didn't work.

Minnesota is among the most generous states in maintaining benefits for welfare recipients who go to work.

A welfare recipient in Minnesota can earn up to \$1,400 a month before benefits are curtailed; only Alaska and California have higher monthly earnings cut-offs.

Veteran black newspaper scribe Higgins passes

WASHINGTON, D.C. (NNPA) — Chester A. Higgins Sr., a veteran reporter-editor for *Jet* magazine and Black newspapers, died here May 25 of colon cancer. He was 83.

Early in his career, Higgins, who in 1967 won a NNPA first-place feature-writing award, reported for *The Louisville Defender*. He was editor of *The Pittsburgh Courier's* Detroit edition before joining *Jet*, where he served as a senior editor-columnist writing about entertainment. He also wrote several dispatches for NNPA over several decades.

During the 1980s, after retiring from a public affairs position in the Department of the Army, he became editor of *The Crisis* magazine, the NAACP's organ, under the leadership of then-executive director Benjamin L. Hooks Jr. In 1972, he was a special assistant to Hooks at the Federal Communications Commission.

The Chicago native, who attended Louisville Municipal College, Kentucky State College and the University of Louisville after serving in a segregated U.S. Army during World War II, had been an adjunct journalism professor at Howard University here and at Malcolm X College in Chicago.

Survivors include Maria C. Kopecky Higgins, his third wife, of Washington; son Chester A. Higgins Jr., a photographer, of Brooklyn; daughter Pamela K. Higgins of Detroit, nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

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