

NEWS BRIEFS

VA. GOVERNOR RESCINDS PROCLAMATION BY WHITE HATE GROUP

Virginia Gov. James Gilmore has rescinded a proclamation he mistakenly signed for a David Duke-led hate group. Gilmore spokesman Reed Boatwright, chairman of the Republican National Committee, told reporters the governor signed it due to "a mistake, staff error. It slipped by." The group, the National Organization For European-American Rights, or NOFEAR, is listed as a hate group on the Klanwatch website of the Southern Poverty Law Center. Duke, a former Ku Klux Klan grand dragon, made national headlines more than a decade ago when he was elected to the Louisiana state legislature. Ron Doggett, leader of the state's NOFEAR chapter, said he prepared the proclamation because he wanted the contributions of the Whites who settled Virginia to be recognized. He told reporters that Gilmore's move was "a slap in the face."

NEW TRIAL ORDERED FOR SOUTH CAROLINA LAWMAKER

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — A federal appeals court on Friday ordered a third trial for a former state legislator convicted of selling his vote in support of a pari-mutuel racing bill in 1990. Larry Blanding, former chairman of the House Black Caucus, was convicted of extortion in 1991. That verdict was overturned and a new trial ordered. Blanding was convicted again in 1999 and sentenced to two years in prison. He was charged with taking \$1,300 from lobbyist-turned-informant Ron Cobb in return for his vote to legalize betting on horse and dog races. In Blanding's most recent trial, the court erred when it refused to let the defense remove a white man from the jury pool, the U.S. Court of Appeals decided Friday. The fact the potential juror displayed the Confederate flag symbol on bumper stickers could indicate bias against blacks, the appeals court said.

CINCINNATI POLICE HECKLED AT ANNUAL MEMORIAL MARCH TO FALLEN OFFICERS

CINCINNATI (AP) — Police officers marching in an annual memorial to fallen officers Friday were heckled by activists angry over last month's fatal shooting of an unarmed black man by a white officer. "We pay our policemen. They ought to be able to take care of all of us," Ras-Sudan Uhuru, 43, shouted at officers leaving for a one-mile procession to police headquarters. About 20 activists held signs that said "No Racist Police" and "Stop Killing Us - Or Else." Several were arrested. Rioting erupted after the April 7 shooting of Timothy Thomas, 19, the 15th black man killed in confrontations with Cincinnati police since 1995. More than 800 people were arrested and dozens were injured in the city's worst racial unrest since 1968. The 27-year-old officer was later charged with two misdemeanors. At a ceremony before the march, Police Chief Thomas Streicher called the officers "human beings who sometimes make mistakes. They have an extraordinary commitment to their society and extraordinary commitment to duty."

ECONOMIST SAYS FED RATE CUT IS GOOD FOR BLACKS, BUT COMES LATE

WASHINGTON — In an action considered to be one of the most aggressive since the Reagan years, the Federal Reserve dropped interest rates again May 15. The 2.5 percentage point drop is the fifth reduction since the beginning of the year and points to strong efforts by the Fed to avoid recession by encouraging business spending. Another cut is expected to occur as early as next month. William Spriggs is an economist and director of the National Urban League's Institute for Opportunity and Equality. The institute conducts research, policy analysis and advocacy on issues of critical importance to the African American community. Spriggs said the cuts favor Blacks, but noted some of the changes may have come too late for many African Americans. He made the following statement to the NNPA: "The Federal Reserve raised interest rates by a record amount for an election campaign cycle from 1999 to 2000. It did so in the face of factors that would tend to slow the economy, most notably record level federal government budget surpluses and international trade deficits. With those two factors slowing the economy, only consumer spending and business investment could lead the economy forward."

NAACP: York City mayor must resign

By Marc Scoloro

Dispatch/Sunday News

Local and state NAACP leaders will call for York City Mayor Charles Robertson to resign at a news conference on the steps of City Hall tomorrow afternoon.

The executive committee of the York branch of the NAACP voted unanimously last night to adopt that position in the wake of Robertson's arrest last week for his alleged participation in the murder of a black woman 32 years ago.

Robertson himself approved a permit for the group to assemble just a few feet from his office so they can "reaffirm ... the NAACP's vision supporting the pursuit of the prosecution of those individuals involved in the Lillie Belle Allen and (Henry C.) Schaad murders," said Leo Cooper, president of the York branch.

"And we will be calling



CHARLES ROBERTSON

for the resignation of Charlie Robertson," he added.

Cooper said he will be joined tomorrow by other members of the local NAACP chapter; Charles Stokes, the Pittsburgh-based president of the state NAACP; members of the state executive board; and presidents of NAACP branches in Harrisburg and Philadelphia.

The York branch's execu-

tive board voted unanimously last night in executive session to call for Robertson to resign, Cooper said. Nearly all 15 members attended. The mayor, who won the Democratic primary for a third term just two days before his arrest, has said he has no intention of resigning.

Robertson, 67, is accused of urging white gang members to "kill as many niggers as you can" during a week of racial violence in York during July 1969. An investigative grand jury probing the murders of Allen and rookie city patrolman Schaad heard eyewitnesses testify they saw Robertson give .30-06 ammunition to the white teens, ammunition that was later fired at Allen and the vehicle in which she and four family members were riding.

Eight others have also been charged with murdering Allen. The grand jury recommended 11 people be

charged, but the identities of the remaining two suspects have not been made public.

Robertson has said he is innocent of the murder charge, acknowledging only that he shouted "white power" while in his police uniform at a meeting of white gang members in Farquhar Park one day before Allen's murder. He was a racist at the time, Robertson has said, but no longer holds racist beliefs.

"He should resign because of his admission to his involvement in the events prior to Lillie Belle Allen's murder. I mean that's his own admission. And his admission to being a racist during that period. And there's no indication of any change in Charlie Robertson," Cooper said.

"We're not saying he's guilty of anything. We're saying he should resign just because he's a symbol of what (See Robertson, Page 13)

O.J. to Blake: Don't watch television

LOS ANGELES (AP) — O.J. Simpson has some advice for actor Robert Blake, whose wife was shot to death this month: Don't watch TV.

"I know that watching TV is only going to frustrate him," Simpson told the syndicated TV show "Extra" for a segment scheduled to air Thursday.

Simpson also advised Blake against taking a lie detector test and added, "As far as I'm concerned, this man is innocent until a jury comes back and calls him guilty."

Blake's wife, Bonny Lee Bakley, 45, was shot to death May 4 in her husband's car after the couple dined at a Studio City restaurant.

Police have said that no one has been ruled out as a suspect.

Blake, who married Bakley four months ago after DNA tests proved he fathered her 11-month-old daughter, has said she was shot while he returned to the restaurant to pick up a gun he left behind.

He said he was carrying

the gun because Bakley had expressed concerns about her safety.

Blake's son, appearing Wednesday on CNN's "Larry King Live," defended his father and said Bakley "was afraid and wanted him to carry it," Noah Blake said.

"My dad is innocent, period," Noah Blake said. "He doesn't need to prove that. He is not obligated nor is he obliged to address a thousand-trillion rumors."

Blake and his slain wife's family decided Thursday to

cancel a planned New Jersey funeral and bury her in California at an undisclosed location and time to avoid media commotion, the actor's lawyers said.

A private religious service late Wednesday in Los Angeles was canceled when crowds of media showed up at the funeral home.

Blake's civil lawyer, Barry Felsen, said that reporters had already begun camping out at the funeral home in New Jersey designated for delivery of the body.

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