

NEWS BRIEFS

BOY SCOUTS REMOVE MISSISSIPPI STATE FLAG

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) - A Boy Scout uniform patch worn in southwest Mississippi that features the state flag and its Confederate battle emblem is being replaced by a patch showing the face of Andrew Jackson. Officials with the Andrew Jackson Council of the Boy Scouts of America, which represents troops in 22 Mississippi counties, said the change was not based on complaints. "We just decided it was time for a change," Larry Smith, the council's assistant executive director, said Thursday. Mississippi voters overwhelmingly voted to keep the flag in April, rejecting a new design that would have replaced the Confederate emblem with a cluster of stars. But Josie Loveless, a Boy Scout leader in Jackson, said he had heard complaints from parents in the black community through most of the 32 years the flag had been on the patch. "I like the new one," Loveless said. "It has a picture of our namesake and it does not have the Confederate flag, which offends some of our parents." At least two other councils in the state have depicted the flag on patches.

GRAND JURY BLAMES LAWYERS IN PROTEST SLAYING

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) - A grand jury has concluded that two lawmen were responsible for the death of a black truck driver during a civil rights protest more than three decades ago. Benjamin Brown was shot in the back May 11, 1967, near the campus of Jackson State College, a predominantly black institution. A protest had turned violent as rocks, bricks and bottles were tossed at police. Officers fired into a crowd of students, killing the 21-year-old Brown and injuring others. A Hinds County grand jury report, released Tuesday, held Jackson police Capt. Buddy Kane and Mississippi Highway Patrol Officer Lloyd Jones responsible for Brown's death. Both men are dead. The grand jury report said there was evidence that Brown "was struck by at least two separate shots from shotguns fired by the Jackson police officer and the Mississippi Highway Patrol officer." After Brown's death, police investigated the case for only about a week. Jackson police reopened the case in 1998 at the urging of Brown's family.

COURT LIMITS USE OF STUN BELTS FOR SECURITY RISKS

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) - A federal appeals panel has ruled that stun belts cannot be used to shock jailed inmates who disrupt courtroom proceedings, but can be used when an inmate creates a security risk in a courtroom. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said Wednesday that the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department may activate the device only if a defendant attempts to flee or endangers others in the courtroom. The three-judge panel ruled that a Los Angeles federal judge's injunction barring use of the belts was too broad. The case stems from 1998, when Superior Court Judge Joan Comparet-Cassani ordered a bailiff to shock defendant Ronnie Hawkins, who refused her demands to be quiet. Use of a stun belt on Hawkins prompted U.S. District Judge Dean Pregerson to order the sheriff's department to stop using the devices. The stun belts deliver a 50,000-volt electrical charge for eight seconds. Hawkins is serving 25-years-to-life on a theft charge, under California's "three-strikes" law.

BLACK MAN BEATEN BY COPS GETS 18 YEARS

PHILADELPHIA (AP) - A man who was beaten by police last summer in an arrest caught on videotape and broadcast worldwide was sentenced Friday to 18 years in prison for a crime spree committed in the two weeks prior to his arrest. "I'm sorry to the city of Philadelphia and the families of the people affected," Thomas Jones said in court. Jones, 31, pleaded guilty in March to carjacking, robbery, assault, reckless endangerment and drug charges. He could have faced a sentence of 127 to 255 years. "It's enough and it's fair," prosecutor Anthony Voci said. "It was a well-informed and well thought-out sentence." Last July 12, Jones led police on a high-speed chase through Philadelphia in a stolen car. When he was stopped, Jones was shot five times by police. He fled in a police cruiser. When stopped for a second time, police yanked Jones from the car. A news crew in a helicopter taped the throng of officers as they repeatedly kicked and punched Jones before leading him away in handcuffs. Jones' civil lawsuit against the city still is pending.

Decision nixing preference case small win

By Raoul Dennis
Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court's decision to decline an opportunity to address the issue of affirmative action in higher education last week is being considered only a minor victory by experts and educators close to the issue.

"It is a victory but there is a big unknown because the process is not over. And because the process isn't over there are many ways to get to an endpoint," says Rene Redwood, former executive director of the Presidential Glass Ceiling Commission. The commission, founded as a result of the Civil Rights Act of 1991, published its

NAACP

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We now have nothing, thanks to Mr. Berry, Mr. Mfume, Mr. Bond, Mr. Ed Lewis."

The petition says suspensions should be ended until the NAACP complies with its own rules, provides proper notice of its actions and allows the branch to contest them before the full board, or the branch will suffer "irreparable damage."

But when contacted on Tuesday, Rivers said: "The NAACP has not been served with any lawsuit as of this date." He added, "Until it is, we can't comment."

"They refused to accept it!" Richardson exclaimed. "Their local resident agent, who is supposed to receive service, has refused to receive

findings in "The Glass Ceiling Report" in 1993.

"I'm sure that those plaintiffs will seek some other form of legal redress on this," she said but added the struggle over the life of affirmative action was not over. We are going to have to continue to battle for access and opportunity for all qualified individuals regardless of race or sex."

James E. Sulton, Jr., executive director of the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education, supported Redwood's claim.

"We should be happy [about the decision] but not too happy," Sulton said. "It's good news because it doesn't set us back any further. But it

doesn't stop people who are relentless in their pursuit of this who want to see an end of affirmative action."

The high court declined to review an appeals court decision that upheld race as a factor for admissions in a University of Washington School of Law case May 26. As lower courts throughout the nation continue to deliver inconsistent rulings on race based admissions policies, many insiders and legal experts expect that the Supreme Court will soon step in and make new ruling that could affect the 1978 Bakke vs. the University of California Regents decision. In that decision, a five-justice majority struck down a school's policy

of set aside admissions for minorities but with Justice Lewis Powell writing that schools could consider an applicant's race as a "plus factor" in an effort to ensure diversity.

"I would like to believe that the evidence was simply overwhelming," Redwood said when asked what she thought may have prompted the court to avoid the University of Washington case. "It begged them to have to come up with a better reason to take it."

Redwood argues diversity in experience and educational background is a key ingredient to success and is a positive attribute in the eyes of (See Victory, Page 15)



GENE COLLINS

the petition," he added, saying he knows this "because he told us."

"We have resident agents," Rivers confirmed, but added, "we haven't heard from them either."

Richardson said the group will resort to the secretary of state, if necessary, saying, "They will be served, defi-

nately."

"I don't know what to make of it, but there's more than meets the eye as to why they don't want to accept it," said Collins. "But we're not going to back off, we're just going to continue until they respond."

While in Las Vegas recently, Rivers said the NAACP's observance of due process extended the duration of deliberations over the fate of the branch. But Richardson called the national's behavior unprofessional, and Rivers "a bald-faced liar."

"He's a liar and the truth's not in him," Richardson said on Monday. "To this date we have still not received a certified letter," he said, denying

Rivers claim that the branch refused an attempt at delivery.

"We want to see the formal charges and the evidence they have that will justify the actions that they have taken and if they cannot produce that, then we want to be made whole," said Richardson.

Two days after the April 29 suspension announcement, Collins, his supporters and various branch members and non-members met at the branch offices to plan a response.

Two mysterious items were circulated at the meeting - an informational flier, and the NAACP's apparent announcement of a deal with the MGM-Mirage corporation (See NAACP, Page 9)

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