

NEWS BRIEFS

SURVEY: BLACKS' ATTITUDES TOWARD CIGARETTE TAXES DIFFER

Most African-Americans favor raising taxes on cigarettes regardless of the impact on low-income smokers, according to the results of the first national survey of African-American opinions on tobacco taxes. The findings run contrary to the position advanced by some critics who claim the tax hike would be injurious to black smokers. "The survey counters the argument of some groups who say African-Americans may be less receptive to higher cigarette taxes because the burden of increased tobacco costs would fall on low-income smokers, many of whom are African-American," according to Gary King of Pennsylvania, principal investigator of the research team that conducted the study. "In fact, 75 percent of respondents disagreed with the idea that raising cigarette taxes is unfair to African-Americans." Published in the May issue of *American Journal of Public Health*, the survey was funded by the Substance Abuse Policy Research Program, a \$54 million program that supports the policy research on alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs. African-Americans are disproportionately affected by smoking when compared to whites in terms of higher lung cancer rates, more premature deaths and increased smoking-related morbidity. "The results of this survey should encourage local, state and federal officials to raise cigarette taxes and enact other anti-tobacco laws as a way of reducing consumption of tobacco products in black communities," King said.

HEALTH GROUP TO GIVE AWAY CELL PHONE RADIATION GUARDS

The Black Health Awareness Project is giving away 10,000 free cell phone radiation guards in the month of May. The project, sponsored by Blacknews.com—billed as the premier online destination for African-American news—encourages blacks to be more health conscious about brain, prostate and breast cancer, as well as HIV. After launching and promoting the giveaway of 1,000 radiation guards in April, the project mailed out 900. "According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, African-Americans are twice as likely as whites to die from cancer," said Dante Lee, president and CEO of the firm that owns Blacknews.com. "In addition, nearly 13 percent of all Blacks have diabetes. This only reveals that it is very necessary and appropriate for black health organizations to step up and really emphasize to the African-American community how important it is to be more health conscious." Adds Lee, "Giving away free radiation guards is only the beginning. The Black Health Awareness Project has future plans to also give away thousands of free HIV test kits, breast examination kits and more."

INDICTMENT: TEXAS LAWMAN LIED IN TULIA DRUG STING

Tom Coleman, the Texas lawman that led the police sting on a suspected drug ring in a small town, has been indicted for presenting false evidence that put 38 people in jail. The majority of those convicted were African-American. A jury in the northern Texas county of Swisher handed down the indictments against Coleman on suspicion of perjuring himself in statements he made about his career as a law enforcement officer. If convicted, Coleman could face up to 10 years in prison and a \$10,000 fine for each of the charges. "It is stipulated by all parties and approved by the court that Tom Coleman is simply not a credible witness under oath," Judge Ron Chapman said in a statement in court earlier this month. In 1999, Coleman claimed he bought drugs from suspects in Tulia, a predominantly White farm town of 5,000 people. No drugs were ever found and little or no corroborating evidence was introduced at trials. Earlier this month, state attorneys and lawyers trying to overturn the convictions reached an agreement to request that all 38 felony convictions obtained by Coleman's testimony be overturned by a higher court. Thirteen people arrested in the sting are still in jail.

Campaign urges black men to eat healthy

Special to Sentinel-Voice

U.S. health officials are pushing for African-American men to increase their daily intake of fruits and vegetables in an attempt to decrease the risk of diet-related disease.

Officials told reporters that Black males between ages 34 and 59 should consume nine servings of fruits and vegetables per day, to lower body weight and improve nutrition.

Officials linked the warning to poor eating habits and obesity, both of which play an important role in cardiovascular disease, diabetes and certain cancers.

All three disease categories are more

common in the U.S. minority population.

"The burden of cancer is directly linked to the problem of obesity and weight gain," Dr. Andrew von Eschenbach, director of the National Cancer Institute said.

Thirteen percent of all African-Americans have diabetes, double the rate for Whites. African-Americans are also twice as likely as Whites to die from prostate cancer or colorectal cancer, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Federal figures also indicate that about 61 percent of American adults are

either overweight or obese, and rates are higher among African-Americans.

"They die too young. They leave their families without them," Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy G. Thompson told reporters.

Federal officials have introduced a program that will encourage minorities to see their doctors for cancer screening. Guidelines recommend periodic cancer screening for adults older than 50, though only about half get it, said Dr. Nancy C. Lee, the CDC's director of cancer prevention and control.

"There is strong evidence that screening works," Lee said.

Report: 'Justice system places higher value on white life'

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Criminals convicted for the murder of African-Americans are less likely to get the death penalty than for killing Whites, according to a study released by Amnesty International.

The study says 80 percent of the 845 people executed in the United States since the death penalty was reinstated in 1977 were put to death for killing Whites. Since then, 200 African-Americans have been executed for the death of White victims, and many were convicted by juries that included no Blacks, the report said.

"President Bush has promised that the U.S. will always stand firm for equal justice," said William F. Schulz, executive director of Amnesty International USA. "If that's true, he must call for an immediate halt to federal executions and encourage states to follow suit in the face of studies consistently indicating that the justice system places a higher value on White life than on Black life."

In the United States, Blacks make up 12 percent of the population. However they represent more than 40 percent on death row and one in three of those executed. The

United States will soon execute its 300th African-American inmate since 1977.

"At least one in five of the African-Americans executed since 1977, and a quarter of the Blacks put to death for killing Whites, were tried in front of all-White juries," Schulz said. "What are the odds that this happened for entirely non-discriminatory reasons?"

In 2000, a Justice Department report found that from 1995 to 2000, three-fourths of the 183 federal defendants facing the death penalty were minorities, and 43 percent of the defendants came from

nine of the 94 U.S. attorney districts: Puerto Rico, the eastern district of Virginia, Maryland, the Eastern and southern districts of New York, the western district of Missouri; New Mexico; the western district of Tennessee and the northern district of Texas.

Attorney General John Ashcroft credited the numbers to discrepancies in state laws, prosecution decisions and geography.

"There is no evidence of racial bias in the administration of the federal death penalty," Ashcroft told federal lawmakers in June.

Baltimore Times associate publisher stepping down

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Baltimore Times' publisher Joy Bramble has announced that associate publisher Anthony W. McCarthy is taking an indefinite leave of absence to "explore several personal options."

"Anthony has been an invaluable asset to our company and although I'm sad that he is leaving, I know that he has some very important decisions to make that will have a great impact on his future," she said.

McCarthy is considered one of the most influential media personalities in Baltimore with a popular talk show on public radio's WEAA and

he serves as a permanent guest host on "The Marc Steiner Show" on WYPR.

"I have a burning desire to serve the people of Baltimore in public office," explained McCarthy. "I am definitely considering running for city council and I understand that it is inappropriate to continue to cover the news until I make a final decision."

McCarthy's leave is effective April 30.

Last year "The Baltimore Business Journal" again named McCarthy to its "40 Under 40" list, recognizing him as one of the state's most influential leaders under the age of 40.

He also was ordained last October by the Unity Fellowship Church Movement, an interdenominational ministry based in Los Angeles, and serves as one of the associate ministers at the Unity Fellowship Church of Baltimore.

In addition to a possible city council run and devoting more time to his ministry, McCarthy plans to increase his public speaking engagements and has started a private consulting company called Mindset Media.

"Even if I don't run for office, I plan to devote a lot of energy to helping some really good people get elected. I also have a lot of ideas about

better and more efficient ways for government to work and want to use my radio show on WEAA and other venues to speak out about those issues," said McCarthy. He plans to temporarily suspend his hosting duties at WYPR at the end of April.

Mindset Media was established to teach corporations and individuals more effective methods of communicating their messages to the mass media.

Said McCarthy, "With the continued expansion of the Internet and the growth we're seeing in satellite radio, there are a lot of opportunities to share my knowledge of this industry with clients."

Slaying

(Continued from Page 3)

When police brought Nelson to a wounded Rosenbaum at the crime scene, the victim blurted out words that implicated the suspect, Resnick said.

"You in the red shirt, I remember you, Why did you stab me?" Rosenbaum said to Nelson, said Resnick.

But Jasper told the jury that this was not a case of politics or religious hatred. Instead, Nelson made repeated statements to police and his friends that he didn't stab Rosenbaum because he was a Jew but because he had been drinking.

"Mr. Nelson is saying that he participated in an attack, not because he was Jewish, but because he ran out there and got high," Jasper said.

Jasper called the events on August 19, 1991 a tragedy for the Cato, Rosenbaum and Nelson families, a comparison Norman Rosenbaum, Yankel's brother, labeled as "repugnant" to reporters outside the courtroom.

"He went down there to get a Jew," said Rosenbaum. "Lemrick Nelson is not a scapegoat, Lemrick Nelson is a murderer."

BBQ Dinners \$500

AMERICAN BARBECUE
1212 D Street • 638-2010

"O TASTE AND SEE THAT
THE LORD IS GOOD"