

NEWS BRIEFS

SBA TO HOLD SMALL BUSINESS SEMINAR FOR VETERANS

The U.S. Small Business Administration will hold a small business seminar and loan expo for veterans to include service-connected disabled veterans at the Gold Coast hotel-casino from 1 to 4 p.m. Sept. 9. The free event is billed as a "one-stop shop" of SBA-approved lenders. It will bring together lenders and resource partners, including SCORE, the Nevada Small Business Development Center and the Nevada Microenterprise Initiative, as well as representatives from several banks that provide financing for businesses. "This program for veterans is a result of a special project from the SBA's Veterans Business Development Office," said Pete Peterson, veteran business development officer in Las Vegas. "We are very fortunate to have been granted additional funding to assist veterans who might be interested in starting a business." The event's format will include a presentation by a SCORE volunteer addressing the basic requirements a person needs to fulfill to be successful in starting a business. Each attendant will receive a free, 300-page workbook titled "How to Really Start Your Own Small Business," published by Inc. and sponsored by VISA in cooperation with SCORE. Those interested in more information can call Pete Peterson at 388-6800.

10-YEAR SENTENCE IN CROWN HEIGHTS RIOT DEATH

NEW YORK (NNPA)—After hearing impact statements from the family of Yankel Rosenbaum and pleas for leniency from the family of Lemrick Nelson in federal court in Brooklyn last week, U.S. District Court Judge Frederic Block sentenced Nelson, 27, to 10 years in prison. This was the maximum sentence sought by the prosecution, since Nelson was found guilty of violating Rosenbaum's civil rights but not of causing his death. The Rosenbaum family had sought a sentence of 20 years for Nelson, who was found guilty in May in his third trial of violating Rosenbaum's civil rights by stabbing him to death during the Crown Heights Riot in 1991. Nelson's lawyers believe he will be free within a year since Nelson already has served time on a prior conviction and could get time off for good behavior.

STUDY FINDS MORE BLACK MEN WILL GO TO PRISON

African-American men born after 2001 will have a one in three chance of going to prison during their lifetime, according to a government study. The report, issued by the U.S. Justice Department, says that in 2001 one-sixth of African-American men were current or former prisoners, a disproportionately high figure when compared to White males. This number is expected to rise. According to the report, Black men had a 32.2 percent chance of going to prison in 2001, compared to 17.2 percent of Hispanics and 5.9 percent of Whites. The number of incarcerated African-American males in 2001 (818,900) exceeded those in college by nearly a third (600,000). "Since the 1970s, there has been a considerable opening of social and economic opportunity in much of the Black community," said Marc Mauer, assistant director of the Sentencing Project, a group which promotes reduced reliance on imprisonment. "But I think we're seeing that for those people left behind by those advances—and that's largely in urban centers—in many ways, their life prospects are probably getting considerably worse."

POET MAYA ANGELOU SPEAKS TO THE HEART OF DISEASE

Maya Angelou, renowned poet and author, is being featured in a new program that will promote cardiovascular health in African-American women. Approximately 40 percent of Black women in the United States die from cardiovascular disease and all American Black women are at higher risk than White women from developing high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol or heart disease. A recent study found that one in three adults in the United States has high blood pressure—with older Black women experiencing the greatest increase in developing the disease. The educational initiative, "Heart Health for the Generations: A Guide for African American Women," consists of a 30-minute educational video and companion guidebook. The video explains cardiovascular disease and highlights prevention strategies and risk factors for developing various forms of the disease.

Suspect arraigned in Shani Baraka murder

By Herb Boyd

Special to Sentinel-Voice

NEW YORK (NNPA)—James Coleman, aka Ibn El-Amin Pasha, was arraigned last week in New Jersey and charged with aggravated assault and making terroristic threats against Wanda Wilson-Pasha, his estranged wife.

Coleman/Pasha, 35, was being sought by authorities for questioning in the murders of Rayshon Holmes and

Shani Baraka, Wilson-Pasha's sister and the daughter of famed poets Amiri and Amina Baraka. The two were killed at Wilson-Pasha's home last Tuesday. Wilson-Pasha was vacationing in Las Vegas when the murders occurred. At the arraignment, Coleman/Pasha was charged with holding a gun to his wife's head and threatening to kill her on June 15.

After the murder of his daughter and Holmes, Amiri

Baraka told the press that several restraining orders had been filed against Coleman/Pasha, but none had been served.

The police said they were unable to locate Coleman/Pasha and considered him a fugitive. Coleman/Pasha turned himself in to authorities last weekend and was accompanied by his attorney, Hassen Ibn Abdallah.

Middlesex County prosecutor Bruce Kaplan said that

Coleman/Pasha was a suspect in the shootings of Baraka, 31, and Holmes, 30. The two women died of multiple gunshot wounds to their heads and bodies. Their vehicles, the police reported, were still missing.

Coleman/Pasha is being held in Middlesex County Adult Correction Center in North Brunswick in lieu of \$250,000 bail.

Herb Boyd writes for the Amsterdam News.

Schools

(Continued from Page 1) ignoring their concerns.

Clark County School Board Trustee Shirley Barber, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and Assemblyman Wendell P. Williams are supporting the chamber.

"There are many laws on the books concerning education that are being ignored," said Williams, who serves as chairman of the Education Committee. "I think it is appropriate for the Urban Chamber of Commerce to request an investigation. It's no different than what other chambers have done."

Two years ago the school board participated in the Urban Chamber's Blue Ribbon Committee on Race that examined race relations in various areas and industries in Clark County including the school district. The committee found that disparity existed between ethnic groups in the workforce, but little has happened to promote minority inclusion, Brown said.

"It appears from the complexion of personnel from entry level to upper level management positions that there is no parity in the hiring or inclusion of minorities, particularly, African-Americans and Asian-Americans. The focus appears to be predominantly only on Hispanics," Brown said.

When it comes to aca-



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— Hannah Brown
President Urban Chamber of Commerce

demic performance, Barber said, "The fact that our school system is constantly rated at the bottom of the National Assessment of Educational Progress Report should be of paramount concern."

Data collected showed that Clark County placed last nationwide at the eighth grade reading level and ranked fourth from the bottom in reading nationwide at the third-grade level. If the complaint prompts an assessment of district operations, Barber said it would help identify problem areas and processes that could better serve minority students.

"The achievement gap between African-American and Hispanic students has continued to get wider and wider," Barber said. "As a school-board member my greatest desire is to see this gap closed. The board needs to have oversight and write policy that will hold the superintendent accountable."

The Rev. Spencer Barrett, president of the Las Vegas

Chapter of the NAACP, said he is concerned that children of color and minorities are often labeled academically challenged and placed in special education classes. He hopes a review of district operations will point out facts, end rumors and put in place mandates for change.

If the complaints prove valid, one of those mandates could pertain to spending. Barber spearheaded a 1999 study of the condition of older schools that determined many were in dire need of repair and replacement. The findings prompted Williams to call for new legislation in 2000 that cleared the way to replace Madison Elementary School now Wendell P. Williams Elementary School.

During the 2001 session, Williams called for Booker, Matt Kelly and Sunrise Acres elementary schools as well as Burkholder Middle and Rancho High schools to be replaced. In addition to the replacement of these schools, the legislation also mandated

the district get input from citizens in the neighborhoods surrounding the schools.

Only residents surrounding Wendell P. Williams and Booker Elementary schools have fully participated in the assessment process, Barber said.

Despite the need to improve older schools, many of which are located throughout Historic West Las Vegas, Brown said getting the money earmarked has been difficult.

"Bond dollars are available for upgrades and refurbishing schools, however, it has been like pulling teeth to get these dollars spent in areas that service African-American children," she said.

While working to push improving the quality of education, the chamber also plans to look closely at the school district's hiring practices. For the past three years, the chamber has worked with private sector businesses to increase the number of minorities at upper management levels, Brown said.

Williams supports the chamber's work and said it is logical and smart for businesses to get involved in making sure the education system is servicing students. The students we teach today will make up the employee selection pool that companies hire from later. If the academic system fails them now, we will all suffer in the future.

Golf Event

(Continued from Page 2)

important than ever," Toston said. "It opens the doors to global opportunities. I believe (education) makes life less complicated."

Toston was born in Epps, La., moving to Las Vegas in 1959 to attend community college and UNLV. He has been married to wife, Gertrude, for 30 years. Toston has been employed by the LVCVA for 28 years.

Russell said Toston is being recognized following a youth career-day speech he gave and sponsorship support he brings from LVCVA. "He is a real team player for the community," Russell said.

For additional information, please call (702) 646-4688.

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