

NEWS BRIEFS

KERRY TAPS VERNON JORDAN FOR DEBATE TALKS

WASHINGTON (AP) - Washington powerbroker Vernon Jordan will be the lead negotiator for Democrat John Kerry on the presidential debates. Jordan, a lawyer, lobbyist and former aide to President Clinton, will represent the Kerry campaign in negotiations with the Bush-Cheney campaign on the terms of this fall's three presidential debates. In a statement released Monday by Kerry's campaign, Jordan said he was honored to join the team and looked forward to the debates "where the American people will see the clear choice facing them in November between more of the failed Bush record and John Kerry's optimistic plan to build a stronger America." The first debate is Sept. 30 at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Fla.

U.S.: DELTA AIR LINES SETTLES DISCRIMINATION LAWSUIT

WASHINGTON (AP) - The government announced a settlement with Delta Air Lines on Monday over allegations the carrier discriminated after the Sept. 11 terror attacks against travelers believed to have been Muslim or of Arab, Middle Eastern or Southeast Asian descent. The department said its investigation found that Delta acted in a manner inconsistent with federal laws that bar discrimination. Delta acknowledged no wrongdoing. The airline agreed to provide civil rights training over the next two years to its pilots, flight attendants and passenger service agents. As part of the settlement, that training must cost the company no less than \$900,000. This is the fourth settlement regarding discrimination complaints against airline passengers in the weeks after the 2001 terror attacks. It settled similar allegations with United Airlines last year and with American Airlines and Continental Airlines this year.

JUSTICE DEPT. OK'S VIRGINIA MAYORAL ELECTION PLAN

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) - The Justice Department on Monday approved Richmond's plan for citywide mayoral elections, rejecting claims that the change would dilute the political power of the city's largely Black electorate. The ruling clears the way for a Nov. 2 election pitting incumbent Rudolph McCollum against the nation's first elected Black governor, L. Douglas Wilder. The proposal, approved 4-1 by voters in a referendum last year, allows residents to elect a mayor directly and gives the post more power. Under the existing system, City Council appoints one of its members to the largely ceremonial post. Virginia lawmakers approved the change earlier this year pending a Justice Department review to ensure that the change complies with the 1965 Voting Rights Act, which bars former Confederate states from enacting laws that diminish Black voting clout. Rep. Robert C. Scott, a Democrat and the only Black member of Virginia's delegation to Congress, asked the Justice Department to reject the plan on grounds that it violates the federal law enacted at the height of the civil rights movement. Wilder has argued, a strong mayor is necessary to take on chronic problems of rampant gang and gun violence within the state capital.

CHURCH APOLOGIZES FOR TURNING AWAY BLACKS

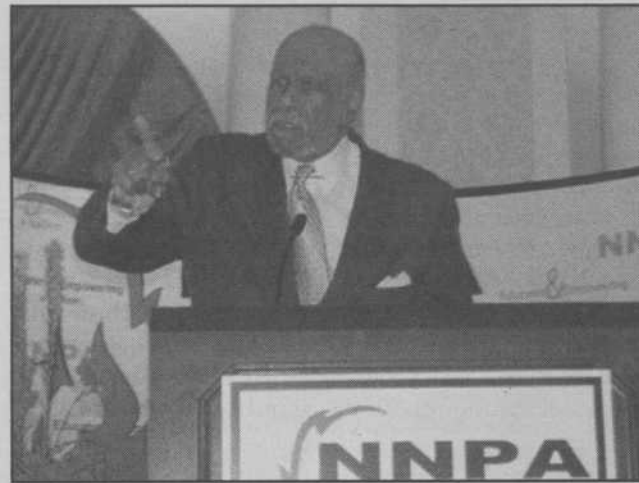
ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. (AP) - A church that shunned Blacks in 1964 apologized for the racist acts and honored two women who were turned away as children. "We regret our actions," Pastor Pat Turner-Sharpton of First United Methodist Church said Sunday at a "service of reconciliation." "We regret the hurt we caused you. We ask your forgiveness." An elderly White woman had walked Audrey Willis and Janice Boles, both child civil rights activists, to the church in 1964. A church leader told the woman the girls were not welcome, Boles said. "The deacon said, 'You can come in, but the little monkeys have to stay outside,'" Boles said. "I would like to say to all of you that I forgive you because I am a Christian." Willis described being arrested when she tried to enter the church. "If I had it to do over again, I would," she said. The church voted to accept all worshippers shortly after the girls' arrests, but the memory of that incident has resurfaced yearly, Turner-Sharpton said. "If we could, we'd go back and undo it," he said.

Activist to Black media: Stay strong

By Hazel Trice Edney
Special to Sentinel-Voice
NEW ORLEANS

(NNPA) - The Civil Rights Movement has forced many changes in society, but not so many that the Black Press is no longer needed, says Thomas N. Todd, an attorney and longtime civil rights activist.

"We need you. We need the Black Press now because some of our people have gone for the okey-doke. They think because they can eat in the big house, sleep in the big house and play in the big house, they think they're a member of the family," says Todd, former president of the Chicago chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Operation PUSH. "Keep on standing up for your people. Keep on educating and empowering a nation, keep on fighting your enemy no matter who they



Thomas N. Todd urged the black press at the National Newspaper Publishers Association convention to be vigilant.

are, Black or White or what have you. Don't ever go for the okey-doke."

Todd was speaking at the National Newspaper Publishers Association's 64th annual convention in New Orleans.

"We are fighting the symptoms of slavery, we are fighting the limbs on the tree,"

he said. "We must go to the roots. If you all want to destroy the tree, you must destroy the roots. If you all are going to be real about freedom, you must attack the roots of racism."

During the speech, which he described as walking down a dirt road and leaving the

information super highway behind, Todd was frequently interrupted with thunderous applause or loud laughter.

"I don't let anyone define winning for me. This is my reputation. This is my life... For me, I would rather lose standing on my feet like a Black man than to win on my knees, sniffling and whimpering like a little boy," he said to applause.

Then, he brought down the house with his description of what he called his "six-pack variety of Negroes."

Number one is the pop-up Negro. "He's just like toast, light, medium or dark," Todd explained, depending on the circumstances.

The second one is the hydroponic Negro. Hydroponics is the science of growing plants in shallow water without their roots being attached

(See Press, Page 12)

Town honors slain civil rights activists

PHILADELPHIA, Miss. (AP) - Amid new calls to reopen an investigation into the slayings of three civil rights activists, a coalition of Black and White residents has organized a memorial service to mark the 40th anniversary of the killings.

The group invited the activists' families to attend a memorial service Sunday at Mt. Zion United Methodist Church, a tiny Black church in rural Mississippi that was burned to the ground after a voter-registration drive in 1964.

James Chaney, a 21-year-old Black man from Missis-

sippi, and Michael Schwerner, 24, and Andrew Goodman, 20 — both White men from New York City — organized the 1964 "Freedom Summer" program in which young civil rights workers organized voter education and registration campaigns.

Their actions still resonate in this rural area northeast of Jackson, where residents remember the fear of going against the Ku Klux Klan.

Blacks had to pass a written test to vote, so the activists taught locals how to read.

Mt. Zion member Cornelius Steele said when he tried to register, a smirk-

ing clerk handed him a test that asked: "How many bubbles are in a bar of soap?"

The last thing Jewel McDonald's parents saw that night four decades ago when her mother was nearly beaten to death were White Klan robes fluttering like doves' wings through the dark as Klansmen ran toward her church.

One of the congregants prayed aloud for God to spare their lives.

"Something in her voice made the Klan so superstitious they stopped the beating," McDonald, 57, said recently as she brushed tears

from her eyes.

But soon afterward, the church burned. When Chaney, Schwerner and Goodman tried to investigate, they were abducted on a rural road and killed. No one was ever tried for the slayings.

Seven Klansmen were convicted of federal civil rights violations in the June 21, 1964, deaths, which became the subject of the 1988 movie "Mississippi Burning."

They received sentences of three to 10 years. The state never brought murder charges, and none of those (See Honor, Page 5)

Kerry backers slam Bush on affordable homes

WASHINGTON (AP) - The debate over cuts to a federal housing voucher program spilled over into the presidential campaign Thursday as Democrats claimed the Bush administration has failed to make affordable housing a priority.

The criticism came as Housing and Urban Development Secretary Alphonso Jackson, in a speech hours later, touted the administration's commitment to expanding home ownership, especially for minorities.

"There is a tremendous housing crisis in this country and this administration is making it worse," said Andrew Cuomo, a HUD secretary during the Clinton administration. He said any increases in home ownership

in the past three years were triggered by lower interest rates, not by administration action.

"He (Jackson) might as well say cockadoodledo, and take credit for the sunrise," said Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., who appeared with Cuomo at a news conference on behalf of Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry.

The event was the first by Kerry's campaign to focus on housing issues. Kerry has not issued any plan to boost the availability of affordable housing.

Jackson, who became secretary less than three months ago, has come under fire in Congress and from state and local officials for recent cuts in the \$14.5 billion housing voucher program known as

"Section 8." The rental program helps nearly 2 million families through some 2,500 local agencies.

Jackson said HUD is still working on the funding problems, and blamed housing authorities for leasing too

many units and exceeding their funding caps.

"Nobody is facing eviction," he said. "The housing authorities did what we told them not to do. They have to find a way to pay for it."

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