



Isabel Sanford and Sherman Hemsley, who performed on the television sitcom 'The Jeffersons,' pose for a photograph in this May 6, 1998 file photo in New York.

## Isabel Sanford of 'The Jeffersons' dies

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Actress Isabel Sanford, best known as "Weezy," Louise Jefferson on the television sitcom "The Jeffersons," died of natural causes, her publicist said Monday. She was 86.

Sanford died Friday at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, where she had been hospitalized since July 4, said Brad Lemack. Her daughter, Pamela Ruff, was at her side, he said.

Her health had waned after undergoing preventive surgery on a neck artery 10 months ago, Lemack said. He did not give a cause of death.

Sanford co-starred with Sherman Hemsley from 1975 to 1985 on CBS' "The Jeffersons," a spin-off of the popular series "All in the Family," in which she also appeared.

In 1981, Sanford became the first Black woman to receive an Emmy for Best Actress in a Comedy Series for her work on "The Jeffersons."

"Isabel was our queen and that's what we called her on the show," said Marla Gibbs, who played the Jeffersons' maid Florence Johnston.

Gibbs said that even before the hit sitcom, Sanford's comedic talents were evident during acting auditions.

"Isabel would come in and just light up the room and start telling stories and having everybody in stitches," Gibbs said.

Sanford, a native New Yorker, was joined by "Jeffersons" creator Norman Lear and others in January when she received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

"Here with stars in my eyes — something that I dreamed about when I was 9 years old," she said at the time. "There are others that deserve it, but let everybody get their own."

She enjoyed getting fan mail from people who saw "The Jeffersons" for the first time in reruns, Lemack said.

"She was just amazed and so pleased that the show had that kind of lasting power and entertainment because she loved to make people laugh," he said.

Sanford made her feature film debut in the 1967 classic, "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner."

Recently, Sanford lent her voice to "The Simpsons" and appeared in commercial campaigns for Denny's restaurants and retailer Old Navy.

Besides her daughter, Sanford is survived by two sons, seven grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

## Lakers end era, trade O'Neal

MIAMI (AP) - The Lakers and Heat finalized a trade Wednesday sending Shaquille O'Neal to Miami, with Los Angeles getting Caron Butler, Lamar Odom, Brian Grant and a first-round draft pick in return.

The deal, ending O'Neal's eight-year tenure in Los Angeles, had been on the verge of completion since Saturday, when he met in Orlando with Heat president Pat Riley and agreed to the trade. NBA attorneys approved it hours after the league's two-week moratorium on player movement ended.

"Today the Miami Heat took a giant step forward in our continued pursuit of an NBA championship," Riley said in a statement. "We feel that we have traded for the best player in the NBA."

The 7-foot-1, 340-pound O'Neal transforms into a title threat a franchise that has reached the conference finals only once in its 16-year history. The Heat have won one playoff series in the past four years and went 42-40 last season.

"I never imagined that we would acquire Shaquille

O'Neal," guard Eddie Jones said. "It's once-in-a-lifetime trying to get a player like this guy. It's an unbelievable, unbelievable move."

At 32, O'Neal is coming off a season when he averaged a career-low 21.5 points, and he has missed 15 games each of the past three seasons with foot and leg injuries. But he's an 11-time All-Star with career averages of 27.1 points, 12.1 rebounds and 2.6 blocks, and he's moving to the Eastern Conference, where there's a dearth of dominating centers.

"I've always said that wherever he is, that's where the balance of power is," Indiana Pacers CEO Donnie Walsh said.

The trade marks a return to Florida for O'Neal, who began his NBA career in 1992 with Orlando and still has a home there. He led the Magic to the finals in 1995, signed with the Lakers as a free agent in 1996 and helped them win three NBA titles.

Days after the Lakers lost this year's championship series to Detroit, O'Neal demanded to be traded, weary of feuding with Kobe Bryant



Shaquille O'Neal, the most dominant center of his era, got his trade wish: The ex-Laker is now part of the Miami Heat.

and feeling disrespected by owner Jerry Buss. He's under contract for \$27.7 million this coming season and \$30.6 million in 2005-06.

The Lakers' most significant acquisition is the versa-

tile Odom, coming off the best season in his five-year NBA career. He and Butler were considered cornerstones in the Heat's recent rebuilding effort, while Grant is a  
(See Shaq, Page 2)

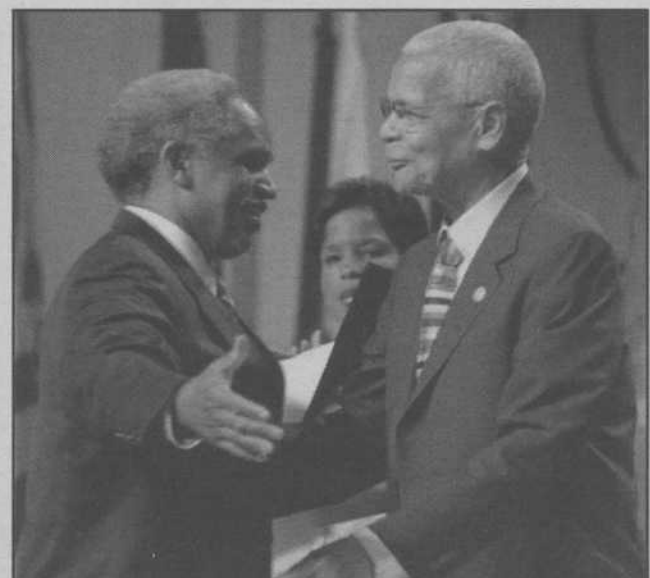
## Street defends statement on appointing Blacks

PHILADELPHIA (AP) - As Mayor John F. Street welcomed delegates to the NAACP convention in his city, he reminded them of a controversial remark he made in 2002.

"I said in the city of Philadelphia the brothers and sisters are in charge," Street said Monday. "They never let me forget it."

Street, who is Black, apologized shortly after the remark became public. But he got a standing ovation Monday when he said, "I will never apologize for (appointing) a Black chief of staff, a Black police commissioner, a Black fire commissioner..." and went on to cite other city posts to which he has named minority officials.

"If I can't provide opportunity for African-Americans in this government, who



Philadelphia Mayor John F. Street, left, gets ready to embrace NAACP Chairman Julian Bond during the NAACP Annual Convention Sunday in Philadelphia.

will?" Street asked the 8,000 delegates to the convention of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Street made no mention of last month's 150-page federal indictment alleging municipal corruption. One of the most prominent defendants

has said he was singled out because he is Black. But the mayor did say, "We recognize responsible economic empowerment for African-Americans in this city." He said his administration makes sure "minorities do business with the city of Philadelphia."

Also Monday, NAACP President Kweisi Mfume made a fiery speech in which he described President Bush's Black supporters as "ventriloquist's dummies" and said Bush's decision not to speak at the convention was an insult that would not be forgotten on Election Day.

"We will be there in every polling place and every battleground state," Mfume said.

The NAACP will reach out to people who haven't voted before and to those who are eligible to cast absentee ballots, he said.