

## NEWS BRIEFS

### REPORT: AMERICANS GETTING TALLER, FATTER

WASHINGTON (AP) - Americans are getting a little taller and a lot fatter. Adults are roughly an inch taller than they were in the early 1960's, on average, but nearly 25 pounds heavier, the government reported Wednesday. The nation's expanding waistline has been well documented, though Wednesday's report is the first to quantify it based on how many pounds the average person is carrying. In 1960-62, the average man weighed 166.3 pounds. By 1999-2002, the average had reached 191 pounds. Similarly, the average woman's weight rose from 140.2 pounds to 164.3 pounds. The report also documented a dramatic increase in weight when measured by body mass index, a scale that takes into account both height and weight. Average BMI has increased from about 25 to 28 over the 40-year span. Anyone with a BMI of 25 and up is considered overweight, and those with BMIs of 30 and up are considered obese. Americans are also getting a little bit taller. Men's average height increased from 5 feet 8 inches in the early 1960s to 5 feet 9 1/2 inches in 1999-2002. The average height of a woman went from just over 5 feet 3 inches to 5 feet 4 inches.

### IRS INVESTIGATING 60 TAX-EXEMPT GROUPS

WASHINGTON (AP) - About 60 charities, churches and other tax-exempt groups are being investigated for potentially breaking federal rules that bar them from participating in political activity, the Internal Revenue Service has said. Such violations would threaten their tax-exempt status, the IRS said. The investigations involve guidelines for 501(c)(3) groups, which grant tax-exempt status so long as organizations do not participate in political activities like endorsing candidates or making campaign donations. By law, the IRS cannot reveal names or details of investigations. It did reveal that about 20 of the groups being looked into were churches. Heightened concerns about improper political activities this election season warranted the creation of a committee of career civil servants to look into potential political violations by tax-exempt groups, according to the agency. "Our obligation is to enforce the law, which prohibits all charities from engaging in political activities," IRS Commissioner Mark Everson said in a statement Friday.

### MINISTER PLEADS GUILTY IN 'OPRAH' CASE

YADKINVILLE, N.C. (AP) - A former minister who was hospitalized after his adult daughters accused him on "The Oprah Winfrey Show" of molesting them pleaded guilty Thursday and was sentenced to 36 years in prison. Ted Eugene Hendrix, 66, pleaded guilty to taking indecent liberties with a child. He could have gotten life in prison if convicted of the original charges, which included rape and incest. His trial had been delayed several days after Hendrix collapsed. Hendrix was arrested in March after one of his daughters went to the authorities. The three women told Winfrey their father abused them almost daily for about a decade. One said he raped her on the church altar and then gave her Communion. Hendrix did not appear on the show and it was unclear whether he watched it when it aired last week. It was unclear what caused his collapse, but friends said he Hendrix has emphysema.

### FLA. TO SETTLE LAWSUIT IN JAILED TEEN'S DEATH

MIAMI (AP) - The state has agreed to pay \$1.45 million to settle a lawsuit filed by the mother of a teenager who died in agony from a burst appendix in a juvenile jail. Cherry Williams sued the state and Miami Children's Hospital for \$25 million over the death last year of her son, 17-year-old Omar Paisley, alleging jail employees and nurses ignored his desperate pleas for help for three days before he died. The hospital, which was under contract to provide nurses at the jail, also agreed to settle but did not disclose the terms. A grand jury issued a blow-by-blow account of Paisley's death, saying a guard told Paisley to "suck it up" as he retched, wept and moaned from abdominal pain. The death prompted a shake-up in the Department of Juvenile Justice and the departure of nearly two dozen employees, including the agency's secretary and the jail's superintendent. Two nurses have been charged with manslaughter and murder.

# LA Urban League chief Mack to retire

By Betty Pleasant  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

LOS ANGELES (NNPA) — Urban League President John Mack is expected to retire next year and his board of directors has begun the process of replacing him, it was learned this week.

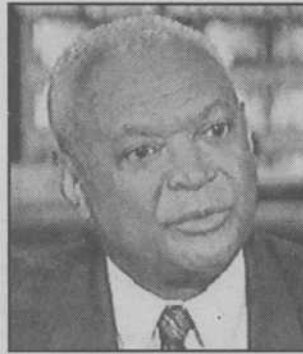
Mack, who has headed the Los Angeles Urban League for 35 years, said his departure, while certain, is not imminent.

He said he is not retiring now but will leave his post in about nine months "because I still have some work to do, so I'll still be around well into the next year."

Mack, 68, denied rumors circulating in the community that his departure is being forced by the Urban League's board of directors.

"No one is forcing me out," Mack said.

"I'm leaving on my own free will and there is no hid-



*"No one is forcing me out. I'm leaving on my own free will and there is no hidden reason for it."*

— John Mack  
Urban League President

den reason for it. I'm in great health, full of vim and vigor, and there are other things I'd like to do. I've had a rewarding life with the Urban League. I love this community and I'll always love the Urban League and I don't intend to sit in a rocking chair when I leave."

John Taylor, chairman of the Urban League board's Succession Committee, echoed Mack's assurance that his pending retirement is voluntary.

"We are not forcing John out," insisted Taylor, who is the managing director of Blue Capital.

"We all respect John and admire what he has accomplished with the Urban League, and as he moves on he will continue to bring good things to the Urban League and to the Los Angeles community."

Taylor said his fellow board members were not surprised by Mack's decision to retire and the Succession

Committee is currently considering potential replacements for Mack even though his departure is at least nine months away.

"The board is exercising its fiduciary responsibility by taking appropriate steps to deal with a logical and smooth transition," Taylor explained.

Under Mack's long leadership, the Los Angeles Urban League has become what is universally regarded as one of the most successful non-profit community organizations in the city, with an annual budget of about \$30 million.

According to its reports, the local Urban League serves more than 100,000 individuals each year through a variety of job training, job placement, education, youth achievement and business development programs.

Betty Pleasant writes for the Wave Newspaper.

## Cuts put L.A. trauma center in jeopardy

LOS ANGELES (AP) - A group trying to prevent closure of the trauma center at an inner-city medical center filed a discrimination lawsuit Wednesday, alleging the county is trying to dismantle the troubled hospital.

The nonprofit group Friends of Martin Luther King Jr./Drew Medical Center Inc., which includes patients, doctors and community residents, accused Los Angeles County and its health department of violating the U.S. Constitution's equal protection clause and the 1964

Civil Rights Act, as well as Medicare and Medicaid regulations and various state laws.

The hospital and trauma center "have not been dealt with fairly nor have the racial minorities they serve," attorney Mark Ravis said in a statement.

The lawsuit asks the court to bar the closure of the trauma center, prevent further hospital cuts and restore services already eliminated.

The suit contends layoffs, transfers and cuts so far have "systematically dismantled the medical care safety net,"

resulting in delays of service. It also contends a decision has already been made to close the trauma center, though a hearing isn't scheduled until next month.

"On the first day that the center is closed, there is the very real, very immediate danger that patients will die," the lawsuit warns.

The hospital opened in the wake of the 1965 Watts riot, and serves a mainly Black and Hispanic population. The region is so plagued by violence that the trauma center is used to train military doc-

tors.

The hospital has come under scrutiny after federal inspectors found five patients died from negligence last year. Another death came Oct. 7 when a nurse turned down an audio alarm on a monitor and failed to notice when a patient went into cardiac arrest.

The hospital has been ordered to correct deficiencies or lose federal funds.

It also faces the devastating threat of losing approval from a national accreditation commission.

## Luncheon

(Continued from Page 2)  
ance is serving as a recruiting agent for the hotel.

The alliance is currently focusing on identifying people with experience in culinary arts. People with this background are encouraged to apply and submit their applications so that they can go through the background checks and be ready to be hired. Additionally, a cooks apprenticeship program will be offered through a collaborative effort with several of the hotels in the near future, Horsford said.

"We are particularly interested in getting some of our young people ages 18 to 25 involved in this training program. This will allow those individuals with no prior skills or experience the opportunity to learn all aspects of the cooking field and graduating as a journey level



JULIANNE MALVEAUX

master chef," Horsford said. "We are working with the church community to address the high level of unemployment in this community and there are a lot of young people sitting at home with nothing to do."

The unemployment rate here is twice that of other areas throughout Southern Nevada, and the median income for a family of four

here is about \$16,000 compared to \$41,000 elsewhere in Las Vegas."

Horsford announced that beginning this Sunday churchesinlasvegas.com, the community faith-based Web operation launched by Duana Heard, would host a gospel brunch at Nevada Partners.

Students training at the Culinary Academy at Nevada Partners will prepare food served during the brunch.

Anyone interested in getting more information about this program can contact the Ministerial Alliance job placement program at 702-597-3362 or 702-523-3001.

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