

Jackson has DNA sample collected

LOS OLIVOS, Calif. (AP) — Following two days of searches at the Neverland ranch of Michael Jackson, who is accused of molesting a boy, authorities collected a DNA sample from the singer, a newspaper reported Sunday.

Investigators used a cotton swab to take the sample from inside Jackson's mouth on Saturday, the Santa Barbara News-Press reported, citing unidentified sources.

The move came as police searched Neverland again on Friday and Saturday, just weeks before the pop star's

trial is scheduled to begin Jan. 31. Jackson, 46, has pleaded not guilty to child molestation, conspiracy and administering an intoxicating agent, alcohol, to the alleged victim.

Gathering DNA evidence so late in a case is unusual but not unprecedented, according to Laurie Levenson, a former federal prosecutor and Loyola University School of Law professor. She said prosecutors may have sought evidence to corroborate witness statements they only recently obtained.

"Until you are really get-

ting ready for trial and talking to witnesses, you don't always know what is important," she added.

Authorities spent more than eight hours at Neverland on Friday, then returned for less than two hours on Saturday. Santa Barbara County sheriff's officials have refused to discuss the visits except to issue a statement saying they are "part of an ongoing criminal investigation."

Jackson was home when authorities arrived Friday but left soon after because the presence of law enforcement

officials was upsetting his children, sources close to the entertainer told the News-Press. He returned Saturday to provide the DNA sample, the newspaper said.

Jackson's estate 100 miles northwest of Los Angeles was first searched in November 2003, shortly before he was charged.

Monday is the deadline for prosecutors and defense lawyers to complete the case's discovery process in which both sides exchange evidence they have gathered during their pretrial investigations.

Jails to nix use of canines on detainees

NEWARK, N.J. (AP) — Jails and detention centers around the country must stop using police dogs to control immigration detainees as of Saturday under a new policy issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

The U.S. Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, a division of Homeland Security, issued a memo to its field offices last month ordering them to refrain from contracting with lockups that use dogs around detainees.

The lockups will still be able to use the dogs to sniff for drugs or other contraband, and to guard regular prisoners who are not being held on immigration charges, said bureau spokesman Russ Knocke.

"We believe there are other effective tools that can be used," he said.

Knocke said the department has received complaints about dogs being used against detainees, "but I wouldn't suggest it was cause and effect in terms of the new policy. This is something we had been working on for a number of years."

Immigrant-rights workers praised the decision, but said it was long overdue.

"We are encouraged at this victory," said Eric Lerner, a leader of the New Jersey Civil Rights Defense Committee. "It's clearly the result of the work of immigrants rights groups over the last 18 months since we exposed the use of dogs against detain-

ees."

The Passaic County Jail in Paterson is among 81 detention centers nationwide that use dogs, and one of between seven and 10 using them to control federal immigration detainees. There are 200 to 400 such detainees at the jail, which gets \$77 per day from the government for housing each inmate.

Dogs are used to accompany prisoners being transferred to and from the infirmary, or to break up fights.

National Public Radio last month aired a report and made public documents describing a dog attack at the jail. The jail temporarily stopped using dogs around detainees last month, but recently resumed the practice.

CBC

(Continued from Page 1) Corrine Brown of Florida, was elected as the caucus' first vice chair. Earlier this year, the House voted to strike from the official record Brown's comments that Bush "stole" the 2000 election during the Florida recount.

The caucus elected Michigan Rep. Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick second vice chair, Illinois Rep. Danny Davis secretary and California Rep. Barbara Lee whip.

During the presidential campaign, Democratic nominee John Kerry often criticized Bush for not continuing President Clinton's practice of meeting regularly with Congressional Black Caucus members.

Watt said he was encouraged by Bush's comments about trying to unite the country and was somewhat optimistic there could be such a dialogue.

"Whether he lives up to that rhetoric will be up to him," Watt said.



"My attitude would be to treat this new election as a possibility of a new beginning."

— Rep. Mel Watt, North Carolina (D)

White House spokesman Trent Duffy declined to comment on whether Bush would meet regularly with the caucus.

"We don't speculate on the president's schedule," Duffy said. "I have every expectation he'll want to sit down with the caucus again on the key issues in the second term."

Watt represents a district that stretches from Charlotte through the Winston-Salem and Greensboro region. His district has North Carolina's second-highest concentration of Democratic voters.

Cummings, Watt's predecessor, called Watt's written condemnation of the Iraq war "one of the most profound documents ever written about Iraq."

The caucus adopted the statement as its official stance on the conflict.

After a meeting with the caucus this year, independent presidential candidate Ralph Nader accused Watt of using an "obscene epithet" while trying to persuade Nader to drop out of the race.

Watt denied the accusation, calling it an "arrogant ego trip."

Bush refashions civil rights board

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush on Monday moved to replace Mary Frances Berry, the outspoken chairwoman of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission who has argued with every president since Jimmy Carter appointed her to the panel a quarter century ago.

But Berry balked at leaving now, arguing through a spokesman that she and vice chairman Cruz Reynoso, who also is being replaced, have terms that run until midnight Jan. 21, 2005. The White House maintained that their six-year terms expired Sunday and that Berry and Reynoso had been replaced.

The eight-member panel investigates civil rights complaints and publicizes its findings. It has no enforcement power. Four years ago, Berry and the commission were heavily critical of Florida Gov. Jeb Bush for his administration's handling of the disputed presidential election won by his brother.

The newly named commissioners are Gerald A. Reynolds, former assistant secretary for the office of civil rights in the Education Department, and attorney Ashley L. Taylor of Richmond, Va. Bush intends to designate Reynolds the commission chairman, succeeding Berry, and to name Abigail Thernstrom, already a commission member, as vice chairperson.

Berry, a civil rights history professor at the University of Pennsylvania, is no stranger to controversy.

"If we don't have people irritated, we're not doing our job," Berry said in an Associated Press interview in 2001. "We're the gadfly. We're the watchdog that bites you on the leg, keeps tugging at you and says, 'How about this?'"

Considered a hero of the civil rights community by some people, Berry is viewed by others as too opinionated and divisive to accomplish much. "I'm not trying to (See Commission, Page 4)

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