

LAS VEGAS Sentinel Voice

VOLUME 24, ISSUE 17

GRIOT COMMUNICATIONS GROUP, INC.

March 24, 2005

"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

Harry Reid praise Black Press

By Hazel Trice Edney
Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON (NNPA) — Republicans and Democrats on Capitol Hill in Washington rarely agree on anything. But last week both parties gave high praises to members of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) on the 178th birthday of the Black Press.

"Over the years, NNPA has remained a voice of conscience and reflection, gauging the progress and fairness of our nation's laws and cultural values," said Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid (D-Nevada) in a statement after a Capitol Hill meeting with NNPA publishers. "The community papers that make up the NNPA have also served as a forum for issues that were, and continue to be, overlooked by other media venues."

Reid thanked the NNPA for "continuing to call for a fair and responsible judiciary, for economic development and security, and for creating



NNPA Publishers meeting with Democratic Senators Harry Reid of Nevada (seated, center), Blanche Lincoln of Arkansas (right) and Debbie Stabenow of Michigan (standing, back).

opportunity for African-Americans and all Americans to succeed."

On the opposite side of the aisle, Republican leaders issued a resolution congratulating NNPA on its 65th anniversary.

"The Senate commemorates the 65th anniversary of the Black Press of America by recognizing the significant contributions all African-American newspapers have made from the time of slavery and segregation to today; and the continued contributions African-American newspapers make to the ideal of equal opportunity for all

(See Reid, Page 2)



Sentinel-Voice photo by Roy Lewis

NNPA Foundation Chairman Brian Townsend, left, newsmaker of the year U. S. Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., former Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman.

NNPA Foundation fetes top leaders

By Hazel Trice Edney
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WASHINGTON (NNPA) — Three generations of Black leadership — Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee; Congressman John Lewis and — U.S. Senator Barack Obama — were honored over the weekend by the National Newspaper Publishers Association Foundation (NNPAF).

"We are pleased to recognize these significant individuals and to thank them for their service, their support, their leadership, their courage, their dedication," said Brian Townsend, chairman of NNPAF and publisher of the *Precinct Reporter* in San Bernardino, Calif.

The four were honored at a dinner here, which served as the primary fundraiser to support NNPAF projects, including the NNPA News Service, the Black Press Institute, Black Press Archives and BlackPressUSA.com. Ofield Dukes, one of the country's leading publicists, served as chairman of the program committee and former Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman was emcee of the event.

Obama was honored as Newsmaker of the Year, Lewis received the NorthStar Community Service Award, and Ruby Dee and her late husband, Ossie Davis, were presented the NNPAF's Lifetime Achievement Award. DaimlerChrysler Services presented a special Entrepreneurial Award to Dr. Donald Suggs, publisher of the *St. Louis American*.

The nation's first Black newspaper, *Freedom's Journal* (See NNPA, Page 12)

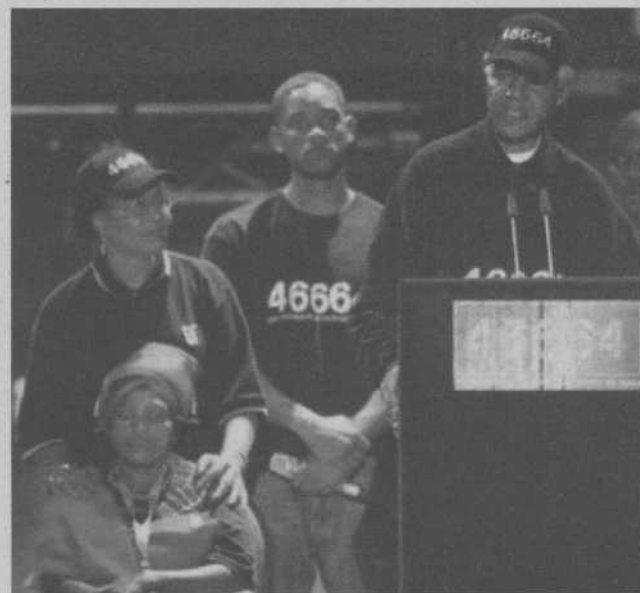
Mandela-led event taps AIDS issue

GEORGE, South Africa (AP) — Former South African President Nelson Mandela, playing host to his second AIDS awareness concert on Saturday, told a crowd of 20,000 that women bear the brunt of the AIDS pandemic that has infected some 25 million people in Africa.

The disease "carries the face of women," whether through infection or caring for those who are ill with the deadly virus, said the 86-year-old Mandela.

Mandela, who lost his eldest son to the disease earlier this year, compared the plight of women coping with AIDS to the isolation he felt when imprisoned for 27 years on Robben Islands for fighting against White racist rule.

"Today there are millions of women in Africa living on their own Robben Islands, struggling against terrible odds, alone and often without much hope," he said.



Former South African President Nelson Mandela, right, with his wife Graca Machel, back left, Will Smith, center, and an HIV positive woman Gertrude Maqanda during the Nelson Mandela Foundation's "46664" HIV/AIDS beneficiary concert in George, South Africa, on Saturday.

"Tonight you and I can say we are here to help give you hope and strength," he said to rapturous applause at the 46664 concert, named for his prisoner number. He sponsored a first AIDS conference in 1993 in Cape Town. The Saturday benefit, he said, raised \$1.6 million.

Gertrude Maqanda, a woman from a poor town-

ship near the popular tourist coastal resort of George, told how she nearly died last year until she received anti-retroviral treatment. She contracted the virus in 1999.

"I love you very much," she said, prompting a temporary hush in the crowd and an embrace from master of ceremonies, superstar Will Smith.

The American actor and singer said he agreed to a personal request from Mandela to be an ambassador for the 46664 campaign.

"I have made movies and music," said the star of "Men in Black" and "Independence Day."

"I felt like that's not enough. I want to fight and I want to struggle," he said.

In South Africa, statistics show women and girls are six times more likely to be infected with the AIDS virus than men. A staggering 38 (See Mandela, Page 9)