

LAS VEGAS Sentinel Voice

VOLUME 26, ISSUE 26

GRIOT COMMUNICATIONS GROUP, INC.

October 27, 2005

"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"



Rosa Parks is fingerprinted after her arrest for refusing to yield her bus seat to a White man in Alabama.

Parks reignited U.S. conscience

By Keith A. Owens
Special to Sentinel-Voice

DETROIT (NNPA) — On Monday evening, at the age of 92, Rosa Parks, considered by many to be the mother of the Civil Rights Movement, died peacefully in her sleep at her home in Detroit, the city she adopted as her own when she relocated in 1957. Although her death was not totally unexpected, the immediate reaction was nevertheless one of anguish mixed with high praise.

Fifty years ago, the fate of an entire movement — and of an entire generation of Americans — hinged on the decision of one very tired and fed up Black woman who refused to give up her seat to a White person on a bus in Montgomery, Ala., in 1955. The result was the Montgomery bus boycott launched that same year and led by a little-known and very young preacher by the name of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Had Parks decided to give way to the status quo and relinquish her seat, her name would have remained unremarkable throughout history and it is difficult to imagine what might have become of the Civil Rights Movement — if there would have even been such a movement. Every flame requires its spark.

But she did not move, and that one small act of defiance — or what may have appeared to be small at the time — set in motion a chain of events that radically changed not only race relations in America but the history of the world. If ever there was a shining example of how one person can make an incredible difference, Parks set the standard for such an example. It can honestly be said that she is one among a relative handful of Americans whose life defined an entire nation.

"Mother Parks represents someone who ignited a fire that was so bright and so hot that America has to recognize how big it really was. So she changed America and, therefore, changed the world," said Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick. "We need to understand and believe that we can do and be anything we want to be; and if a small, tiny, great and nice lady like Mother Rosa Parks can stand up, then that is what her legacy should mean to us."

Kilpatrick added that the City of Detroit will formally honor Parks on Dec. 1, although the details of that upcoming event have not yet been released. In addition, Congresswoman Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick has initiated

(See Parks, Page 2)

Fundraiser gives NAACP boost

By Lés Pierres Streater
Sentinel-Voice

The Las Vegas chapter of the NAACP held its annual Freedom Fund Extravaganza Banquet on Saturday at the Orleans Hotel and Casino. "The Time Is Now" theme was chosen to highlight the need for reversing the assault of retrogression which threatens to undo historic civil rights gains and interfere with present-day goals of attaining political, social, economic and educational equality for people of color.

Formed in 1909, the NAACP is the oldest civil rights organization in the country with a mission to eliminate racial prejudice and remove all barriers of racial discrimination through a democratic process.

Individuals and organizations that have provided support to the group were recognized at the ceremony. Nationally acclaimed recording jazz artist Najee performed during the banquet and at the presentation and concert which followed. Attendance was estimated at 400.

Congressman Gregory Meeks of Queens, New York, was the keynote speaker.



Sentinel-Voice photo by Lés Pierres Streater

Rep. Gregory Meeks, D-N.Y., accepts a painting of civil rights icons Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. from local NAACP president W. Dean Ishman on Saturday at the Orleans.

Meeks has established himself in Congress as being a strong ally in consumer rights advocacy and environmental protection. He is credited with helping to stop the erosion of gains made by Blacks over the past 50 years due to the efforts of the NAACP.

Meeks praised the local chapter for the "indispens-

able work they do on a day-to-day basis" and recounted its past achievements:

"The hard work that this branch has done over the years has led to the end of the situation where Blacks performed on the stages of these fancy nightclubs but were denied the opportunity to sit in the audience. They ended the process of Blacks spend-

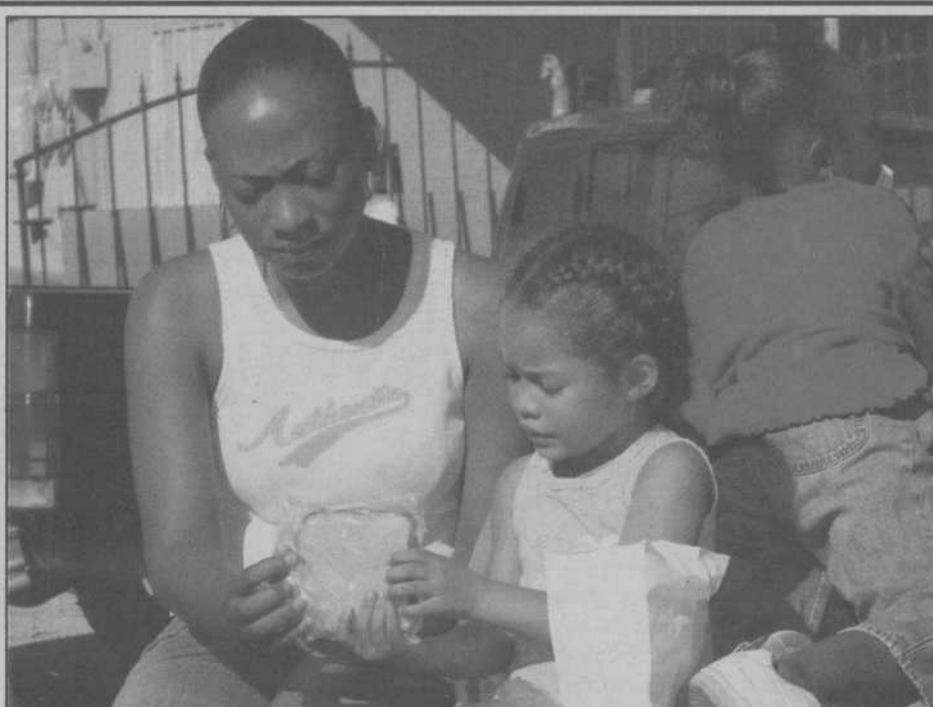
ing their money at the casinos but were unable to work at the casinos. This branch brought down the curtains that allowed Blacks to make the beds at these casinos during the day but did not have the opportunity to spend the night and sleep in those same beds... This branch has been the conscience of Las Vegas, just as the NAACP as a whole has been the conscience of this nation."

He emphasized the NAACP's need to expand its efforts and to focus on education: "...We as a nation still have a long, long way to go in regard to helping people of color... throughout their history regardless of the efforts of their local branches or throughout the nation, the NAACP has focused its efforts on education."

Meeks explained that many of the NAACP's successful and enduring legal challenges involved asserting the 14th amendment rights of Black children to receive a quality education.

"In the 1940s, '50s and '60s, the local chapter here in Las Vegas successfully challenged school zoning concentrating Blacks to attend inferior schools... Now,

(See NAACP, Page 3)



Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

HELPING HANDS

CeCe and Eunice enjoy some free food handed out Sunday during the Humanitarian Day Health Fair for the Homeless at the Masjid As Sabur. The event, which included free health screenings, was put on by Islamic Relief and the local Muslim community.