

# LAS VEGAS Sentinel Voice

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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

## American hero gets gracious sendoff

By Parker Philpot  
Sentinel-Voice

The funeral was held yesterday for Rosa Louise Parks, who sparked the nation's civil rights movement 50 years ago when she refused to give up her seat to a White man and move to the back of a bus. In 1955, in Montgomery, Ala., Parks took her position against racial segregation and discrimination. Parks is regarded as the Mother of the Civil Rights Movement.

Parks was given top-rank honors in the days after her death from natural causes on Oct. 24 at age 92. Her body was flown from her adopted hometown of Detroit, Mich., to Montgomery, Ala., where the bus incident happened, then on to Washington, D.C., where she became the first woman to lie in state under the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol.

President Bush ordered that U.S. flags be flown at half-staff the day of the funeral for Parks in Detroit at Greater Grace Temple, an African Methodist Episcopal church. More than 4,000 mourners attended the service.

Repeatedly characterized as a humble "woman of quiet strength," Parks — even in death — seemed to fuel the

unfinished civil rights agenda.

During the memorial period, an entourage of approximately 80 family members, friends and members of the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development in Montgomery, quietly hummed the words of the civil rights anthem, "We Shall Overcome," as D.C. National Guardsmen escorted the mahogany coffin up the steps into the Capitol to be honored by dignitaries, congressional representatives, House and Senate leaders, and President and First Lady George and Laura Bush before the public viewing.

Thousands lined the streets for hours when her body was memorialized in Montgomery and in Washington, D.C. Several thousands passed by the casket to pay respects.

Many were struck by Parks' radiance and strength throughout her life, even in her death.

"I gasped," said actress Cicely Tyson in an interview with the NNPA News Service.

"I gasped because what I saw buried in her face was the same thing that made me realize, 'This is what that woman had that allowed her to sit in that seat and not



A mourner at the funeral for civil rights pioneer Rosa Parks holds the funeral program at the Greater Grace Temple in Detroit. Parks was described during her funeral service Wednesday as both a warrior and a woman of peace who never stopped working toward a future of racial equality. Many credit her with starting the Civil Rights Movement.

move.' Even in death, she had it. I tell you, it was so startling to me, I will never ever get over that first moment."

She was dressed in her beloved white deaconess uniform of St. Paul's. The black and white bonnet was tied in a fluffy bow at the side of her neck. Her braided hair covered her ears. Her hands were

covered with White lace, decorated with tiny pearls and diamonds.

"Her hair was so long, she could sit on it," said Monica Morgan, who served as Parks' personal photographer for nearly 15 years. "The most phenomenal thing about her was that she was the same behind the scenes as she was in front of the

camera — always kind, gentle, positive and humble," Morgan recalls.

Civil rights icon Joseph Lowery agreed: "Only God could take a whisper of such a gentle woman and turn it into a global revolution."

The caregivers were mainly Lois Harris, who was in the room with Parks when she died; Carolyn Green, a

cousin of Parks, and Elaine Steele, who cared for Parks for 43 years and was a co-founder of the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development in Montgomery.

"Her final moments were that of quiet strength, the way that she led her life," said Steele.

(See Parks, Page 2)



Tens of thousands of people, including politicians, filed by the casket of civil rights icon Rosa Parks in the Capitol, as she was hailed for her role in the battle for racial equality.

## School's mentoring project celebrates nine great years

By Lés Pierres Streater  
Sentinel-Voice

Mentors, young male students and program sponsors gathered at the Fitzgeralds Casino Hotel last Thursday for Kermit R. Booker Sr. Elementary School to celebrate its ninth annual Gents and Lads Banquet paying tribute to the male students and the adults who support them.

Fitzgeralds, one of the community business partners helping Booker's mentorship program, stepped in as a collaborative partner to provide a facility for the event attended by more than 300 guests. The school campus is under reconstruction and is temporarily sharing space on the campus of Wendell P. Williams Elementary School,

according to Beverly Mathis, principal of Booker Elementary.

The focus of this event is to provide the 178 male students in grades K through 5 with role models to establish a mentoring relationship. The students are paired with a male teacher, professional, business owner or other community volunteer. The concentration is on the academic achievement and social development of the young men in a positive atmosphere.

Many of the youth come from single-family homes lacking an adult male figure to assist them in their upbringing, growth, and development as they enter their adolescence and teen years.

(See Gents, Page 10)