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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

Coretta Scott King elevated 'Dream'

By George E. Curry
Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON (NNPA) — On Monday, the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution voted to erect the National Museum of African American History and Culture on the national Mall in Washington, not far from the Lincoln Memorial, where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave his legendary "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963. Less than 24 hours after the vote, Coretta Scott King, the widow of the famous civil rights leader, closed her eyes for the final time and died in her sleep. She was 78, three months shy of her next birthday.

Coretta Scott King was more than Dr. King's widow. "Long before she met and married Martin Luther King Jr., she was an activist," Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.), former



Coretta Scott King, widow of slain civil-rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., speaks during an interview at the King Center for Nonviolent Social Change in this 2004 file photo.

chairman of the Atlanta-based Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, said in an interview on CNN. In her autobiography, "My Life with Martin Luther

King, Jr.," she spoke of her own humble background growing up in Marion, Ala. "They made it illegal for Blacks and Whites to eat together in public; to sit to-

gether in theaters, buses or trains; to use the same comfort stations or water fountains; even to enter public buildings by the same door. It was as though the Blacks

had some contagious disease."

She continued, "And yet, we worked in their houses, prepared their food, nurtured their children, and were intimately associated with them in every domestic way. The whole idea was to impress upon the Black people that we were an inferior race; to reduce us, not to slavery again, but to being less than men."

To reinforce that message, she said: "African-Americans, no matter what positions or how much education they had, were never called 'mister' or any other title. They were addressed as 'boy' or 'girl' — even if they were old and gray. They were supposed to say, 'Yes, sir,' and 'Yes, ma'am' — even to teenage Whites. It was all deliberately aimed at instilling the slave mentality in our people."

The Scott family tried to

insulate Coretta from further indignities by sending her off to Antioch College, a small liberal institution in Yellow Springs, Ohio, where she earned a bachelor's degree in music and education. With an emphasis on voice, she enrolled in Boston's New England Conservatory of Music.

It was in Boston that she met a young Martin Luther King, who was studying for his doctorate in theology at Boston University.

In his first telephone call to his wife-to-be, Dr. King said: "A mutual friend of ours told me about you and gave me your telephone number. She said some wonderful things about you, and I'd like very much to meet you and talk to you."

Recalling the conversation in her autobiography, Coretta King wrote: "I began to remember then, and I said, (See Coretta, Page 13)

Documents depicted FEMA Katrina response

WASHINGTON (AP) — As Hurricane Katrina victims waited for help in flooded houses or in looted neighborhoods, hundreds of trucks, boats, planes and federal security officers sat unused because FEMA failed to give them missions, newly released documents show.

Additionally, the Federal Emergency Management Agency called off its search and rescue operations in Louisiana three days after the Aug. 29 storm because of security issues, according to an internal FEMA e-mail given to Senate investigators.

The documents, expected to be the focus of a Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee hearing Monday, highlight further evidence of FEMA's inadequate response to Katrina.

They also detail breakdowns in carrying out the National Response Plan, which was issued a year ago specifically to coordinate response efforts during disasters.

The Homeland Security Department, which includes FEMA, did not dispute the failures Sunday. Katrina "pushed our capabilities and resources to the limit — and then some," said spokesman Russ Knocke.

Responding to a questionnaire posed by investigators, Assistant Interior Secretary P. Lynn Scarlett said her agency offered to supply FEMA with 300 dump trucks and other vehicles, 300 boats, 11 aircraft and 400 law enforcement officers to help search and rescue efforts.

"Although the (Interior) Department possesses significant resources that could have improved initial and ongoing response, many of these resources were not effectively incorporated into the federal response for Hurricane Katrina," Scarlett wrote in the response, dated Nov. 7.

Scarlett added: "Although we attempted to provide these assets through the process established by the (response plan), we were unable to efficiently integrate and deploy those resources."

At one point, Scarlett's letter noted, FEMA asked the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to help with search and rescue in New Orleans, St. Bernard Parish and St. Tammany Parish "but never received task assignments."

The agency, part of the Interior Department, apparently went ahead anyway, according to the documents. (See FEMA, Page 6)

Congresswomen raise Darfur crisis awareness

By Tasha Pope
Sentinel-Voice

Nevada Congresswoman Shelley Berkley will host a Darfur crisis awareness event featuring Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, Dem-Texas, next Thursday at 7:00 p.m. in the Flora Dungan Humanities Building at UNLV. Both speakers will address the audience and show a video presentation detailing the crisis.

They will focus on the killing and persecution of people in the Darfur, which is in the western region of Sudan, and show people in the community what they can do to help stop what is being called a human tragedy.

"The first step [in getting involved] is to come to the lecture and learn what's going on," Berkley explained.

The Sudan government and the Arab militias are accused of committing war



SHELLEY BERKLEY

crimes against the Black African population in Darfur. Over a two year period over two million people have been forced to leave their homes and at least 180,000 have died.

What is the U.S. government currently doing to aid people of Darfur?

"Nothing, and that's the problem. I'm tired of nothing being done," Berkley

said.

Berkley wants people in the community to get involved so government leaders will take notice of the problem and recognize the magnitude of the crisis.

"I think that the people of this country need to insist that our country gets involved," she continued.

Berkley courted Jackson Lee to attend because of her background with the Darfur crisis.

"I think I found the perfect person to come and inform people what's going on," Berkley said.

Jackson Lee has firsthand experience with the situation in Darfur because she's visited the region during this crisis. She will be addressing the audience and answering questions.

Berkley feels educating people on what is occurring (See Darfur, Page 2)