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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

'Survivor' unveils race card

By Lorinda M. Bullock
Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - The CBS television reality show "Survivor" usually divides the contestants into teams called "tribes" to compete in various physical and mental challenges on some exotic island then eventually narrows the field of 20 competitors to one final winner.

But, this time around, in the show's new season, "Survivor: Cook Islands" is taking the term "tribe" literally — dividing the teams by racial group. White, Black, Asian and Hispanic groups will be represented in a move that the show's host Jeff



The new season of "Survivor" has become a lightning rod for anger and speculation by splitting teams by ethnicity.

Probst said is more inclusive than divisive.

Media experts disagree and worry about the impact

on not only the contestants, but the viewing public when the show airs in September.

"With the reality shows,

I've noticed there's always been an unspoken racial tension and sometimes spoken," said University of Maryland-

College Park professor Sheri Parks.

"This brings it to the front and, I suppose, in an odd

way, it makes sense for 'Survivor' because they separate people into tribes. And of course tribes in the real world are racialized, but this seems to pit races against each other in a way that I have not seen on television before," she said.

Parks, who teaches a number of classes about television and its impact on culture and society, said that racial tension — subtle and not so subtle — has played out in a number of other reality shows such as "American Idol" and "So You Think You Can Dance."

"We've watched America (See Survivor, Page 15)

Jackson: Captured Israelis still alive

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP)-The Rev. Jesse Jackson said Tuesday that two Israeli soldiers who were captured by Hezbollah guerrillas in a cross-border raid that sparked 34 days of fighting are reportedly alive, as is a third soldier seized earlier by Palestinian militants.

The veteran civil rights leader, who was in Lebanon and traveled to Israel on Wednesday, said he received the information in meetings Monday in Damascus with

Syrian President Bashar Assad and Khaled Mashaal, political leader of Hamas.

"The president (Assad) believes that the two held somewhere by Hezbollah are alive," Jackson said.

None of the soldiers has been heard from since their captures.

Miri Eisen, spokeswoman for Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, said Jackson was "not the first international figure to have been told so, though he is the first

Westerner that I can recall that actually sat down with Khaled Mashaal."

"Obviously under any kind of international law, we should have been given a sign of life immediately," Eisen said. "But these are terrorists, though we'd like to believe them, we continue to demand the unconditional release of all three."

The soldiers' relatives met Tuesday with U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who was visiting Israel as

part of an 11-day trip through the Middle East to try to shore up the fragile cease-fire.

Karnit Goldwasser, whose husband, Ehud, was captured by Hezbollah guerrillas, told Israel TV after the meeting that Annan gave them no new information about the fate of their loved ones.

"But the good news was that we got a personal pledge from the secretary general of the U.N. that he accepts the

mission to get the three kidnapped soldiers home, and that's a really big thing," she said.

The relatives said they had heard lip service from many international officials about efforts to get their relatives freed.

"We asked him to be the one to start turning words into deeds and bring about their return home, all three," Karnit Goldwasser said.

Hezbollah seized the two Israeli soldiers July 12 in a

cross-border raid that started the war with Israel, which ended with a U.N.-brokered cease-fire Aug. 14. Palestinian militants in Gaza captured the Israeli soldier in an earlier raid on June 25.

Jackson said Syria, a main backer of both Hamas and Hezbollah, wanted to be involved in a prisoner swap that included the three Israelis and Syrian nationals detained by Israel in the Golan Heights. Israel has ruled out (See Jackson, Page 2)

Play conveys drama, trauma of Gulf storm

By Debbie Hall
Sentinel-Voice

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina ravaged Louisiana, Mississippi and parts of Texas, with the city of New Orleans and surrounding areas hit hardest. To commemorate the upcoming anniversary, Playwright Judi Ann Mason presented a theatrical rendition in "Storm Stories: True Dramas of Hurricane Katrina" at the Clark County Library and at the Whitney Library.

The four-performance series, which ran Thursday through Sunday, was a multimedia enhanced reading with live music and projections of video footage of Katrina. The

cast consisted of mixed ages and races.

The production brought to life to the words of survivors who lived through this wreckage. The play staging had a racially mixed cast of 12, varied in age, dressed in black, sitting with their scripts on music stands. Soft lights bathed the stage as each actor in the spotlight created a different layer of expression about the tragedy of Katrina.

The play emphasized the events of one year ago as the devastation continues today. Mason said she wanted to bring human voices to the images seen on television, in newspapers and magazines.

Her perspective is a unique one: She had been trying desperately last year to reach her brother, author BJ Mason, by telephone until she was informed on October 3 that he had died at his computer in Shreveport, La., while writing about flood victims after Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf region.

He had volunteered at shelters, helped with transportation, registered for FEMA funds and, most importantly, listened to the harrowing tales of the survivors. Mason adapted her brother's writings in a script for a play, and she gives him full credit.

The monologues and duos (See Storm, Page 3)



FAT TRIBUTE

President George W. Bush, right, meets with musician Fats Domino in New Orleans. On Tuesday, the legendary musician met with former President Bill Clinton. One year after Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast, Bush returned to the Crescent City and promised that the federal government would do much better if another disaster hit.