

Ex-NY Times executive excelled

NEW YORK (AP) - When Gerald M. Boyd was named managing editor of *The New York Times*, he knew he would set precedents. He was the first Black journalist to hold that post, one of the top jobs at one of the world's most distinguished newspapers.

"I'm not about to dwell on the firstness of all of this," Boyd said when he was appointed in 2001, "but if somewhere a kid of color who reads about this can smile tomorrow or dream a little bigger dream, then that makes me very happy."

But *The Times* would also make less welcome headlines during Boyd's tenure. Two years after his appointment, he resigned amid a reporter's plagiarizing scandal.

Boyd died Thursday at his home in Harlem. He was 56. His wife, Robin Stone, said he had been diagnosed with lung cancer in February but had kept the condition private from most of his friends and colleagues.

"Every wife would say she'd want her husband to be known as a great person, wonderful husband, father

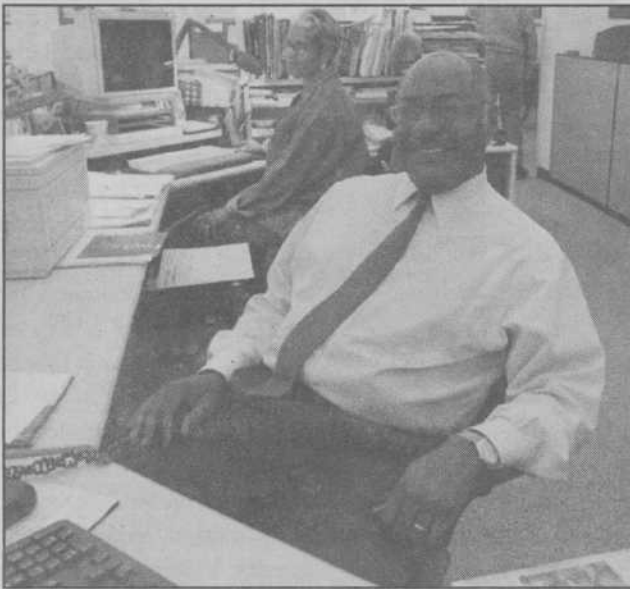
and good citizen," his wife, a fellow journalist, said from her home. "But as I've said before, as a journalist, he was my hero; and I know he was a hero to many journalists in the profession."

A native of St. Louis, Boyd joined the *Times* in 1983 after serving as White House correspondent for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. At 28, he was the youngest journalist chosen for Harvard University's prestigious Nieman fellowship, *The Times* reported.

According to the newspaper, Boyd was the first Black journalist to hold many of his various jobs there, including city editor. As deputy managing editor for news, he oversaw the 2000 series "How Race is Lived in America," which won a Pulitzer Prize.

Over the years, Boyd led or shared in leading coverage that won a total of nine Pulitzer Prizes, the newspaper said. The topics included the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993, children in poverty, and the terrorist attacks of 9/11.

As he rose through *The*



Gerald Boyd worked hard to distinguish himself as a journalist, and then a managing editor, of the highest order.

Times' management ranks, Boyd became known as demanding and determined.

"He knew how to mobilize a reporting team and surround a story so that nothing important was missed. He knew how to motivate and inspire," executive editor Bill Keller said, according to *The Times*. "And, tough and demanding as he could be, he had a huge heart. He left the paper under sad circumstances, but despite all of that, he left behind a great

reservoir of respect and affection."

Boyd and former executive editor Howell Raines were brought down by the scandal caused by Jayson Blair, a journalist they had groomed, and criticism of their management style.

In the subsequent months, Boyd said he made a mutual decision with the newspaper to resign after *The Times* discovered that Blair had plagiarized material, invented quotes and written stories

using datelines of places he had never been. The scandal exposed a deeply discontented staff that had lost confidence in newsroom leadership.

Boyd shared the blame and responsibility for Blair's downfall but said management didn't realize how deeply troubled Blair was until it was too late.

Had management known, "Jayson Blair simply would not have been writing for *The New York Times*," Boyd said at a speech made in Dallas in August 2003. He dismissed as "absolutely untrue" criticism that Blair had been promoted and his problems overlooked because the reporter was Black.

Boyd said it was disturbing that people would read more into the situation because of race.

"I would be lying if I didn't say that I can't help wonder why after all these years of struggling to establish our work and credibility in the newsroom — to be seen as top-notch journalists — as soon as controversy arises, an African-American reporter and an African-

American senior editor are automatically viewed as suspect," he said at the time.

After his resignation, Boyd was involved in several projects, including writing a column for Universal Press Syndicate to help people understand how newsroom decisions are made.

"I just think the more we can, as journalists, try to explain what happens in terms of decision-making, to pull back curtains and describe what goes on in newsrooms or in journalism in general, the better we are," Boyd said in 2004.

Boyd joined Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism for a semester in 2004 to develop case-study curriculum materials, and he had been working on a memoir. "I wanted to do everything I could to try to be a positive force in journalism and try to begin to deal with issues that I saw as important, such as credibility issues, such as leadership issues and issues involving diversity," he said at the time.

He is survived by his wife and 10-year-old son, Zachary.

Congress should push HIV/AIDS reform

By Lorinda M. Bullock
Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON (NNPA) — When Americans voters shifted the nation's political power in Washington to a majority Democratic House and Senate earlier this month, a new hope ran through the Black HIV/AIDS community that government attention will be refocused to the epidemic that has claimed the lives of more than 200,000 Black Americans.

"One of the things we are excited about is that a number of members of the Congressional Black Caucus, who have been strong advocates for increased resources for fighting HIV and AIDS and comprehensive prevention, now presumably will be in leadership positions in the new Congress," said Phill Wilson, founder and executive director of the Black AIDS Institute.

Wilson is referring to the 15 CBC members who will likely become subcommittee chairs and three CBC members — Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.), Charles Rangel (D-NY) and John Conyers (D-Mich.) — who are expected to lead some of the most powerful committees,

including Homeland Security, Ways and Means and the Judiciary, respectively.

"We also hope that new leadership will in fact make it easier for us to increase resources for fighting HIV and AIDS and reprioritize our efforts so that those resources address getting those people into care, making sure people have access to appropriate care and treatment as well as access to HIV testing and counseling," Wilson said.

To guide legislators through the multifaceted social problems that co-exist with the disease, the National Minority AIDS Council, along with Robert E. Fullilove, of Columbia University drafted a five-point plan in the report "African Americans, Health Disparities and HIV/AIDS: Recommendations for Confronting the Epidemic in Black America."

Fullilove, the report's author, recommended more affordable housing, by expanding federal programs such as Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS, as well as directing more attention to America's prison facilities where men are contracting and spreading the disease

through "tattooing, drug use and high-risk sexual activity."

The report observes that condoms are banned or unavailable in 95 percent of U.S. prisons. Mississippi and Vermont make up the 5 percent of state prison systems that makes condoms available; county jails in Philadelphia, New York City, Wash-

ington, D.C., San Francisco and L.A. are also distributing condoms.

"I think we're seeing a trend around the country because we do know that people have sex in prison," said Dr. Benny Primm, the chair emeritus of NMAC, the National Minority AIDS Council.

"We do know a number of

people who come into the prison system HIV positive and some are HIV negative and when they leave they're HIV positive. But there has been a tendency not to test prisoners because perhaps the prison system, the corrections system, and health system does not want to pay for the treatment of HIV for people who are incarcer-

ated." The report included one of the most recent examples of the resistance to providing condoms for prisoners in California.

In September, although California is reported to have the nation's largest incarcerated population (160,000), Gov. Schwarzenegger vetoed. (See HIV/AIDS, Page 13)

Corrections

(Continued from Page 2)

Corrections, Parole and Probation for the upcoming session, to be led by Assemblyman David Parks.

The new committee will examine the state's corrections system from both a policy and funding perspective.

"The estimate of our needs for prison beds over the next 20 years is absolutely staggering," Buckley said.

Those who violate the law must be punished, but the state might use cheaper alternatives to prison beds, such as restitution, house arrest and community service for non-violent offenders, Buckley said.

"We need to find less costly ways to address inmate growth than by committing so many of our general fund dollars to new prisons," she said.

State Budget Director Andrew Clinger said the average inmate population in fiscal year 2005-06 was 11,700. Projections estimate the population to grow to 13,337 and 13,900 in each of the next two years of the upcoming budget cycle.

"I get the sense that based on the projections, unless they do something on the front end to change the numbers, I don't know what else you can do," Clinger said. "We're already doing as much as we can on the back end, with

parole," he said.

Corrections Director Glen Whorton in September told lawmakers that methamphetamine use, and crimes committed by those addicted to the drug, is a big factor in the increasing inmate population.

The department has no data specifically for meth, but it has 1,884 drug offenders in its inmate population of about 11,700. Of that, 1,884, or 38 percent, had one or more prior felony convictions in Nevada.

Assemblyman Bernie Anderson, chairman of the Judiciary Committee and vice chairman of the Select Committee, said controlling inmate growth is critical.

Without a commitment to treatment programs to deal with meth addiction and to help reduce recidivism among inmates, Nevada's prison population could grow by 50 percent in the next 15 to 20 years, he said.

"If we don't take care of this in the next couple of sessions, prisons will be the No. 1 cost to the state," Anderson said.

"We have other issues, including transportation needs and other infrastructure issues including water, to deal with. But if we're building the 'Big House,' we're not building roads."