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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"



M.C. Hammer, center, dances with James Brown's daughter Venisha Brown, left, and his son Daryl Brown during the funeral service at the James Brown arena in Augusta, Ga., on Saturday.

Brown funeral lures masses

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) - At a gathering marked by joy more than sorrow, thousands of James Brown's fans and friends filled an arena bearing his name Saturday for their final tribute to the homegrown singer known as the Godfather of Soul.

The farewell tour for Brown — loved in Augusta and elsewhere as much for his generosity and influence as for his music — wound down with an afternoon funeral, two days after a spirited viewing in the famed Apollo Theater in New York.

Michael Jackson was among the more than 8,500 fans who

packed James Brown Arena, where Brown lay in front of the bandstand in his third outfit in three days — a black jacket and gloves, red shirt and sequined shoes.

As the service began shortly after 1 p.m., friends and relatives filed past the casket. The procession was followed by a video of Brown's last performance in Augusta and his final concert in London — where he performed a slow, soulful version of Ray Charles' "Georgia On My Mind."

Jackson, whose arrival (See James Brown, Page 3)

Inquest input eyed

By Frank Armand Albano
Sentinel-Voice

Two hearings will be held for the public to give input on a proposed set of changes to the controversial coroner's inquest process, which has been under fire lately from many citizens groups and other opponents.

A County Commission-appointed panel has developed consensus on preliminary recommendations for improving the coroner's inquest process and is asking the public to weigh in at the public hearings next week on Wednesday and Thursday.

"The process had been called into question, so we wanted a public discussion as to procedures and changes needed... with public opinion to discuss warranted changes," Clark County Commission Chairman Rory Reid said. "As a result, two hearings will be held next week."

They take place on Wednesday, January 10, from 3 to 4:30 p.m., and Thursday, January 11, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Clark County Commission Chambers in the Government Center at 500 S. Grand Central Pkwy. The public is encouraged to voice their opinions regarding changes to the process, according to organizers.

The hearings will also be televised on Cable Channel 4 and can also be viewed online at www.accessclarkcounty.com.

The coroner's inquest is a process of review for cases where a suspect, person in custody or citizen dies during a police action, such as a suspect who is shot or dies

while in custody. The inquest determines if any involved officer was justified or not. That process has been loudly criticized by members of the community who claim there is bias favoring the police department. It is rare that the process has ever found against a police officer. Many of the people who have been killed during officer-involved shootings are African-Americans.

In July, Reid directed staff to examine the coroner's inquest process, then meet with interested parties and report back on possible changes. In August, the rest of the panel sanctioned the review and asked for a report back.

Reid said the reason for establishing a review committee about the coroner's inquest process is because last summer, "historically, a lot of people had died. We got calls from citizens and the media with concerns about the process and the best way to have confidence in the process."

The review committee, which is

coordinated by Clark County Assistant Manager Elizabeth Quillin, consists of a group of community representatives that the commissioners have been meeting with since last year.

The council has formed a consensus of recommendations, which will be presented to the public for input at the hearings. The three proposed changes are:

—Replace hearing masters, who oversee the proceedings, with justices of the peace.

—Replace representatives of the district attorney's office, who currently are the chief questioners during coroner's inquests, with lawyers from the state attorney general's office.

—Allow relatives of shooting victims, who are currently allowed to submit questions in writing, to ask questions in open court. Those questions would be considered by the presiding official, who would determine whether they are rel-

(See Inquest, Page 2)

Las Vegas honors MLK

By Kanika Vann
Sentinel-Voice

Nine days of public events will lead up to the annual celebration of the iconic, African-American Civil Rights Era leader, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., whose January 15 birth date is a national holiday.

Beginning this Sunday, the local Martin Luther King Committee hosts a variety of events, many free to the public, ranging from banquets and parades to forums and film festivals. The 35-member group celebrates its silver anniversary this month.

MLK Committee Founder and

President Wendell Williams said, "This year's events are very diverse. I think the public will enjoy what we've planned in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. We have a parade being held downtown, an interfaith church service, and a youth night, amongst other activities. We have also collaborated on many of the events with some very notable organizations that include Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated, the University of Nevada Las Vegas' ACT-SO program, and Macy's."

On Sunday, January 7, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., the MLK Commit-

tee, in conjunction with Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, co-hosts the Civil Rights Film Festival at the West Las Vegas Library Theater located at 951 West Lake Mead Blvd., three blocks east of MLK Blvd. Admission to this event is free.

A Day of Reflection takes place on Monday, January 8. The purpose of this day is for individuals to reflect not only on how to better society and their own personal lives, but the lives of their families and respective communities as well.

The MLK Committee Economic (See MLK Events, Page 2)



TREASURED MOMENT

U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Johnnie Rawlinson, right, presided over the Tuesday morning swearing-in ceremony of Clark County Recorder Debbie Conway, the first African-American to hold the position in Nevada. Conway won in the 2006 general election.