

LAS VEGAS

Sentinel Voice

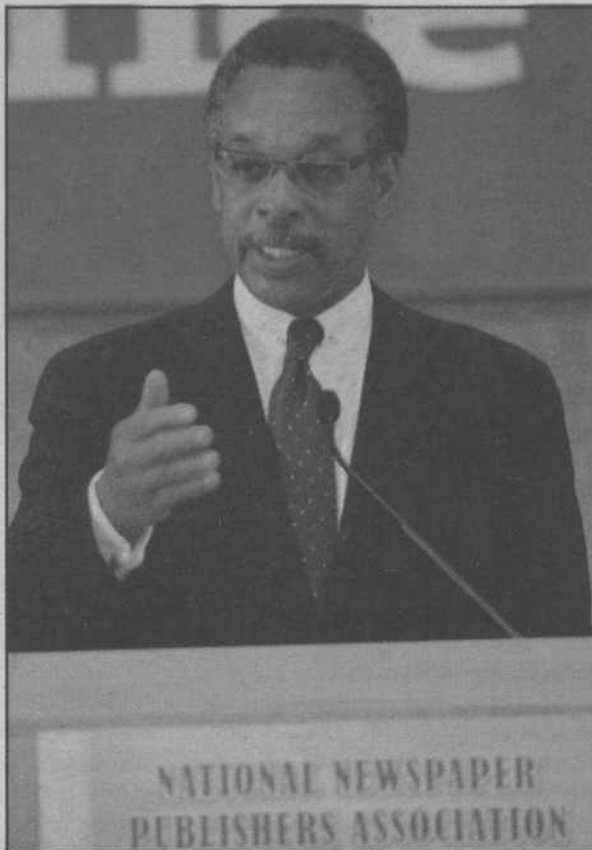


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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"



Citing differences with the board, Bruce Gordon stepped down from the presidency of the national NAACP.

Gordon leaves NAACP top job

By Hazel Trice Edney
Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - NAACP President and CEO Bruce Gordon, who resigned last week, citing a clash with the organization's 64-member board, apparently was unable to reconcile his corporate conciliatory style with the board's veteran civil rights advocates.

"I saw myself as a change agent. I came to the association to be a transformational leader, not a maintenance of the status quo leader. And, rightly or wrongly, my approach to affecting change is not something that the board bought into," Gordon said in an interview with the NNPA News Service.

"They thought they knew what they were getting. I thought I knew what I was getting into. And I certainly think that I misread it. What I found was not what I expected... At the end of the day, the CEO and the board must be aligned in order for the organization to be effective. And we are not aligned. There's a lot more to it, and I have no desire to get into it. What matters is that we just weren't all on the same page."

Well-placed sources close to the organization said trouble started brewing soon after Gordon, a former Verizon executive, was hired 19 months ago. One source said he tried to resign only six weeks after starting the job, but was talked into staying.

Board Chairman Julian Bond was candid in his assessment of the conflict.

"We had some disagreements about whether the NAACP should focus all of its energies on social justice or whether we should focus on social service. The board believes that we have been a social justice organization for 98 years. Although we very much appreciate and value

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Ward 5 race crowded

Ten candidates vying to replace Lawrence Weekly

By Frank Armand Albano
Sentinel-Voice

Former City Councilman Lawrence Weekly resigned his seat and was sworn in this week as the newest Clark County Commissioner, leaving his former position vacant until the upcoming elections.

The city council was faced with several choices after Weekly was appointed by Gov. Gibbons to take over the County District D seat of Yvonne Atkinson Gates, who had suddenly resigned, vacating her seat effective March 2. The council could have held a special election or appointed someone to fill Weekly's post, but opted instead to allow the election process since Weekly was up for re-election this year.

Ten candidates, vying to

take the helm of the Ward 5 position for the next four years, filed to run in the short deadline time after Weekly's resignation was announced.

Those seeking voter approval are: Shondra Summers Armstrong, Ricki Barlow, Marion Bennett, Richard Blue, Gene Collins, Katherine Duncan, Earnestine Howell, Jeffrey Loveall, Stacie Truesdell and Marcia Washington.

The Sentinel-Voice called each candidate for an interview of some of the issues. Of the 10 candidates running, five responded. Candidates were asked about area roadways, crime, economic development and the grocery store anchor issue that has plagued the Enterprise Park Project near Lake Mead Avenue and Martin Luther King

Boulevard, the neighborhood center of Ward 5.

Shondra Summers Armstrong, a community activist who served on the Regional Transportation Commission, came to Las Vegas in 1990.

"We need a repair schedule for street repair," she said. "On the subject of crime, I'm concerned; there is no silver bullet. Parents, police and the community must deal with the problem of crime."

She commented on the search for a local grocery store for the area: "Councilman Weekly had a problem with the grocery store. Keep on pushing for it. No reason people should have to go to Wal-mart. We have to think out of the box. Good development is mixed use. Invite out-of-the-box businesses to

West Las Vegas. Businesses are a tax base; they have to be lured here. It's the basis for growth opportunities," she concluded.

Marion Bennett, a retired minister, is a 46-year resident of Las Vegas who renovated strip malls to bring in Black businesses to the Historic Westside.

"I'm not intimidated, I speak my mind. What we have to do is take responsibility for our own community. We have to get our kids jobs and training. Without jobs, they just hang out and get into trouble. We have to keep the streets in proper repair. We have to bring in new businesses, but they are afraid to come in because of the crime. Remove the deterioration and crime drops."

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African refugees settle in LV

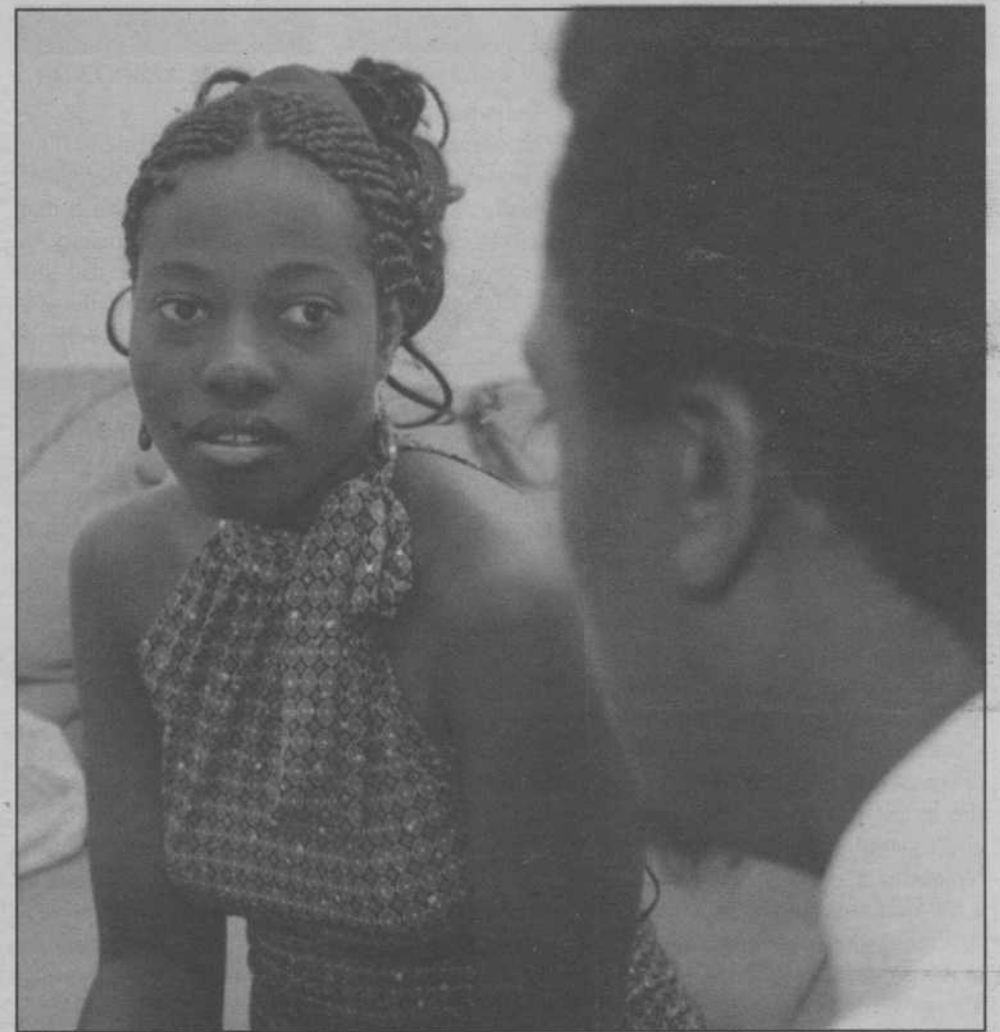
By Kanika Vann
Sentinel-Voice

In the midst of the Latin American immigration boom, there is a group of immigrants that has been entering the United States legally but may have fallen under the American public's radar. Far from the borders of Mexico and the waters of the Caribbean Sea, African refugees, exiled or forced to flee from their native lands, have settled in this country, seeking unfamiliar freedoms and personal protection.

A national organization, The Ethiopian Community Development Council, helps African and other refugees resettle in the United States. Founded and based in Arlington, Va., in 1981 by its President Dr. Tsehaye Teferra, the ECDC became a 501c3 non-profit agency in 1983. It operates through a network of community-based, affiliate organizations.

The African Community Center, located in the 1500 E. Tropicana Ave. suites, is the

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Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

The African Community Center helps refugee Fidence Umuhire adjust to life in Las Vegas.