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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

## NCBW Luncheon honors women

By Kanika Vann  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

The third annual Madam C.J. Walker Awards Luncheon will be held Sunday at the Paris Las Vegas Hotel and Casino to induct 13 new members into the National Coalition of 100 Black Women-Las Vegas Chapter. The NCBW honors women in business.

The lineup of speakers includes NCBW National President Marva Smith Battle-Bey, among others. The keynote speaker is Sheryl Lee Ralph, acclaimed actress, singer, writer and entrepreneur.

Ralph may be most recognized for her roles in "Sister Act II," "Moesha," and as Deena Jones in the original Broadway musical, "Dreamgirls."

According to NCBW National Board Member and

Founding President Dr. Sandra Mack of the local chapter, "Ralph was chosen as the event's keynote speaker because of her prominent activism surrounding AIDS awareness," the same basis for the chapter's choice of principal speaker Gloria Ruben the prior year.

Veteran actress Ralph, established in Hollywood and on the Broadway stage, is also a producer, director, and an avid activist and promoter of AIDS education. She is the creator of "Divas Simply Singing!," an annual AIDS benefit. She intends to take pointers from many of her seasoned life experiences to relay a message of power, appreciation and success to the flourishing group of established women attending the business luncheon.

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### IDOL SHOCK

Melinda Doolittle performs Tuesday on the set of "American Idol" in Los Angeles. Many observers thought she was a lock to go on to the "American Idol" finale, but Doolittle was eliminated Wednesday.

## King clan loses another

ATLANTA (AP) — Yolanda King, the firstborn child of the first family of the Civil Rights Movement, who honored that legacy through acting and advocacy, died late Tuesday. She was 51.

The daughter of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King died in Santa Monica, Calif. Family members did not know the cause of death, but suspect it might have been a heart problem.

"This is just the last thing and the last person that we expected this to happen to," said Isaac Newton Farris, the Kings' cousin and CEO of the King Center. "At least with my aunt (Coretta Scott King) we had some warning. Yolanda, as far as we knew, was healthy and certainly happy."

Former Mayor Andrew Young, a lieutenant of her father's who has remained close to the family, said King was going to her brother Dexter's home



Yolanda King died in California on Wednesday. The eldest daughter of Martin and Coretta Scott King, she was 51.

when she collapsed in the doorway. Farris said she died near Dexter King but would not elaborate.

Yolanda King, who lived in California, appeared in numerous films, including "Ghosts of Mississippi," and played Rosa Parks in the 1978 miniseries "King." She also ran a production company.

"She was an actress, author, producer, advocate for peace and nonviolence, who

was known and loved for her motivational and inspirational contributions to society," the King family said in a statement.

"She used her acting ability to dramatize the essence of the movement," said Democratic Georgia Rep. John Lewis who worked alongside King's father.

"She could motivate and inspire and tell the story. I heard her recite 'I Have A Dream' on several occasions.

She made it real, made it part of her. I think her father would've been very, very proud of her."

Yolanda King's death came less than a year and a half after Coretta Scott King died in January 2006 after battling ovarian cancer and the effects of a stroke. Her struggle prompted her daughter to become a spokeswoman for the American Heart Association, raising awareness, especially among Blacks, about stroke. A spokesperson for the group said she last spoke on the organization's behalf on Saturday at a hospital in Langhorne, Pa.

For nearly 40 years, Dr. Stephanie Robinson knew Yolanda King. They went to high school together in Atlanta. Robinson knew that King was the daughter of Martin Luther King Jr. Said Robinson: "She was Yoki first. She was her own person and then she

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## Teen smokers face stinky issue

By Hazel Trice Edney  
Special to Sentinel-Voice  
Part seven of a series

Editor's Note: More than a half million African-Americans have died from smoking-related diseases over the past decade. That's enough people to fill the cities of Atlanta, New Orleans, Kansas City, Mo., or Cleveland, Ohio.

Yet, 'cigarette smoking is the single most preventable cause of premature death in the United States,' according to the Centers for Disease Control. Then why are so many Black people dying from cigarettes, and why is it so difficult to quit?

This eight-part series — "Nicotine Addiction" — seeks to explore these questions by featuring real people, real circumstances,

and real answers.

WASHINGTON (NNPA) — Brian, 16, has always prided himself for his good behavior and mature outlook on life. Hanging out with his friends at City Place Mall in Silver Spring, Md., he boasts to a reporter, "I don't smoke, 'cause I'm an athlete, a basketball player."

Then, hesitantly, in front of his friends, the lanky teen comes clean. He admits that, well, "I tried it once. Just to see how it feels or whatever."

He was 15 when it happened.

"I was with friends," he said. "It was stupid. It wasn't even a cigarette. It was Black & Milds. Cigarettes are worse."

Actually, those statements are more "stupid" than Brian really knows.

"There's no such thing as a safe cigarette," said Eric Asche, a spokesman for the American Legacy Foundation's Truth Campaign. "The appearance on the package comes across to the consumer as a safe alternative when, in fact, there is no safe alternative."

The Black & Mild brand cigar, extremely popular among young African-American teens, is filled with pipe tobacco.

They are cigarillos, slender cigars, that are relatively inexpensive.

They also appear innocent because of the variety of deceptive flavors and names, such as Black and Mild Apple, Black and Mild FT (Filter Tip), Black and Mild Cream, and Black and Mild Wine; reminiscent of the line

of flavored cigarettes produced over the past five years, also aimed to entice young smokers.

The National Cancer Institute makes it clear: "The risk of tobacco smoke exposure is similar for all sources of tobacco smoke, and the magnitude of the risks experienced by cigar smokers is proportionate to the nature and intensity of their exposure," writes Richard D. Klausner, director of the National Cancer Institute, in a decade-old report, representing the findings of more than 50 scientists.

It continues, "Cigar smoking can cause cancer of the mouth, esophagus, larynx and lungs. Regular cigar smokers who inhale, particularly those who smoke sev-

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