

GOP hopefuls snub Black forums

By Elaine Welles
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Four empty podiums raised perhaps more questions than anything after the contentious debate between the second-tier Republican presidential candidates.

Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, former Sen. Fred Thompson, former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani and Arizona Sen. John McCain did not attend the forum at Morgan State University for Republican presidential candidates, which was hosted by PBS show moderator and political commentator Tavis Smiley.

Citing scheduling conflicts, the four leading Republican candidates were represented at the forum by four empty podiums, set between the other six candidates who did appear: former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, Kansas Sen. Sam Brownback, Tom Tancredo of Colorado, Texas Rep. Ron Paul, Calif. Rep. Duncan Hunter and the lone Black candidate, conservative po-

litical activist Alan Keyes. Smiley, in opening comments, said it had been suggested that forums such as this one, focused primarily on issues of importance to the African-American community, would be "hostile" and "unreceptive."

However, even some of those who did appear last Thursday evening at what was called the All-American Presidential Forums on PBS, said those not present had erred. "I am embarrassed by those who didn't come," said candidate Huckabee, in response to the first question of the evening regarding the absent candidates. Huckabee said he wanted to be "president of the United States, not just president of the Republican Party."

Paul, responding to the question of why he attended the forum when others did not, said he came because "I go wherever I'm invited to talk about freedom," he said.

Tancredo made note of the fact that he was the only Republican candidate to address

the NAACP Convention, saying that the "promise of America" is what drives him and that "we all have to actually share in and explain how we would fulfill that."

Other candidates had similar comments, but the lone African-American candidate, Keyes, said it was "unfair to assume that they [the absent candidates] were sending a negative message to the Black community."

He said there had been other forums in which the absentees had not participated, not because there were minority issues being discussed, but "values" issues. "They don't believe it's possible to address Blacks on Republican values. I do," he said.

Regardless of why the candidates did or did not ap-

pear, they received criticism from some of their own. Republican operative Jack Kemp said, in earlier comments regarding the forum, "I think we will be punished at the polls for seemingly turning our back on such a large segment of the population."

Former Maryland Lt. Gov. and Republican Michael Steele noted during his introduction of the forum candidates a saying by former Republican President Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Segregation is not compatible with the ideals of America." But since that time, said Steele, Blacks and the Republican Party have been at odds.

While the African-American vote is largely Demo- (See Podium, Page 11)

Blues

(Continued from Page 3)

the yardstick that others are measured by. I am really looking forward to seeing her," said one Denise LaSalle fan, Lea Gilmore.

Documentary

(Continued from Page 1)

of the dance style is that she has outlasted everyone else, and it is her job to make sure that her generation's legacy is recorded. She says that this is why she is doing the documentary.

The documentary is a historical biography of Miller's life, including her friends Louis Armstrong, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Frankie Manning, John Hendricks, Redd Foxx, Bill Cosby and Richard Pryor, and others.

Miller is the author of several books. "Swing Baby Swing" chronicles the evolution of the swing culture in the 21st century. Her biography, "Swingin' at the Savoy: A Memoir of a Jazz Dancer," recounts her youthful encounters with Basie and Ellington, along with Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Benny Goodman, Artie



"Swing was the only American dance created here in America... Swing is everlasting, I am 86 years old and I can still do swing."

— Norma Miller
"Queen of Swing"

Shaw, Ethel Waters and other jazz legends.

Miller has also been the subject of many documentaries, including National Geographic's "Jitterbug" (1991) and the Smithsonian Jazz series on National Public Radio. In the 60s, she began working with Redd Foxx at his comedy club and later joined him on the 1970's television series, "Sanford and Son," serving as a stand-up comic, actor and choreographer.

When asked if there was a comparison of today's dance to swing, she replied, "No, it is like comparing apples and oranges. Every generation has their style. The swing is, again, everlasting. It is not a trend. People still swing."

Miller remains active and continues to be an inspiration to all who know her.

For more information, call the West Las Vegas Library at 507-3989 or the West Las Vegas, Arts Center at 229-4800.

which would leave states free to deal with abortion as they wish.

But at the time of his nomination, Thomas told senators he had never discussed the case. In the book, he describes himself in the years before he joined the court as a lazy libertarian, with mixed feelings about abortion and uncomfortable telling others what to do.

Within a few months of his confirmation, however, the court was faced with a case that offered the prospect of overruling Roe v. Wade. By then, he says in a footnote, he had ample time to study the issue and concluded that Roe was wrongly decided in 1973.

Thomas

(Continued from Page 3)

He does, however, trace his rightward political shift from a protesting college student at Holy Cross and a George McGovern supporter in 1972 to an appointee of presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush.

In the roughly one-third of the book spent recounting his nomination to the court, Thomas says his opponents were obsessed with the issue of abortion and determined to stop him because they believed he would oppose abortion rights.

As a justice, Thomas has called for overturning the landmark Roe v. Wade decision,

Rep. seeks probe on military noose

NEW LONDON, Conn. (AP) - Nooses were left in a Black Coast Guard cadet's bag and in the office of a White officer who conducted race relations training after the incident, leading a congressman to call last week for a thorough military investigation.

A Coast Guard probe was unable to determine who left the nooses, said Chief Warrant Officer David M. French, a spokesman for the Coast Guard Academy.

Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, a Maryland Democrat and chairman of the House Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, recently urged Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Thad Allen to address the full academy and asked for a more intensive probe.

"Racial discrimination and intolerance have no place in either the Academy or the Coast Guard, and these incidents run directly against the efforts being made to increase diversity throughout the Coast Guard," Cummings said in a statement.

Rear Adm. J. Scott Burhoe, the academy's superintendent, said he had ordered the Coast Guard Investigative Service to look further into what he called "heinous acts."

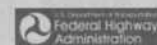
Burhoe said in a statement, "Symbols such as those reported go against everything our Coast Guard is all about. We pride ourselves in being one of the most inclusive institutions of higher learning."

He said if the person or people who planted the nooses are caught, the academy will "pursue appropriate action including possible proceedings under the Uniform Code of Military Justice."

A task force found that minority members comprised 13.5 percent of the Coast Guard's student body, compared with 16 percent in 1991, Cummings said.

Minorities comprised only 7 percent of the faculty and staff, and fewer than 1 percent of captains on active duty are Black, Cummings said.

The first noose was left in the cadet's bag July 15 on board the Coast Guard cutter Eagle, French said. The second was found in early August on the office floor of a female officer who had been conducting the race relations training in response to the first incident, he said.



TRANSPORTATION NOTICE PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING FOR

I-15 Corridor and Martin Luther King Boulevard/Industrial Road Connector (Project NEON)

Purpose of Meeting:

The Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC), and the City of Las Vegas are working together to coordinate the planning and design of the Interstate Highway 15 (I-15) Corridor Improvements and Martin Luther King Boulevard (MLK)/Industrial Road Connector Project (Project NEON). The proposed project will involve improvements to the I-15 corridor and major street connections beginning south of the I-15/Sahara Avenue interchange and continuing north to the I-15/United States Highway 95 (US 95) interchange (the Las Vegas Spaghetti Bowl). The project covers a total distance of approximately 3.7 miles on I-15. Project NEON integrates six major highway improvement components:

- Expanding and improving the I-15 freeway mainline between Sahara Avenue and US 95, including northbound and southbound high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes
- Reconstructing the I-15/Charleston Boulevard interchange
- Adding I-15 freeway access ramps near Alta Drive for movements to and from the south
- Creating a new six-lane arterial roadway connection over I-15, Charleston Boulevard, and the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR), by connecting MLK and Industrial Road
- Grade separating Oakey Boulevard/Wyoming Avenue and the UPRR tracks
- Reconstructing the I-15/Sahara Avenue interchange.

When and Where:

The public information meeting will be held on October 24, 2007 at the Clark County Government Center, Community Room (Pyramid-Shaped Building), 500 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas, NV, 4-7 p.m.

Where You Come In:

Members of the public are invited to attend the Public Information Meeting at their convenience anytime between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. There will be a brief presentation about key elements of the project at 5:30 p.m. followed by a short comment period. Prior to and after the presentation and comment period, the meeting will be open format, with an opportunity for attendees to submit their comments in writing on a comment sheet provided at the meeting or in person to a public stenographer who will be available throughout the meeting. This meeting format increases the opportunity for public comment and provides for one-on-one discussion with staff involved with the project.

General information about the project and meeting can be obtained by calling (888) 411-6366 or by visiting our website at www.ndotprojectneon.com. Written comments can be mailed to Project NEON, 6795 Edmond Street, Suite 150, Las Vegas, NV 89118 or submitted through our website.

Right of Way: The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policy Act of 1970 will govern the acquisition of any right-of-way acquisition and information may be obtained by calling NDOT right of way, (775) 888-7480.

NOTE: Reasonable efforts will be made to assist and accommodate physically handicapped persons desiring to attend the meeting. Request for auxiliary aids or services to assist individuals with disabilities should be made with as much advance notice as possible to Julie Maxey at (775) 888-7171.