

## OUR VIEW

# Loss of Life

Fewer things leave a deeper, more lasting emotional scar than for parents to have to bury a child. It's supposed to be the other way around. Your children are supposed to outlive you. They're supposed to care for you as you age and take care of you should you become infirm. Parents of murdered children might feel this pain even more acutely. No doubt the family of Palo Verde freshman Christopher Privett is grieving mightily. Privett was killed in a drive-by shooting on Friday as he walked home from school. So far, two arrests have been made in the case.

The Cincinnati-based Parents Of Murdered Children, Inc., exists to help families like the Privetts cope with such losses. The group was founded by Robert and Charlotte Hullinger in 1978 after their 19-year old daughter Lisa was killed by former boyfriend Bill Coday. Coday would later go on to commit murder in Florida and be sentenced to die. Sadly, as POMC notes, the Privetts pain may only be beginning.

Families of murdered children experience a roller coaster of emotions. "Isolation and helplessness in a world that is seen as hostile and uncaring and that frequently blames the victim. Feelings of guilt for not having protected the victim. The memory of a mutilated body at the morgue—'How much did my loved one suffer?' Getting back the personal belongings of a murder victim. Sensational and/or inaccurate media coverage. Lack of information. Endless grief. Loss of ability to function on the job, at home or in school, etc. The strain on marriages (frequently resulting in divorce) and the strain on family relationships. Effects on health, faith and values. Effects on other family members, children, friends, co-workers, etc. Indifference of the community, including professionals, to the plight of survivors. Society's attitude regarding murder as a form of entertainment. Financial burden of medical and funeral expenses. Medical expenses for stress-related illnesses and professional counseling for surviving family members. Financial burden of hiring private investigators, etc. Public sympathy for murderers.

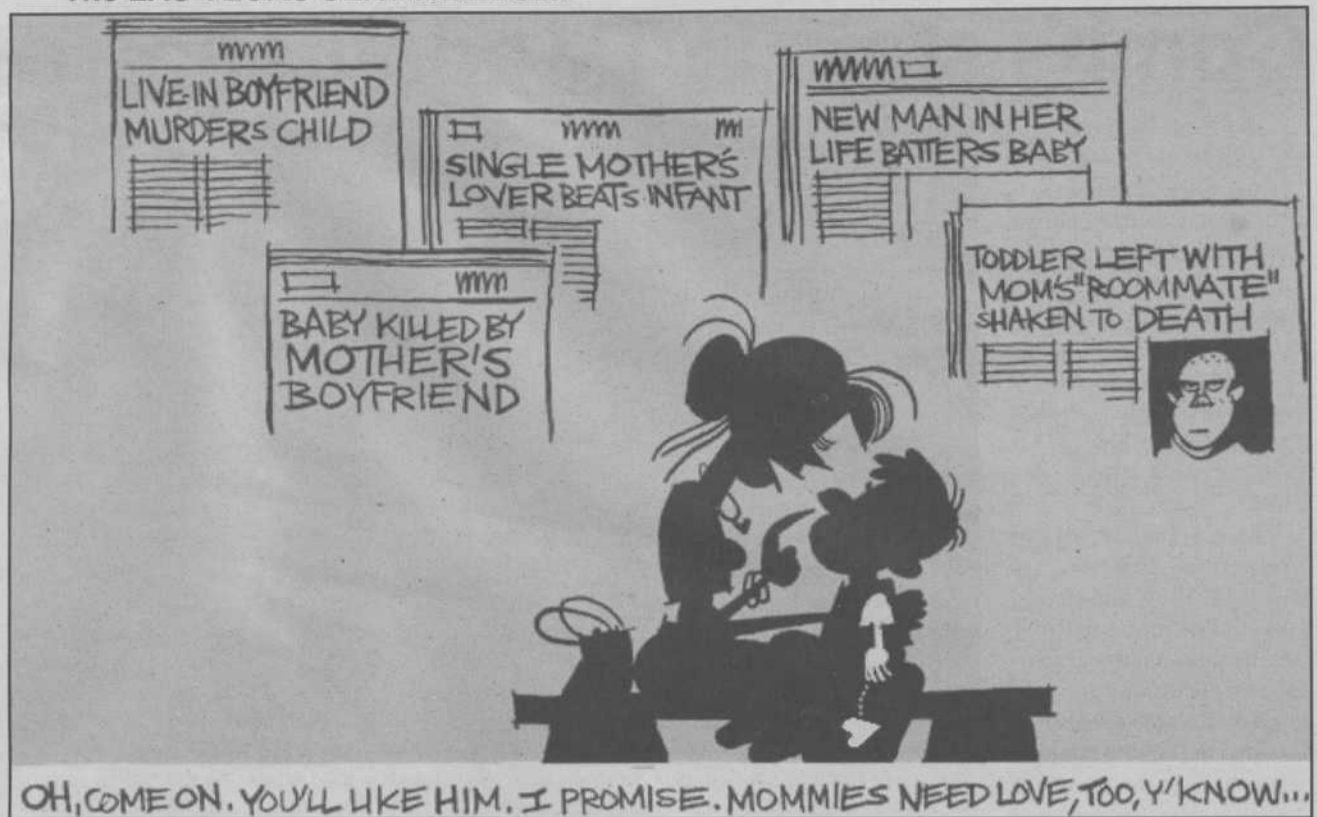
This is just the iceberg's tip. Other stressors include: "The feeling that the murderer, if found, gets all the help; survivors of homicide victims have few rights. Outrage about the leniency of the murderer's sentence. Disparities in the judicial system (frequently punishments for property crimes are as great or greater than the crime of taking a human life). Anger over a plea-bargain arrangement/agreement. Frustration at not being allowed inside the courtroom at the time of trial. Unanswered questions about the crime, such as 'What happened?' Unanswered questions about postponements and continuous delays throughout the trial. Bitterness and loss of faith in the American criminal justice system. After conviction, the long appeals process begins. Constantly reliving your story through the dreaded parole process."

In sympathizing and empathizing with the Privett family, society would be remiss to dismiss the parents of the murderers and suspected killers. The families of Gerald Quashawn Davison and Ezekial Williams have also lost something. The alleged actions of these young men have robbed them, too, of creating memories for a lifetime. With the pull of a trigger, the lives of a circle of families have been shattered. And for this, everyone should mourn.

## Let's Not Jump

...to conclusions that is. By now the news is public: Ex-UMC boss Lacy Thomas has been indicted on five charges of theft and five charges of misconduct by public officer. The charges stem from alleged malfeasance at University Medical Center, the county hospital. Authorities claim Thomas funneled contracts to friends and associates. In some cases, authorities say, work was not done.

We must remember that in the American system of law, you are innocent until proven guilty. Indictments don't mean automatic jail time. We must let the criminal justice process play out. A jury of Thomas' peers needs to be impaneled. A judge needs to case both sides of the case. And a decision must be rendered. For the sake of the defendant and his family, we should take a wait and see approach not convict Thomas in a court of public opinion.



# Bigotry raises its head at FCC

By Harry C. Alford  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

A few months ago, Black and Latino advocacy groups, such as the National Black Chamber of Commerce, were shocked to learn that the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission derided us as incapable of writing articulate position papers and filing official comments to the FCC. He did this while addressing the very conservative Aspen Institute in Colorado. He called us by name and said anything we file at the FCC must be written by White entities that pay or persuade us to lend our names and reputations to their cause. His point was that we colored groups don't know anything about pertinent issues at the FCC and suffered from low intellect. President Bush has used the term "soft bigotry of low expectations."

Well, it seems that he has appointed an FCC Chairman who goes well beyond the "soft bigotry." This here is cold-blooded, hardcore bigotry.

I am very proud of the advocacy we and other minority organizations have demonstrated on FCC issues throughout the past two decades. The NBCC has been engaged with FCC issues since 1995.

Filings, comments, letters are numerous and the issues vary widely such as broadband deployment, Internet availability, mergers, phone costs, etc. Most importantly the digital divide and how we, African-Americans, can overcome this challenge. Clearly, Chairman Kevin Martin has access to our his-



HARRY C. ALFORD

tory of involvement but his mindset seems to be getting in the way of logic and reason.

This is quite a contrast to Chairman Martin's predecessor, Michael Powell (son of Gen. Colin Powell), who not only had an open-door policy for minority organizations but demonstrated outreach.

He always wanted to know what we were thinking and encouraged our input. Sitting down across from his desk and sharing our views was indeed a pleasurable experience even when we differed on policy. He served his President and nation well.

You can't do that unless you are inclusive in your assessment and thought process. To block out organizations by the race of people they represent is totally un-American and unwanted. From what I understand, Chairman Martin has chased out most of Chairman Powell's staffers. Was it about politics or race?

It equally contrasts with former Chairmen William Kennard and Reed Hundt. In fact, none of the previous three chairmen had any thread of exclusivity especially when it came to race.

Chairman Hundt's son was a school chum of my boys. The relationship that

minority organizations have had with the democratic process of input with the FCC can best be described as engaging and overall positive until now. We have been insulted and slighted and that may just be the beginning.

Since his bigoted tirade about "us" to an audience he thought was insulated from our ears there have been strange things happening between the NBCC and the FCC. Every time we submit a filing we are chased by an investigative reporter from the Associated Press who challenges our authorship. It gets worse. The GAO has performed a "phone audit" on one of our filings. They went through a charade with the formality and at the end of the questioning they queried, "Who wrote this for you?" When I immediately replied that I wrote it myself they began laughing as if to say, "Negro, you can't write like that!"

There have been other forms of harassment, which I won't go into detail about at this time. I believe you can get the gist. The precious freedom of speech, which we

all depend on in this democracy is being challenged by someone who chooses to abuse his power based on his prejudgment of people who are of another hue than his.

I regard Chairman Kevin Martin as a public enemy. It is incumbent upon all of us to challenge this assault. We should submit filings and comments to the FCC like never before and dare him to try and stop us.

People who know me understand that I don't use the terms racist and bigot lightly. However, when I see it, my conviction is to challenge it and prevent its growth.

The next time he shares his feelings about people of color in a public arena I will organize a march to the White House to demand his firing. In this day and age, our nation can ill afford backward thinking and harassment on its citizens, especially when they exercise their right to opinion and free speech. I am totally appalled.

Chairman Martin needs to realize that we have come too far to turn back now. And yes, we have college degrees, im-

(See Alford, Page 9)

NEVADA'S ONLY AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER  
**LAS VEGAS Sentinel Voice**  
GRIOT COMMUNICATIONS GROUP, INC.  
1000 EAST CHARLESTON BOULEVARD, SUITE 100

Nevada's only African-American community newspaper.  
Published every Thursday by Griot Communications Group, Inc.  
900 East Charleston Boulevard • Las Vegas, Nevada 89104  
Telephone (702) 380-8100  
Email: lvsentinelvoice@yahoo.com

Contributing Writers:  
Shirley Savage  
Lés Pierres Streater  
Kanika Vann

Ramon Savoy, Publisher, Editor-in-Chief  
Parker Philpot, Copy Editor  
Don Snook, Graphics  
Ed & Betty Brown, Founders

Member: National Newspaper Publishers Association  
and West Coast Black Publishers Association