

# LAS VEGAS Sentinel Voice

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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

## Candidates pay respects to MLK

MEMPHIS (AP) — Republican and Democrat, Black and White, the three remaining presidential candidates summoned memories of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., 40 years after his death on Friday and gently sought to advance their own strivings as they found greatness in his.

"The quality of his character is only more apparent," said Sen. John McCain, a Republican who readily told a Black audience that he had been wrong to vote against legislation making King's birthday a holiday.

"His good name will be honored for as long as the creed of America is honored. His message will be heard and understood for as long as the message of the gospels is heard and understood."

Like McCain, Democratic Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton traveled to Memphis to observe the day. But unlike him, she chose not to speak at ceremonies at the Lorraine Motel where King was shot.

Instead, she was in the church where he had delivered his final sermon on the day before his death. A college student 40 years ago, Clinton recalled, "I walked into my dorm room and took my book bag and hurled it across the room." Her voice breaking, she added, "It felt like everything had been shattered and we'd never be able to put the pieces together again."

In a glancing reference to the current campaign, she added that "because of him, after 219 years and 43 presidents who have all been White men, this generation will grow up taking for granted that a woman or an African-American could be president of the United States."

Alone among the three, Sen. Barack Obama decided against a personal pilgrimage to the city of King's death. The strongest Black candidate in history, he campaigned in Indiana, where he said King's pleas have yet to be answered fully.

"You know, Dr. King once said that the arc of the moral (See Tribute, Page 3)

## 40th commemoration of Dr. King's death: Time to reflect, reconnect

By Florence M. Howard  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

MEMPHIS (NNPA) — "Martin Luther King III and Rev. Bernice King for the first time in history made a pilgrimage to the Lorraine Motel on the date of their father's assassination," said Beverly Robertson, executive director of the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis.

She was reflecting on the historicity of the moment observed last week, during the 40th anniversary of their father, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The leader of a nonviolent Civil Rights movement, Dr. King was assassinated April 4, 1968, while standing on the motel's balcony. It was his second trip to Memphis to help rally support for striking sanitation workers. His first march on March 28 that year had ended with violence, and he had come back to lead another more peaceful demonstration scheduled for April 8.

Now, 40 years later, the balcony and the room in which Dr. King stayed are part of the museum, which served as the focal point for



Sentinel-Voice photo by Warren Roseborough, Tri-State Defender/Real Times News Service

Thousands in Memphis honored King's memory in a march to recommit to his dream.

last week's commemorative activities.

The 40th anniversary commemoration, which began in February with the opening of a Smithsonian traveling exhibit, "381 Days: Montgomery Bus Boycott Story Exhibit," hit its stride with the 10th Annual National Convention of the National Action Network, April 2-6 at the Peabody Hotel. It reached its zenith on April 4, drawing civil rights icons,

dignitaries, presidential hopefuls, television and movie luminaries, and ordinary people to Memphis and to the museum to reflect and reconnect with Dr. King and his dream.

Friday, April 4 started off with rain and a morning march by Local 1733 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, the union of workers Dr. King had come to help. Georgia King, 68, was invited by Ruth Davis, the current union president, to lead the march.

King, a Memphis grassroots activist also known as Queen Akua, said that this was a repeat of history.

"Coretta King came back to finish the march on April 8 — the day before Martin Luther King's funeral — from Clayborn Temple on Hernando to the Lorraine Motel. Rev. Ezekiel Bell was telling everyone to line up and start the march," she recalled.

Then in her 20s, Georgia King had come to Memphis from Union City, Tenn., in tribute to Dr. King and was chosen to lead the march because of her African-styled garb and head wrap, which became her trademark.

"That first march, I was

out front by myself," she said, noting that she walked 12 to 15 steps in front of Coretta Scott King who was followed by 17,000 marchers.

Now a member of the poverty committee for the Memphis chapter of SCLC, Georgia King said the 40th commemoration march brought her full circle. Later that day, she participated in a second march.

"In all, it was a very successful gathering, a very peaceful gathering. And I think it carried the philosophy of Dr. King's nonviolence for social change atmosphere," she said.

Some 800-1,000 people took part in last week's march that honored the 1968 sanitation workers and traversed from the AFSCME union headquarters on Beale to a rally in the museum courtyard. Sen. John McCain, the Republican Party presumptive nominee, was among those who spoke at the rally. In town for the commemoration, he acknowledged his failure to support a bill that made Dr. King's birthday a national holiday. His admission was met with a mixture of boos and sympathetic murmurs of "we all make mistakes."

(See Anniversary, Page 2)

## Braxton hospitalized for chest pain

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Toni Braxton canceled her Las Vegas show after being hospitalized overnight with chest pains, hotel officials said. The 40-year-old Grammy winner spent Monday night at a local hospital and was expected to be released after precautionary tests, Flamingo Las Vegas Hotel and Harrah's Entertainment Inc. spokeswoman Deanna Pettit said.

The cause of the chest pain was not immediately known. But Pettit said Braxton, a six-time Grammy winner for songs including "Un-break My Heart" and "Breathe Again," has been treated in the past for pericarditis, a viral inflammation



Toni Braxton was hospitalized Monday for chest pains.

of the heart.

"We wish Toni a quick recovery and would like her to take the time she needs to regain optimal health," said Don Marrandino, Flamingo president.

Four more Toni Braxton shows have been canceled as she recuperates following her hospitalization with chest pain. "We're going to go ahead and cancel her shows tonight and for the rest of the week," said Pettit Wednesday. "We expect she'll return to the stage next Tuesday."

The hotel was offering refunds to the canceled shows.

Braxton's act, "Toni Braxton: Revealed," is in its two-year run which began in August 2006.