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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

HIV worse than thought

By George E Curry

Special to Sentinel-Voice
MEXICO CITY (NNPA)

— The number of people infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, is 40 percent higher than the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has been reporting each year, according to new figures released last Saturday.

According to the CDC, approximately 56,300 new HIV infections occurred in the United States in 2006. The previous estimate had been 40,000 new infections per year.

"It's important to note that the new estimate does not represent an actual increase in the number of new infections, but reflects our ability to more precisely measure HIV incidence and secure a better understanding of the epidemic," said Dr. Kevin Fenton, director of the CDC's National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and TB Prevention. "This new picture reveals that the HIV epidemic is —



Two women paint a banner at a stand of the Global Village during the 17th International AIDS Conference in Mexico City on Sunday. The Global Village is a space open to the public. Around the world, people are focusing, addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

and has been — worse than previously known and underscores the challenges in confronting this disease."

The study shows that HIV has the greatest impact among African-Americans and gay and bisexual men of all races.

"The rate of new infections among non-Hispanic Blacks was seven times as high as that among Whites in 2006 (83.7 versus 11.5 new infections per 100,000± population), the CDC said. "Blacks also accounted for the largest share of new in-

fections (45 percent, or 24,900). Historical trends data show that the number of new infections among Blacks peaked in the late 1980s and has exceeded the number of infections in Whites since that time."

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Morial: Voters must be registered

By Hazel Trice Edney
Special to Sentinel-Voice

ORLANDO (NNPA) — National Urban League President Marc Morial, exuberant that the Housing Rescue and Foreclosure Prevention Act has been passed by Congress and signed by President Bush, focused the NUL annual conference in Orlando, Fla., last week on leading citizens into a new direction for by compelling people to register and vote.

"It's 40 years after the death of Dr. King and this is an historic election in American history. I mean... this is the debate about the direction of the country. And that's what's in the halls, in the air, in the sessions and in the plenary sessions," said Morial.

In his keynote speech, he announced historic voter registration efforts as well as community initiatives to help



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— Marc Morial
Urban League President

stem the tide of homes being lost due to the subprime lending crisis.

"We're going to be doggedly aggressive at registering and encouraging people to vote and working to protect the vote," he said.

"Morial called on NUL members to make September 'Voter Empowerment Month.' So, we will dedicate our efforts during that month to register people to vote."

The NUL has teamed with the National Coalition on Black Voter Participation for a strong grassroots registration effort.

This is part of a national effort to encourage participation in an election, which has already drawn interest of historic proportions due to the heated race between two U.S. senators, Republican John McCain, a Vietnam veteran, and Democrat Barack

Obama, who could become the nation's first African-American president.

"The thing you've got to do is stimulate people to participate. You've got to focus on the fundamentals of democracy, which are registering people to vote and encouraging people to double check their vote," Morial said. "In registration, there's been so much purging in some states and so many games they play in efforts to disqualify voters."

Meanwhile, the Housing Rescue and Foreclosure Prevention Act that was passed by the House and Senate last week and signed by President Bush aims to enable at least 400,000 troubled homeowners to refinance their homes, "switching from risky subprime mortgages to safer loans backed by the

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Injured woman Freeman friend

Actor, lady recover in hospital

Special to Sentinel-Voice

JACKSON, Miss. — The woman who was injured along with Morgan Freeman in a weekend car accident apparently is a friend of the Oscar-winning actor who had offered him a ride home, a crash witness says.

Freeman, 71, was driving a 1997 Nissan Maxima that authorities said belongs to Demaris Meyer, 48, of Memphis, Tenn., when the car veered off a rural road Sunday night a few miles from Freeman's home in the Mississippi Delta. The car flipped at least twice.

Bill Rogers, a retired police officer who was the first person to arrive at the scene, said a dazed Freeman told him that he and Meyer were headed to his home in Charleston, a small town some 90 miles south of Memphis.

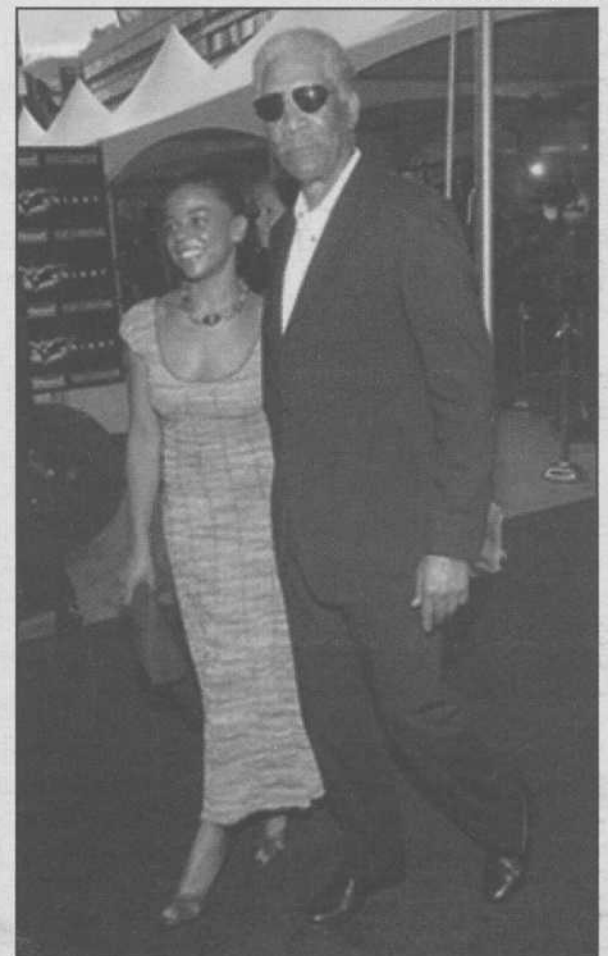
"He said that she had offered him a ride home; that they were friends and she had offered him a ride home and she didn't really know the way and so he was going to drive the vehicle," Rogers said Tuesday, recalling a conversation he had with the actor.

Freeman's friend and business partner, Bill Luckett, has told the *Commercial Appeal* newspaper that Meyer is the actor's friend.

Rogers said he talked to Freeman and Meyer in attempt to keep them conscious — something he was trained to do as a police officer.

"They said they were coming from Clarksdale,"

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Actor Morgan Freeman and granddaughter Edina attend the world premiere of 'The Dark Knight' in New York. Freeman was injured in a vehicle accident.