

Kennedy's NY senate-hopeful tour in full swing

By Herb Boyd
Special to Sentinel-Voice
 NEW YORK (NNPA) — Few names in the political kingdom have as much star power as Kennedy, and it has been given fresh currency with the possibility of Caroline Kennedy, John F. Kennedy's daughter, being tapped to fill the senatorial seat soon to be vacated by Hillary Clinton, the nominee for secretary of state.

Kennedy, who had been reluctant to express an interest in filling the position, a choice left to Gov. David

Paterson, finally let a few close friends and notables know that she would welcome the appointment.

"She's interested in the position," Paterson told the press, "but she realizes it's not a campaign... and that she was willing to sit down and tell me what her qualifications are."

The issue of whether she is qualified to fill the post has spurred a range of opinions. New York Cong. Gary Ackerman is among those who believe that name recognition is not enough, com-



Rev. Al Sharpton, left, and Caroline Kennedy have lunch at famed soul food restaurant Sylvia's in Harlem, New York last week. Kennedy is seeking appointment as U.S. Senator.

Robert. Schools Chancellor Joel Klein offered a favorable impression of Kennedy, citing her ability to raise funds. He credited her with facilitating a \$51 million donation from Bill Gates' foundation. "She's good in the room, but she's also good at getting people to focus and come together quickly," he said of Kennedy, who is currently the vice chairwoman of the schools' nonprofit fund-raising arm. Very little has appeared in the press about her husband, Edwin Schlossberg, 55, a highly regarded artist and designer. President-elect Obama hasn't directly stated his position on the matter and, like so many, feels that decision belongs entirely to the governor.

When Perkins was asked earlier to respond to a supposed scenario that begins with Obama nominating Clinton to be the next secretary of state, and thereby removing her from the Senate and opening the door for another Kennedy, he said, "That's a very sophisticated scenario and is certainly a possibility."

Even so, Perkins seemed to suggest that there remains the one thing Obama cannot control: Gov. Paterson.

Herb Boyd writes for the New York Amsterdam News.

Donald Harris dies

Donald Morris Harris, 81, of Las Vegas passed away Friday, Dec. 19, 2008. He was born April 23, 1927, in New York City, and was a five-year resident of Nevada. He went to school in New York, where he earned an A.A. degree in law. Donald was retired from the New York City Police Department, Homicide Division, having achieved the rank of 2nd Detective Lieutenant, Homicide Division and served in the U.S. Army Infantry during World War II. Donald moved to Las Vegas with his wife in February 2003. He was a long standing member of Second Baptist Church in Las Vegas.



Donald Morris Harris

He is survived by his wife, Herlene Roberta Harris; brother, Richard (Jeannie) Harris; children, Lester, Morris (Saundra) and Yvette; grandkids, Taisha (Eric Mills), Erick, Jeffery Chapman (Marica) and Tanya (Horace Collette); great-grandkids, Daysha, Keaton, Micheal, Mikalt, Christian. Viewing will be held Friday, Dec. 26, 10-11 a.m., with service following at Second Baptist Church, 500 W. Madison Ave., Las Vegas.

paring her appeal to actress and singer Jennifer Lopez. "I don't know what Caroline Kennedy's qualifications are except that she has name recognition, but so does J.Lo," he said. "I wouldn't make J.Lo the senator unless she proved she had great qualifications, but we haven't seen them yet."

Rev. Al Sharpton, who along with a number of other prominent New Yorkers received notification from Kennedy about her intentions, has a different take on her quest.

"Since the possibility of Kennedy's candidacy for the Senate has, understandably, already generated a fair degree of debate and discussion," Sharpton said in a statement, "I feel compelled to state that I unequivocally disagree with those that say she is not qualified and could not bring needed leadership to this state and country. My

knowledge of her in the area of education, and on behalf of children generally, the fact that she has written several books, and her other civic involvement more than qualifies her to be senator. Kennedy is an accomplished author on constitutional law, the Bill of Rights, and political courage. She is also a lawyer." Sharpton said that "elected office is not the only area of public service that establishes leadership in this country. We just elected a community organizer as president of the United States."

Kennedy, 51, was selected by Barack Obama to help choose his vice presidential running mate after he won the Democratic primary.

And the space is not allocated here to list even a portion of the many organizations in which she has been instrumental in attracting funds, something that probably gives her an edge in a state facing more than a \$15 billion deficit. "True, she doesn't have much of a political portfolio," said State Sen. Bill Perkins, "but her name is magical, and she is undeniably qualified and a woman of substance. But in the end, I'm in support of

whatever the governor decides is good for him and our community."

Despite being possibly overshadowed by another celebrity/politician, New York's senior senator, Chuck Schumer, said he has talked to Kennedy but stopped short of saying anything else since, as he noted, there are 12 other potential candidates.

One of those is the state's attorney general, Andrew Cuomo, and a couple of weeks ago the polls showed him the odds-on choice, with more than 45 percent of those queried seeing him as the likely person to fill the vacancy that was once held by Caroline Kennedy's uncle

Bias claim hits mayor

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — A former mayoral aide says in a second discrimination claim that Kansas City, Mo., and its mayor have tried to destroy her reputation as retaliation for filing her original lawsuit.

Ruth Bates filed a lawsuit in June against the city, Mayor Mark Funkhouser and his wife that claimed Bates was paid less because of race and gender.

It also claimed Gloria Squitiro, who volunteered in her husband's office, made lewd comments and referring to Bates as "Mammy."

The new claim Bates filed recently with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission says Funkhouser issued statements and news releases that falsely questioned her motives, said her attorney, Lynne Bratcher.



REPORTING FOR DUTY
 U.S. President-elect Barack Obama embraces former Dallas Mayor Ron Kirk (C) as U.S. Rep. Hilda Solis looks on during a news conference in Chicago last week. Obama appointed Kirk as United States Trade Representative, Solis as Secretary of Labor, U.S. Rep. Ray LaHood as Secretary of Transportation, and Karen Mills as Administrator of the Small Business Administration. Obama is vacationing in Hawaii.



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