

# Sparks' Leslie calling it quits at end of year

EL SEGUNDO, Calif. (AP)—Three-time WNBA MVP and four-time Olympic gold medalist Lisa Leslie will call it quits after her upcoming 12th season with the Los Angeles Sparks.

The 36-year-old center announced her decision Wednesday, accompanied by her 19-month-old daughter and husband.

Leslie, a cornerstone of the league since its start in 1997, guided the Sparks to WNBA championships in 2001 and 2002.

"I'm not going to pull a (Michael) Jordan and come back in a year or two," she said. "For me, I feel good about where I am... I just know this is a good time. I can still help (the team). I don't want to be out there when I can't do it."

Leslie said she considered retiring last season when it became more difficult to balance her family life and her basketball career. She took the 2007 season off to give birth to her first child, Lauren, and returned last season. She is married to Michael Lockwood.

Her teammates and



WNBA superstar Lisa Leslie of the Los Angeles Sparks, here with her daughter, will retire at the end of the season.

Sparks coach Michael Cooper persuaded her to play one season so fans could give her a proper send-off.

"This year, I have another opportunity to put more than 100 percent into my job one last time," Leslie said. "It's really difficult balancing the team and family.

"I love being a wife, I enjoy my husband and our time. I love being a mom. I'm really passionate about raising a child and being there for her. For me, I just see it's re-

ally hard to give 100 percent to everything."

Since the WNBA began in 1997, Leslie has been one of the league's highest-profile and well-liked players.

"Not only do the Sparks (See Leslie, Page 11)

## Homicide

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tion." For Michigan, the study found that in 2006:

—There were 483 Black homicide victims, resulting in a homicide rate of 33.40 per 100,000. Of these, 416 were male and 67 female.

—For homicides in which the weapon used could be identified, 87 percent of Black victims (372 out of 428) were killed with guns. Of these, 39 percent (146 victims) were known to be killed with handguns.

There were 186 victims killed with firearms where the type of gun was not stated.

There were 27 victims killed with knives or other cutting instruments, 7 victims killed by bodily force, and 14 victims killed by a blunt object.

—For homicides involving Black victims for which the victim-to-offender relationship could be identified, 84 percent of Black victims (118 out of 141) were murdered by someone they knew. Twenty-three victims were killed by strangers.

—For homicides involving Black victims for which the circumstances could be identified, 87 percent (146 out of 167) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 62 percent (91 homicides) involved arguments between the victim and the offender.

Sugarmann added that cities across

America who are disproportionately affected by gun violence lack key tools for battling the crucial problem, particularly in Michigan.

"Most cities you find have tougher gun laws," Sugarmann said.

"Today's gun industry publications have turned into a paramilitary industry. The guns that are selling today are assault weapons and high capacity pistols. The Obama administration has expressed an interest in repellment, and recognizing that at least we know that mayors, advocates, citizens, survivors, will get a fair hearing — then we'll see some changes."

Sen. Hansen Clarke, D-Detroit, is convinced that the numbers won't change until children are given a better chance at education. "I think it's sad, but I believe that policy makers need to look at the underlying problems," Clarke said.

"The tension, hostility and anger that cause people to act out violently, I believe, is rooted in a feeling of hopelessness and that's something that a good sound education can (help prevent). And our young people now have the greatest role model in our U.S. president."

The Violence Policy Center is a national educational organization working to stop gun death and injury in America. For more information, visit [www.vpc.org](http://www.vpc.org).

Cornelius Fortune writes for the Michigan Chronicle.

## Book Review

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According to Daughters of Men, the answer might lie in a good father.

For what the 44 contributors to this touching collection of intimate memoirs had in common was the sage counsel and unwavering support of a strong dad. Thus, it only makes sense that each of the heartfelt entries in this beautifully photographed keepsake would invariably reflect the perspective of a daughter grateful for the father figure who helped forge her character during her formative years.

Credit the ostensibly very well connected Rachel Vassel for talking an enviable assemblage of rich, powerful and famous sisters into participating in the project. Many are household names, such as Beyonce and Solange Knowles, actresses Sanaa Lathan, Meagan Good, Nicole Ari Parker-Kodjoe and Aisha Tyler, entertainment magnates Cathy Hughes, Tracey Edmonds and Sheila Johnson, national TV news correspondents Deborah Roberts and Rene Syler and gospel great Yolanda Adams. Others, like *Amsterdam News* publisher Elinor Tatum and Harlem's Studio Museum curator Thelma Golden, have made equally impressive marks in their own right by rising to the top of their respective industries.

And exactly how were these accomplished women inspired by their dads? Typical in tone are the warm reflections of Ms. Golden, who fondly reminisces that "I was always interested in the arts, and my father was the first one to take me to see the Dance Theater of Harlem and Alvin Ailey." Adding that, "What he did for me, which was such a gift, was encourage my own ambitions by supporting them."

Thelma and her dad, Arthur, are artistically posed standing back-to-back in their accompanying portrait, while most of the other father-daughter pairs are shown simply hugging each other contentedly in pictures which say a thousand words. In the cases where a dad was unfortunately deceased, the subject was shot next to a photo of her dearly departed.

An illustrated album of testimonials which add up to proof positive that the sky's the limit for any African-American girl able to rely on the undying love of a father.

## Your Horoscope Says...Feb. 5-11

### ARIES

You and your honey have so much to talk about, listen! He or she is trying to come out of a whole new bag. Accept! Change is a good thing this week. Expect to travel soon. Savor the thought.

Soul Affirmation: What I've been waiting for has been here all along.  
Lucky Numbers: 16, 24, 35

### TAURUS

If nothing much is happening on the job, remember that chilling is good sometimes. Use this week to return phone calls and answer letters. Be low key. Wonderful things flow from what you don't do.

Soul Affirmation: All things work together for good.  
Lucky Numbers: 3, 6, 27

### GEMINI

You can turn that obstacle into an opportunity at work. Check out the players carefully. Watch your back and hold your tongue around workplace rivals. Aggressively seek agreement.

Soul Affirmation: The slowness of my week gives me time to refresh my energy.  
Lucky Numbers: 9, 17, 38

### CANCER

Don't let your outer space infringe on your inner peace. Control situations that might affect your ability to get that important job done. Remember people are only human.

Soul Affirmation: I find many things about myself that I really love.  
Lucky Numbers: 5, 9, 16

### LEO

Mail, e-mail, or telephone brings

news of a matter that demands more attention than you might think. Opportunity knocks at work this week. Tonight spend some quality time with your family.

Soul Affirmation: I keep in mind the practical side of life this week.  
Lucky Numbers: 7, 10, 30

### VIRGO

Listen well for the indications that money can be found in an unusual place. Social and romantic interest should be your focus this evening. Love comes from what you do not say.

Soul Affirmation: I let my mind go slack and tighten up my body  
Lucky Numbers: 20, 37, 38

### LIBRA

Some people may not "get" where you're coming from, but ask your family and significant other to give you time to explain your way of looking at life this week. Do it calmly and confidentially.

Soul Affirmation: I let go and let the spirit take control.  
Lucky Numbers: 45, 49, 54

### SCORPIO

Now's a better than usual time for self-reflection and meditation. Share your ideas. They're more valuable than you think. Appreciation comes from someone far away. You make the call.

Soul Affirmation: I admit what I really want out of life this week.  
Lucky Numbers: 27, 48, 52

### SAGITTARIUS

Listen carefully and follow good advice that will come from someone you've often regarded as foolish. You run into difficulties with one of your

projects; don't worry, it's only temporary. How you manage your mind will affect the eventual outcome.

Soul Affirmation: The deed is done. I must wait for the results to unfold. Lucky Numbers: 8, 10, 32

### CAPRICORN

If there is someone or something that you're avoiding don't panic if you find you must confront what you've been hiding from. Wait for things to work themselves out. Don't force the issue. Time solves more problems than you ever can.

Soul Affirmation: I seek connection with the best that is in me.  
Lucky Numbers: 6, 15, 17

### AQUARIUS

Be flexible. Yes, you. There are many ways to be right and your lover or friend will have come up with one that is different from yours. You'll be asked to compromise this week or you just have to give in. Remember you sometimes have to give a little to get a little.

Soul Affirmation: I see myself as a finisher rather than a starter this week. Lucky Numbers: 23, 28, 36

### PISCES

Use your natural magnetism to get to someone who might be hard to reach. If you have a problem that you need to get off your chest tell a relative or friend, don't hold it inside. Where's the party? Find it. You need a social setting to make the magnetism work best.

Soul Affirmation: I give thanks for the chance to give.  
Lucky Numbers: 41, 47, 52