

National NEWS



Mediator Bell

COLUMBUS, GA — Former Attorney General Griffin Bell, right, shakes hands with attorney Dennis Parker and other representatives of the NAACP prior to a closed meeting with the Muscogee County School Board in Columbus, Ga., Wednesday. Bell is mediator in desegregation talks between the NAACP and the school board. The White House also announced Wednesday that President Bush has hired Bell in the Iran-Contra affair.

Record Number Of Blacks

WASHINGTON, D.C. — President-elect Bill Clinton's 15-member cabinet will include four blacks, the largest number of African Americans to be named to the levels of government in U.S. history. Fulfilling a campaign promise to nominate a cabinet "which looks like America," Clinton selected five white males, four white females, three black men, one black woman and two Hispanic males to help him run the executive branch of government for the next four years. The blacks in the cabinet are Jesse Brown, 48, Veterans Affairs; Ronald Brown, 51, Commerce Department; Mike Espy, 39, Agriculture Department; and Hazel O'Leary, 55, Energy Department. None of the nominees is expected to have any trouble being confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

Marijuana O.K. For Medical Purposes

LITTLE ROCK, ARK. — President-elect Bill Clinton's appointee as U.S. Surgeon General says she will advocate the use of marijuana for medical purposes. According to Joycelyn Elders, currently the director of the Arkansas Health Department, "If the doctors feel marijuana would be beneficial to the patient it should be available." The 59-year-old black pediatrician pointed out that there is strong evidence marijuana can be of benefit to persons suffering from glaucoma, cancer and AIDS. The Elders' appointment could be delayed, however, because the term of current Surgeon General, Antonio Novello, does not end until March, 1994. But Clinton aides hint that Novello may be asked to resign so Elders can take the post this coming summer. Elders also favors distribution of condoms and contraceptives in high schools.

A Powerful Force In Congress

BALTIMORE, MD. — When the U.S. Congress convenes in January, one of its most powerful members could well be Maryland Representative Kweisi Mfume, the newly elected head of the Congressional Black Caucus. With a record 40 members, the caucus will be its strongest in history. And, since all the caucus members, except one, are democrats, the role Mfume may play with a democrat in the White House is viewed as being even greater. Mfume, from the 7th District in Baltimore, captured the chairmanship by beating off a challenge by Houston Representative Craig Washington. Mfume was first elected to Congress in 1986.

Supremacist Cleared For Third Trial

JACKSON, MS. — The Mississippi Supreme Court, in a contentious 4 to 3 vote, has cleared the way for avowed white supremacist Byron De La Beckwith to be tried a third time for the 1963 murder of civil rights leader Medgar Evers. Two previous all-white juries were unable to reach a verdict. Both earlier trials took place in 1964. Beckwith is now 72 and has argued that he should not stand trial because of his poor health. Prosecutors believe Beckwith shot Evers in the back because he was trying to register black voters. The Evers killing is often viewed as one of the turning points of the civil rights movement.

Blacks Win Political Lawsuit

CINCINNATI, OH. — U.S. District Judge Herman Weber has ruled in favor of a lawsuit filed by a group of African-American voters in Cincinnati. The lawsuit charged that Cincinnati's at-large system of electing members to the city council was discriminatory because it diluted black voting strength and made it harder for blacks to win election. Judge Weber agreed and gave the city until December 31 to submit a new election procedure.

Carol Braun Getting Married

CHICAGO, IL. — Chicago gossip columnists were busy with speculation recently that the first black woman elected to the U.S. Senate — Carol Mosley Braun — was vacationing in South Africa with her campaign manager, Kgosie Matthews. Senator-elect Braun and Matthews, who is from South Africa, have been romantically linked for some time.



Harlem's Mother Hale Dies

NEW YORK, NY. — The elderly New York woman who gained a national reputation for her efforts to save homeless and drug-addicted babies died recently of complications from a stroke. She was 87. Clara Hale, who began her efforts in 1963 with a single drug-addicted baby, went on to open a home that helped hundreds of babies. She was recognized nationally when former President Ronald Reagan labeled her "an American hero." Hale responded, "I am simply a person who loves children." Hale's Harlem Home has grown into a \$3.5 million a year operation.

Mortgage Lending: Fair Treatment

Herbert Wayne, a Wachovia senior vice-president and compliance manager of the Community Reinvestment Act, said they were concerned about the number of rejected minority applications.

He said they recently pulled a statistically valid sample of loans and found that they were turned down "due to flaws in the applications."

The Comptroller of the Cur-

rency, the federal agency that oversees banks, was also concerned, and surveyed a larger number of loan applications.

They found no evidence that the bank had discriminated against

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black loan applicants, Wayne said. Credit history and debt-to-income ratio are the primary reasons that black loan applications were denied, he said.

(Next week: Realtors Speak Out.)

New Year's Eve Party Was Fun

mony and uplifting song selections. They nearly "had church" right there in the coliseum education building.

Another crowd pleaser was blues singer Willie Lockett, who had no trouble in getting a crowd of 9,000 to jump to its feet and happily mimic his gyrations as if he were a lusty Pied Piper. Lockett and his band, Blues Krewe, hail from New Orleans and played a pulsating, heart-pumpkin version of the blues.

Janice Price, Walkertown's most talented, glamorous native, performed perennial jazz favorites.

The children's pavilion included a weightless simulator, moonwalk, a professional clown and a carousel.

STEP ONE, Winston-Salem's alcohol and drug abuse prevention and treatment facility, sponsors First Night, which is a franchise concept from a consortium in Boston. STEP ONE owns franchise rights for the Triad region.

Craig W. Ewing, event producer, proclaimed the visual art show a tremendous success.

"At 8:30, you couldn't get into an art booth, and some of the artwork had price tags over \$5000,"

he said.

Ewing credited the Jaycees with providing the backbone of the operation, including primary chair positions.

He will put out a call for participating artists in the next few months.

Ewing wants the production to become a national event, and hopes to attract a few big name groups such as Boyz 2 Men.

Next year he plans to invite 30 marching bands, urge participants to come in costume, and expand arts participation. December performances would be published in the First Night calendar and distributed the first of the month.

Bert Wood, president of STEP ONE, said First Night is one of several (drug-and alcohol-free) SAFE Initiative events, such as Project Graduation.

"This is an example of corporations, business and government leaders who have put their money where their mouth is," he said. "We can't just say we want a drug-free community."

We have to provide drug-free events. It's important that we change the tradition of drinking. We need to recognize that people

shouldn't go out and get plastered, and that families are important."

He said a national study

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showed that 74 percent of people stay home on New Year's Eve. "That's our market," he said.



The Bristow & Gwyn families enjoyed First Night. (L to R) Ronald Bristow Sr., Charles Gwyn Sr., (middle) Ronald Bristow Jr., Brenda Gwyn, Jana Bristow. (front row) Ashley Bristow and Asia Bristow.

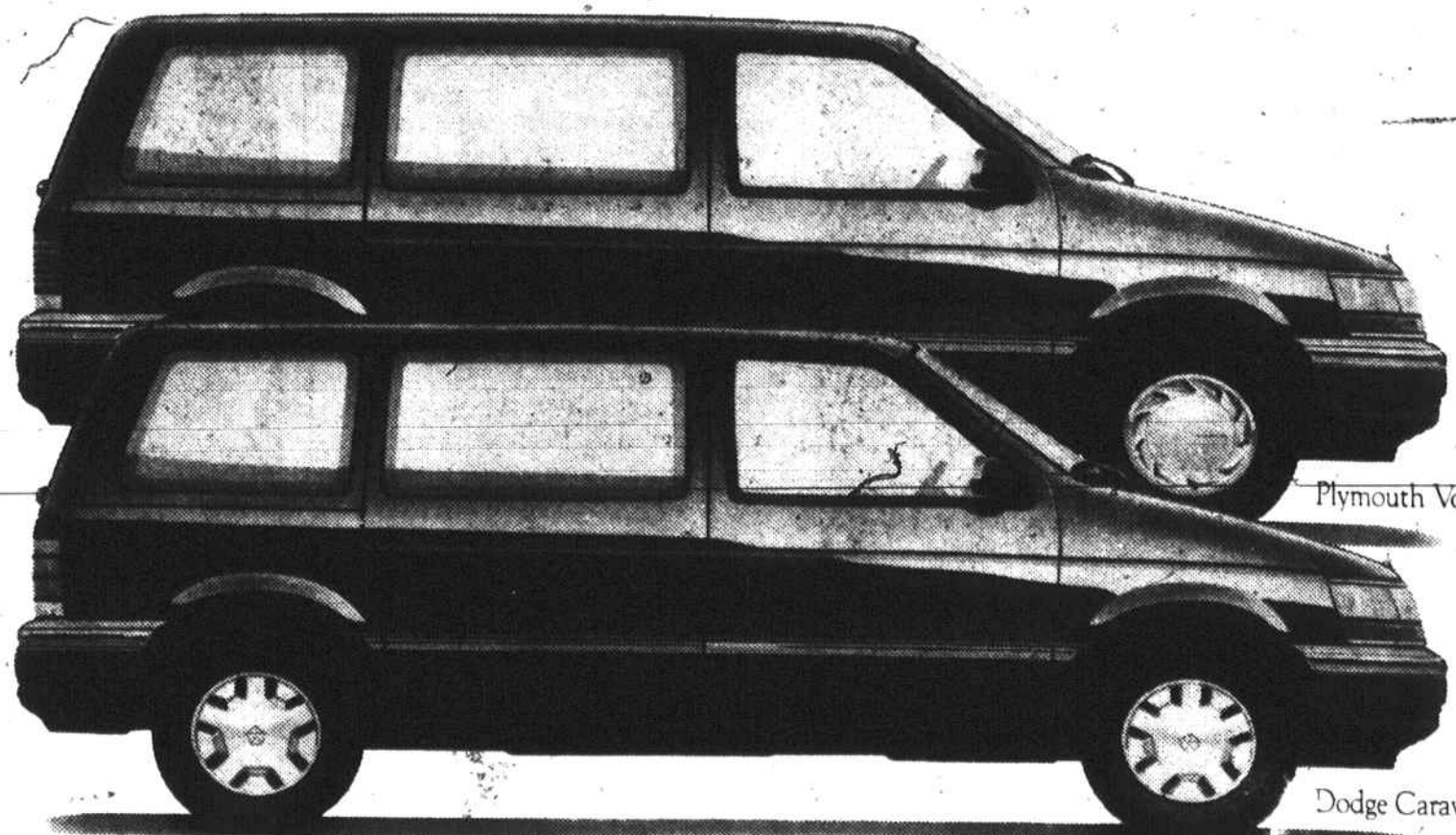
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minivan airbag! The first and only to offer integrated child seats. The first with front-wheel drive for car-like handling. And all these features are available on Dodge Caravan and Plymouth Voyager. And only from The Minivan Company. Now, isn't all that worth celebrating?

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