

Singer R. Kelly answers detractors in song released after abuse allegations

CHICAGO — Grammy winner R. Kelly, who's fighting criminal charges that he videotaped himself having sex with an underage girl, is singing a new song addressing the controversy.

The song, "Heaven, I Need A Hug," debuted this week on Chicago radio station WGCI-FM. In it, the R&B artist knocks his detractors and says he hopes to regain his fans' support.

"I've given 13 years of my life to this industry. Hit song or not, I've given all of me," Kelly sings. "You smile in my face and tell me you love me. But then before you know the truth you're so quick to judge me."

Kelly, 35, was indicted by a Cook County grand jury earlier this month on 21 counts of child pornography stemming from a videotape that allegedly shows the singer having sex with an underage girl.

Kelly has denied he is the man on the tape. His defense attorney, Edward Genson, has said the woman on the tape was not younger than 18 at the time of the video.

Marv Dyson, WGCI's president and general manager, said the record was delivered by Jive Records, Kelly's label. Dyson has been outspoken in his decision to keep playing Kelly's music until the singer, best known for his Grammy-winning song "I Believe I Can Fly," has had his case heard in court.

Calls to a Kelly spokeswoman were not returned Thursday.



Kelly

University Survey: 65 percent of black Alabamians favor slave reparations

MOBILE, Ala. — A new survey shows that 67 percent of black Alabamians favor the federal government paying reparations to slave descendants, while only 5 percent of white Alabamians agree.

The telephone survey was done for the Mobile Register by the University of South Alabama. Surveyors telephoned 418 adult residents of Alabama from Tuesday through Thursday. The margin of error is plus or minus 5 percentage points.

J.L. Chestnut, a black lawyer from Selma who is part of a legal team preparing to file reparations litigation, said slave reparations are justified because black people continue to be at an economic and educational disadvantage.

But Spyros Alvonellos, a 38-year-old white man who immigrated came to the United States from Greece as a boy, disagrees. He says people like him shouldn't be held responsible for what people did 200 years ago.

Congress' lone black Republican may retire, according to House speaker

WASHINGTON — House Speaker Dennis Hastert has announced that Rep. J.C. Watts, the only Black Republican in Congress, may retire.

Watts' Oklahoma district is undergoing redistricting because of population shifts, causing Oklahoma to lose a seat in Congress.

Watts, who is in his fourth term and ranks fourth in leadership, is chairman of the House Republican Conference.

"J.C. Watts is certainly somebody who I depend on," Hastert said. "He has a lot to offer this country, and I would hope that he stays engaged."

The legislature approved a new redistricting boundaries that will give Watts and other lawmakers a new district in which to seek possible re-election.

Watts is tight-lipped about his future but won't announce a decision until he returns to his home district. He said: "At this point, I don't know."

Congresswoman Tubbs Jones assists in Freedom Center funding

CINCINNATI — Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones joined First Lady Laura Bush and Muhammad Ali in celebrating the ground breaking of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati on June 17.

In her remarks to the thousands gathered for the event, Congresswoman Tubbs Jones praised the efforts of former U.S. Representative Louis Stokes and the members of the Congressional Black Caucus in helping to make the Freedom Center a national priority.

"The Freedom Center is not simply a local project. It's not just an Ohio project. The Freedom Center is seen by people throughout the nation as a national treasure," Rep. Tubbs Jones said. "The cooperation between Lou Stokes, the CBC and the Freedom Center makes good on the instruction of the simple but poignant hymn that tells us, 'Brighten the corner where you are. Someone far from harbor you may guide across the bar.'"

In addition to the First Lady and Ali, a host of dignitaries, including Andrew Young, Ohio Gov. Bob Taft and Congressman Rob Portman, participated in the groundbreaking ceremony.

When completed, the Freedom Center's \$110-million facility will feature three pavilions, celebrating courage, cooperation and perseverance. The center uses the Underground Railroad as a prism through which issues of freedom in American can be examined. The story of freedom is woven through the heroic legacy of the Underground Railroad and the American struggle to abolish human enslavement and secure freedom for all people.

"For Harriett Tubman was a conductor of faith, who did not stop building those railroad tracks until it stopped at a place called freedom," stated Rep. Tubbs Jones. "Today, I am pleased that we, as a nation, have taken the train from the underground and have placed on 'high ground' so that all Americans can receive the 'blessings of liberty.'"

The Chronicle (USPS 067-910) was established by Ernest H. Pitt and Nubisi Egemonye in 1974 and is published every Thursday by Winston-Salem Chronicle Publishing Co. Inc., 617 N. Liberty Street, Winston-Salem, NC 27101. Periodicals postage paid at Winston-Salem, N.C. Annual subscription price is \$30.72.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The Chronicle, P.O. Box 1636 Winston-Salem, NC 27102-1636

INDEX

OPINION.....	A6
SPORTS.....	B1
RELIGION.....	B5
CLASSIFIEDS.....	B10
HEALTH.....	C1
ENTERTAINMENT.....	C9
CALENDAR.....	C11

Long: drought, fireworks don't mix

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

RALEIGH — Extreme drought conditions across the state have fire officials on alert, and the approaching July 4 holiday adds a new reason to worry. Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal Jim Long reminds everyone of the dangers associated with fireworks and urges all North Carolinians to practice caution when celebrating this year.

"Each year when July rolls around, I start reminding folks that fireworks pose a hazard to life and limb even under the best of circumstances," Long said. "Anything that is lit and moves around is risky from a personal safety standpoint. But this year, with the terrific drought conditions all over North Carolina, there is a new risk — that of fire."

Long asks that all consumers play close attention to their surroundings when using fireworks and to make note of the types of pyrotechnics that are banned in the state. The law allows only a very limited list of items to be bought, sold or used in North Carolina. It is illegal to purchase banned fireworks in another state and bring them across state lines. These laws are in place to protect the consumer, but take on a new urgency with this year's heightened fire risks.

"The fireworks that are illegal for use in North Carolina are the same types that pose the most risk of starting fires in our drought-ravaged vegetation," Long said. "Anything that explodes, spins around or flies through the air is an extreme risk, not just for starting fires but also for human safety. If you must play with fire-

works, don't break the law - only use those approved for use in our state, and keep the risk to a minimum."

The types of fireworks permissible for use in North Carolina include sparklers, fountains and novelty fireworks that do not explode, such as "snap and pops" and "glow worms." Fireworks that are illegal include: firecrackers, ground spinners, roman candles, bottle rockets, mortars and any pyrotechnic that is intended to spin, leave the ground or fly through the air.

Should you choose to use legal fireworks at home, keep the following tips in mind:

- Fireworks are not toys and should only be handled by responsible adults. Even sparklers burn as hot as 1200 degrees and cause hundreds of injuries every year.
- Never point or throw fireworks at people, pets, cars or buildings.
- Always use fireworks outdoors on a paved surface, away from dry grass, wooded areas and dwellings. This is especially important this year, when grass, trees, shrubs and other vegetation are suffering from lack of rain.
- Never alter fireworks or attempt to make your own.
- Light one device at a time and move away from it quickly. Never approach fireworks that have not functioned or have "fizzled."
- Have a hose or bucket of water nearby in case of a fire emergency.
- Read and follow all directions before lighting fireworks. Do not buy any devices that lack instructions written in English.



This Fourth of July may be more hazardous than others because of the state's ongoing drought.

Retrial begins in N.Y. for ex-cop accused of torturing Abner Louima

BY TOM HAYS THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — The retrial of a former patrolman accused of holding down Abner Louima while another officer tortured him with a broken broomstick began Monday in a reopening of one of the city's most explosive police brutality cases.

"The man who held down Abner Louima down while he cried out in pain is sitting right here in this room — the defendant, Charles Schwarz," prosecutor Lauren Resnick said in opening statements.

The civil rights case "is not about the thousands of good cops who risk their lives every day," Resnick added. "It is about the torture of a human being at the hands of two New York City police officers."

Schwarz, 36, was convicted in 1998 of violating the Haitian immigrant's civil rights in the 1997 assault in a police station bathroom.

But earlier this year, a federal appeals court threw out Schwarz's conviction and ordered a new trial, saying that his lawyer did not defend him adequately and that the jury was tainted by news reports. Schwarz had been serving a 15-year prison sentence.

Defense attorney Ronald Fischetti told the federal jury in Brooklyn on Monday that his client was never in the bathroom.

"They arrested him and they won't admit they made a mistake," he said, pointing angrily at prosecutors. "That's why you're here." He asked the jury to "right a terrible wrong and do justice for Charles Schwarz."

The attack touched off angry protests and allegations of widespread abuse of minorities. Schwarz and five other officers were convicted, and Louima received \$8.7 million in a settlement with the city.

Former officer Justin Volpe took Louima into a bathroom and brutalized him after



Louima

Louima was arrested in a brawl outside a Brooklyn nightclub. Volpe thought Louima had punched him during the melee.

Louima suffered a torn rectum and bladder. Volpe is serving a 30-year sentence.

Louima, 35, has not been able to identify Schwarz by sight. But he has insisted his second assailant was the driver of the car that took him to the police station. And records show the driver was Schwarz, who said he was cleaning out a patrol car at the time.

Testifying Monday, Louima said the driver pulled down his pants before leading him in

handcuffs into the bathroom and forcing him to the floor, where he was beaten. When he screamed in pain, the driver put "his foot hard on my mouth and said, 'Shut up,'" he testified.

Louima said the driver held him by the handcuffs while "Mr. Volpe put something in my rectum." Volpe later told him that "if I ever talked to anyone he'd kill me and everyone in my family," he testified.

Louima, who was a security guard and a used-car dealer at the time of the attack, now lives in Miami with his wife and three children.

Union Baptist Church FIRST FRIDAY



Summer Praise Break

First Friday is held monthly and features national and local gospel groups, dynamic worship and Christian fellowship

July 5, 2002 at 8:00 pm

Gospel Jazz

Joe Robinson: All Gospel Featuring gospel group "Soul Out"

Outdoor Service, Bring lawn chairs, Picnic basket optional

August 2, 2002 at 8:00 pm

Gospel Comedy

Spend an evening with gospel comedian. Sister Cantaloupe! She'll give you a fresh perspective on living the Christian Life!

Union Baptist Church

Dr. Sir Walter Mack, Jr. - Pastor & Teacher

"A Church Determined to Live for Christ"

1200 North Trade Street • Winston-Salem, NC 27101

(336) 724-9305 • www.UnionBaptistWSNC.org

WWW wschronicle.com