

# News at a Glance

## Duke turns himself in to begin sentence

**BIG SPRING, Texas (AP)** — Former Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke turned himself in to a federal prison last week to begin serving a 15-month sentence for mail and tax fraud.

Duke, who was driven to the west Texas prison in a light-brown Jeep, did not appear to acknowledge about eight admirers outside who waved signs that read "Duke for President" and "Free David Duke."



Duke

"It's a nice day to meet the grand wizard," said Sarah Peterson, 17, of Big Spring.

Duke, a former Louisiana state representative who ran for governor and the U.S. Senate about a decade ago, did not speak with reporters at the prison but said in a telephone interview Monday that he was ready to meet the terms of a plea agreement finalized in December.

Duke pleaded guilty to falsely reporting a gross income of \$18,831 in 1998, rather than the actual \$65,034, and to bilking supporters. The mail fraud charge grew out of what prosecutors described as a scheme between 1993 and 1999 to swindle thousands of followers out of hundreds of thousands of dollars through a direct mail campaign.

Without the agreement, Duke could have faced a mail fraud charge for each piece of mail in the campaign, said his attorney, James McPherson.

After his sentencing last month, Duke denied swindling his supporters.

Prosecutors said Duke told supporters that he was in danger of losing his home and savings, but said he sold his home for a profit, held many investment accounts and gambled away much of his take at casinos in Mississippi, Las Vegas and the Bahamas.

Duke said he intends to be a model prisoner at the low-security Big Spring prison.

Duke will have two years of supervised release after he gets out of prison. His criminal record will prevent him from seeking office in Louisiana for 15 years.

## Rodney King suffers broken pelvis

**RIALTO, Calif. (AP)** — Rodney King, whose videotaped beating led to the deadly 1992 riots in Los Angeles, was hospitalized with a broken pelvis after he lost control of his SUV while weaving through traffic at 100 mph and crashed into a house, police said.

King, 39, was spotted April 13 by a police officer who said King was speeding and weaving through traffic in his 2003 Ford Expedition when he slammed into a utility pole, a chain-link fence and then the home, police said. No one in the home was injured.

Police said they suspect that King was intoxicated.

King was chased by police through the San Fernando Valley in 1991 and was captured on videotape being beaten by four white officers.

After their acquittal, riots broke out and lasted for four days, leaving 55 dead and more than 2,000 injured. The mayhem caused \$1 billion in property damage.

King later received a \$3.8 million settlement from the city of Los Angeles in 1994.

He was convicted of spousal abuse in 1999 in San Bernardino County and was sentenced to 90 days in jail and four years of probation.

King pleaded no contest to three counts of being under the influence of PCP and a count of indecent exposure in October 2001. A judge gave King a year in a drug treatment center even though a prosecutor argued King should spend a year in county jail.



King

## Moose appeals decision on book deal

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Montgomery County Police Chief Charles Moose filed an appeal last week of a county ethics panel decision barring him from writing a book about the Washington area sniper investigation, claiming the ruling violated his right to free speech.

With the appeal, Moose is mounting a constitutional challenge to the county's strict ethics law blocking employees from using the prestige of public office for personal gain.

"Chief Moose is writing a book," attorney Jamin Raskin said after the appeal was filed in Montgomery County Circuit Court. "This is a basic First Amendment right that all of us enjoy as Americans."

But the county ethics commission is only concerned about Moose profiting from the sniper investigation, said chairwoman Elizabeth Kellar. He can write and speak about the subject if he doesn't do it for a fee, she said.

Moose, a native of Lexington, became a minor celebrity during the three-week sniper manhunt last October as the public face of the massive task force. Many hailed him as a hero after the arrest of suspects John Allen Muhammad and Lee Boyd Malvo on Oct. 24.

But he ran into trouble when he signed a deal in January with Dutton Books to write an insider account of the sniper probe. Due out in the fall, Moose was to receive a reported \$100,000 advance for the book and consult on the movie already in production.

Moose, working with a professional writer, is seven chapters into the book. Raskin said because Moose is writing the book on his own time, it won't affect his public work as police chief and shouldn't be subject to the county's law.

The county will likely file a response to Moose's appeal within the next 30 days, the county attorney said.

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# Mother of accused soldier fears for son

BY ASKIA MUHAMMAD  
THE FINAL CALL

**WASHINGTON (NNPA)** — A Muslim soldier from the 101st Airborne Division has been charged with murder in a grenade attack on Army officers four days after the U.S. invasion of Iraq that killed two U.S. servicemen in Kuwait, officials at Ft. Campbell, Ky., have announced.

Sgt. Asan K. Akbar, 32, was officially charged on March 25

**'My son was framed.'**

— Quran Bilal

with two counts of premeditated murder and 17 counts of attempted murder along with other charges under military law. He was transferred from Kuwait to a military detention center in Mannheim, Germany, immediately after the attack, then to an undisclosed military location in this country on March 28.

If convicted, Akbar could face the death penalty, according to military law experts quoted in published reports.

His mother, however, insists that he is innocent.

"No, I don't think he would do anything against his country or his fellow servicemen," said Quran Bilal, Akbar's mother, in an exclusive telephone interview with The Final Call. "He didn't do that. He didn't do anything like that. My belief? I believe he was framed."

Bilal had not spoken with



KRT Photo by Chuck Kennedy

The USAF Honor Guard carries the casket containing the body of USAF Maj. Gregory L. Stone before a funeral service at Arlington National Cemetery April 17. Stone was killed by injuries received in Kuwait after a grenade attack March 23, an attack allegedly carried out by fellow serviceman Asan Akbar.

her son and did not know his location at Final Call press time. But she was visited by FBI agents and told not to grant any interviews with the news media. Los Angeles Imam Abdul Karim Hasan, the family's spiritual adviser, said in a broadcast interview.

"He said, 'Mom, nobody in my platoon likes me.' And I said, 'Well, they don't have to like you. Just go ahead and teach them,'" Bilal continued. "He had his own squad, you know.

And he was saying that nobody really liked him, and that was basically because he was a Muslim. That's what he told me."

Bilal has been reluctant to tell her story publicly because of her concerns about how white, non-Muslim reporters might distort her comments. "They print stuff up and twist it around and everything, you know," she said.

She is also concerned about what appears to her to be lax security at the base, and the fact that her son appears to be the

only one who was ever a suspect in the crime.

"I'm just wondering how in the world did he throw grenades at three tents, and then sit up there and shoot" at those who came out of the tents when the grenades exploded. I'm saying, where was the guards at?"

Officials are still investigating the attack, which killed Army Capt. Christopher Scott Seifert, 27, of Easton, Pa., and Air Force Maj. Gregory Stone.

See Akbar on A10

# College presses on, despite losing leader

BY CYNTHIA POST  
THE ATLANTA DAILY WORLD

**ATLANTA (NNPA)** — Despite the surprise resignation of Morris Brown College President Charles E. Taylor last week, supporters said they remain committed to the future of the historically black college.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools removed the accreditation of Morris Brown College (MBC) on April 7. A spokesman for the college said Taylor resigned after a daylong meeting with the board of trustees.

Leroy Frazier, a chemistry professor for 17 years at Morris Brown, was named acting president. Frazier, the college's SACS compliance officer, was already leading the school's drive for re-accreditation.

According to Bishop Frank C. Cummings, chair of the MBC board, a search committee will look for a new president.

"The board's priority for the remainder of the year is to work toward reinstatement of Morris Brown's accreditation. We plan to reapply for membership in SACS in the very near future," Cummings said.

SACS initially revoked the college's accreditation last December because of ongoing problems with financial aid, record keeping and institutional effectiveness.

In response, Morris Brown raised more than half of the \$10 million short-term debt that it owes, maintained current notes on the long-term debt and restructured its board of trustees to recruit business and corporate leaders, including two bank presidents. Many internal protocols have been improved and systems of accountability are being reviewed and strengthened. Only one institution, Texas College in Tyler, Texas, has successfully appealed a SACS decision in recent years. Still another college, Knoxville College in Knoxville, Tenn., chooses to operate without accreditation.

According to Morris Brown officials, the college continues to plan for the fall 2003 semester.

Just last week, Taylor said, "We will continue to improve; we will continue to raise funds; we will continue to meet the needs of our students and all standards for accreditation as we engage the process for re-accreditation."

Neither Morris Brown's loss of accreditation nor Taylor's resignation means "the end of the institution," said Atlanta City Council member Derrick Boazman, who is a Morris Brown graduate.

"Morris Brown is greater than one individual or group of individuals. His decision was a prayerful one," Boazman said. "You can't force a man to be somewhere he doesn't want to be. We have to

move forward."

Taylor's decision does not change anything, Boazman said. "It does provide an opportunity to find a new leader and new direction. All is not lost."

The college's situation speaks to a larger issue facing historically black colleges and universities, he said. "They need to be academically proficient, financially sol-

See Morris Brown on A4



Taylor

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