

News at a Glance

Rosa Parks to be inducted into Alabama Women's Hall of Fame

MARION, Ala. (AP) — Rosa Parks, the black seamstress who helped launch the civil rights movement by refusing to give up her seat to a white man on a bus in Alabama's capital, will be inducted this year into the state Women's Hall of Fame.

This is the first year that Parks, who died in October 2005 in Detroit at age 92, is eligible; women must be dead for at least two years before being considered. She will be this year's sole inductee.

"Rosa Parks was a woman of silent dignity and grace whose life changed the state, the nation and the world," said Valerie Pope Burnes, director of the Hall of Fame.

Parks was arrested Dec. 1, 1955, for refusing to give up her seat on a Montgomery city bus. Her arrest prompted blacks to boycott the city's bus system and led to a Supreme Court decision ending segregation in public transportation.

The Montgomery bus boycott was led by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., then a relatively unknown young minister. The boycott catapulted him to a leadership role in the civil rights movement.



Parks

State, fraternal group start probe on club's policy toward blacks

CLARKSBURG, W.Va. (AP) — West Virginia's Human Rights Commission and the international leadership of the Fraternal Order of Eagles will investigate allegations that a man was recently asked to leave a local aerie because he's black.

Gov. Joe Manchin requested the state investigation after becoming disturbed by reports that the unidentified man was asked to leave the Fraternal Order of Eagles aerie in Clarksburg recently.

The chairman of the nonprofit international organization said the group has contacted the Human Rights Commission and agreed to assist in the investigation.

"Our goal is to find the facts and take appropriate action after our internal investigation," Bill Loffer said in a prepared statement.

Two of the Clarksburg fraternal club's officers say the incident has been blown out of proportion and is overshadowing the good work the Eagles do.

The club's admittance policy "has nothing to do with black, white or Mexican," Tom Stalnaker, the Clarksburg aerie's president said. The policy is to admit only members or guests signed in by members.

The group that was asked to leave the club were not members and were not registered guests of a member, he said.

But club member Paul Moses and fellow Clarksburg resident Jonathan Miller and Miller's friend said they went to the club for karaoke night. Moses said he was asked to tell Miller's friend to leave because the club doesn't admit blacks.

National Urban League wants more help added to proposed stimulus package

NEW YORK, N.Y. — National Urban League President and CEO Marc H. Morial last week called for a more comprehensive economic stimulus package that incorporates an unemployment benefits extension, increased food stamps and reinstatement of the youth summer jobs program. Morial's ideas go beyond the \$150-billion economic stimulus compromise forged last week by President George W. Bush and U.S. House leaders.

"Every little bit helps, especially in lean times when a few hundred dollars can ease the strain of living paycheck to paycheck like so many African-Americans do," observed Morial. "That may help in the very short-term but what will happen after Election Day? That is the question our leaders must address. In crafting their stimulus pact, they ignored tried-and-true strategies that have been used in past recessions with much bigger bang for the buck than what they are considering now."

According to a recent analysis by Moody.com Chief Economist Mark Zandi, the proposed tax rebates are expected to generate \$1.26 for every \$1 of cost. By contrast, the extension of unemployment insurance and increased food stamp payments would generate an estimated \$1.64 and \$1.73 in near-term GDP, respectively, per \$1 cost.

"A few hundred dollars isn't likely to give a low-income unemployed American the kind of boost that an extra six months to find a new job will," Morial said.

Man accused of driving past Jena activists dangling nooses charged

ALEXANDRIA, Louisiana (AP) — A white man accused of driving past a group of black civil rights activists with two nooses dangling from the back of his pickup truck has been indicted on federal hate crime and conspiracy charges, federal prosecutors said.

Jeremiah Munsen, 18, was arrested in September after driving past a crowd of people who had attended a civil rights march in Jena, about 40 miles (64 kilometers) northeast of Alexandria, police have said. The Jena march drew an estimated 20,000 protesters, and many stayed in the towns and cities surrounding the tiny town, including Alexandria.

The indictment accuses Munsen of conspiring to threaten and intimidate the marchers and with having committed a federal hate crime.

"It is a violation of federal law to intimidate, oppress, injure or threaten people because of their race and because those people are exercising and enjoying rights guaranteed and protected by the laws and Constitution of the United States," Donald W. Washington, the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Louisiana, said last Thursday.

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THE WOMAN BESIDE THE MAN

Michelle Obama says she will be a different kind of First Lady

BY ZENITHA PRINCE
AFRO-AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS

WASHINGTON — Michelle Obama said when she's in the White House, she will not be your typical first lady.

No dainty airs, reserve or a sense of noblesse oblige with her. No scripted speeches overrun with rhetoric designed to deify her spouse.

Instead, she gets personal, dirty socks personal, in a way that says that the potential president and first lady of the United States are still, at heart, simply Barack and Michelle.

"I can give people a perspective into Barack's character like no other person can, I mean, I'm married to the guy," she said in an interview with the AFRO. "I know his strengths and weaknesses but I can also speak to his character."

It is that character, along with an impressive resume that includes a law degree from Harvard, practicing as a civil rights attorney, community advocacy and a scandal-free stint in the Illinois Senate that has elevated the Illinois senator to stardom among many voters.

But his wife's background is equally impressive — Princeton and Harvard graduate, Harvard law degree, corporate lawyer, Chicago's assistant commissioner for planning and development, executive director of a group



Michelle Obama campaigns in South Carolina.

that grooms community leaders and vice president at the University of Chicago.

It's a profile far from the traditional first lady mold, a fact that has bothered some, but it is one with which many women voters can identify, Obama said.

"I don't think in this modern society that the first lady role would be traditional because women like me are already breaking the mold," she said. "The fact that I'm a vice president of a company has thrown people off. The fact that I have a career and a spouse, that I am a great speaker in my own right,

some would say compelling, sends people in a tizzy at some level. But that's who women are."

The challenges that most women face, "struggling and juggling" resources and maintaining a healthy work-family balance, are those that she has battled with, she said.

And it was those challenges, more so than any fears about possible assassination attempts against her husband, that made her reticent about his pursuing the presidency.

"To the extent that there was any hesitation, it was based on the fact that this was a huge sacrifice for us as a

family," Obama said.

"I thought more about my girls and how do we make sure their lives are whole, that they're still focused on school, that their lives don't get consumed in this campaign, that they feel loved and get the attention that they need, that we don't miss their activities."

I worried about finances, making sure that we paid the mortgage. Those were the thoughts that went through my head."

Obama's openness about these and other issues have

See Obama on A12

50 people protest MLK Day in Jena

BY MARY FOSTER
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JENA, La. — A crowd mostly made up of members of the media listened as four white separatists demanded white rights, severe prosecution of six black teens accused of beating a white school mate and an end to the Martin Luther King holiday.



Barrett

But the speeches didn't last long.

The "Jena Justice Day" planned on MLK Day by the white supremacist Nationalist Movement ended about two hours earlier than organizers had planned, with most participants leaving long before that.

Still, Richard Barrett, a Nationalist spokesman, declared the day a success. He noted the group was successful earlier in having set aside the city's demand that it put up \$10,000 to hold its rally and that it had collected about a dozen signatures to end the city's newly established interracial committee.

"We backed down the mayor, backed the committee down," he said. "So the chances are good we'll back the Jena Six down and Martin Luther King Day down as well."

The group opposes support of the so-called Jena Six — the six black teens whose case in September sparked one of the largest civil rights demonstrations in recent years — and a holiday for King, the slain civil rights leader.

About 50 white supremacists showed up, with 27 marching to the high school and back before the speeches began.

About 100 counter-demonstrators turned out briefly to wave signs and shout slogans before marching away.

Chants of "No KKK!" from the mostly college-aged counter-demonstrators were met with a chant from the separatists that contained a racial epithet.

Several demonstrators reportedly showed up with guns. But there was just one arrest reported during the day — that of a man authorities identified as William Winchester Jr. of New Orleans and a member of the New Black Panthers.

The arrest came after dozens of state police, at one point, forced back 10 people, dressed in New Black Panther uniforms who had gathered around a podium where Barrett was to speak. The man identified as Winchester broke away from that group and was booked with battery of a police officer and resist-

ing arrest. Members of the New Black Panthers at the scene declined to comment.

Nearly all the demonstrators and the counter-demonstrators appeared to be from outside of Jena.

John N. Hill, Jr., 58, of Monroe, La., said he felt compelled to come denounce the white separatists.

"Nobody fears these people anymore," said Hill, who is

black. "If you confront evil you can stop it. If you don't confront it, it grows like weeds."

Race relations in Jena, with a population of about 2,800, have been in the news since the arrest of the black students accused of "beating the white teen in December 2006.

About 20,000 people peacefully marched in support of the Jena Six in September.

Five of the black teens were

charged with attempted murder, leading to accusations that they were being prosecuted harshly because of their race. Charges have since been reduced.

"I think people here are tired of all of this," said LaSalle Parish sheriff-elect Scott Franklin. "And it's a shame for this to happen on this day especially. But hopefully this will be the end of it. Both sides have had their say now."



The Winston-Salem Symphony and the Secret Artists Series of Wake Forest University PRESENT AN EVENING WITH EVELYN GLENNIE

ROBERT MOODY, Music Director

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