

News at a Glance

Forgotten heroine gets day in her honor

WASHINGTON, D.C. (BlackNews.com) - Mayor Adrian Fenty proclaimed Aug. 25 "Henrietta Vinton Davis Day" in the nation's capital.



Davis

Davis was the first African-American to work at the DC Recorder of Deeds Office beginning in 1878, before Frederick Douglass. The proclamation also recognizes Davis' significance as a cultural icon. She made her debut in her career as an actor, elocutionist, dramatic reader and impressionist in Washington on April 25, 1883. She also had great success as a public speaker. During 1919, a year remembered for its "Red Summer," she became a leader of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League and its "African Redemption" movement headed by Marcus Garvey.

First black commercial airline pilot honored by his peers

FORT WORTH, Texas (BlackNews.com) - American Airlines recently served as the title sponsor of the Organization of Black Airline Pilots (OBAP) 32nd Annual Convention, where retired Captain Dave Harris was honored for being the first African-American to fly for a commercial airline. Harris, 73, retired from American Airlines in 1994 after more than 30 years of service.

After rejections from several other major airlines at the time, Harris wanted to avoid any misunderstanding down the road. Following his interview with American, Harris recalls, "I felt compelled to tell [the interviewer] I was black." The chief pilot who conducted the interview responded, "This is American Airlines and we don't care if you're black, white or chartrouse, we only want to know, can you fly the plane?"

Harris began training with American Airlines on Dec. 3, 1964, preparing to pilot the airline's DC-6 aircraft.

American Airlines today has one of the most diverse flight crew rosters in the industry. American and its regional affiliate American Eagle Airlines together employ 163 African-American pilots.

Founded in 1976, the Organization of Black Airline Pilots, Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing the number of African Americans and women employed in the aerospace industry. Headquartered in Silver Spring, Md., the mission of OBAP is to prepare young people to realize a successful future in the aerospace industry through educational opportunities, mentoring, and aerospace projects.

For more information on OBAP, visit www.obap.org.



Capt. Harris

City to be sued for slain father, sons

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) - The city of San Francisco is partially responsible for the fatal shooting of a father and his two sons by a gang member who was shielded from deportation by the city's "extreme" immigration sanctuary policy, the slain family's attorney said in a claim filed last Friday.

Tony Bologna, 48, and his two sons, 20-year-old Michael and 16-year-old Matthew, were gunned down at an intersection in June. Police arrested Edwin Ramos, a native of El Salvador, who they say mistook the Bolognas for rival gang members.

Ramos has been charged with three counts of murder and is awaiting trial. He has pleaded not guilty.

The claim states that the city knew Ramos was a member of Mara Salvatrucha, or MS-13, with a violent past, but failed to report him as required by federal law to Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials.

The claim alleges the city knew Ramos "would likely murder men simply because they appeared to be Latino or African American."

Ramos, 21, had been arrested as a juvenile for assault and attempted robbery, but was not deported because the city's juvenile justice system did not report him to federal immigration officials.

Matt Dorsey, a spokesman for City Attorney Dennis Herrera, said the office had not yet reviewed the claim, so he would not comment.

Johnson to build resort in Liberia

(NNPA/GIN) - Liberia will be home to a four-star, luxury beachfront resort, in capital city Monrovia, built by Black Entertainment Television founder-turned-billionaire developer Bob Johnson.

Johnson hopes this project, scheduled to open in March 2009, will help improve the country's global image.

RLJ Kendeja Resorts & Villas will be an \$8 million, 85-room resort with restaurant, tennis courts, a spa, health club and pool. Security measures include infrared motion detectors and bulletproof glass. Rates will be in the \$150-\$200 range and Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is expected to host the first guests.

Also eyeing Liberia's development, Illinois Rep. Jesse L. Jackson, Jr. is proposing legislation earmarking \$225 million for a five year "Liberia Seeds Act."

The funds would provide critical assistance to Liberia in a couple of areas, particularly in post-conflict resolution and infrastructure such as roads and bridges.

The funds also help ex-combatants and war affected youth, most of whom are unemployed and lack skills.

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BET Photo

Kanye West, left, with Jay-Z at the recent BET Awards Show.

Hip-hop artists pitching in to benefit Negro Leagues museum

BY BILL DRAPER
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. - A museum dedicated to a baseball league that few thought would last is getting a boost from a musical genre that was expected to have a similarly short existence.

Some of the top names in hip-hop -

Kanye West, Akon and T-Pain among them - are performing on a compilation CD being released in October to benefit the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City.

"There are some very stark parallels between hip-hop and the Negro Leagues," said Bob Kendrick, spokesman for the Kansas City museum.

"Neither one was expected to survive. But here we are, how many years later, and it's one of the most influential types of music out there."

"Nobody gave the Negro Leagues a chance, but it lasted 40 years."

The CD, titled "True to the Game," is scheduled to be released Oct. 21. It's the

See CD on A13

Eight million blacks still not registered to vote

BY HAZEL TRICE EDNEY
NNPA EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

WASHINGTON - Despite record numbers of voters who turned out during the presidential primaries last spring, eight million African-Americans are still not registered to vote.

This according to Rick Wade, African-American vote director for the Obama for America presidential campaign.

"Our principle focus has been a 50-state voter registration initiative. I think we all appreciate that if we increase the number of African-American registered voters and then increase turnout and get people to the polls on Nov. 4, then Sen. Obama will be the next president of the United States," Wade says.

Wade explains that the eight million unregistered Black voters accounts for 32 percent of eligible Black voting population nationwide.

"In 2004, African-Americans made up approximately 11 percent of the overall voters nationwide. If the percentage of African-Americans was a mere two-and-a-half percent higher at 13-and-a-half percent, Democrats would currently be running for re-election at this time," he said. "For example, in the state of Ohio in 2004, we lost by two percent or 100,000 votes. There were 270,000 unregistered African-Americans. I use that as an illustration to show how the African-American vote can make the difference in a state and across this country. So the African-American vote can absolutely make the difference in this election."

But, the Democrats are not alone in going after the Black vote. Republicans, who barely get a tenth of Black voters in presidential elections, say they are not giving up.

"The [Republican National Convention] is working to turn out voters of all races to support Sen. John McCain and all of our Republican candidates, by focusing on using a strong grassroots program that relies on neighbor to neighbor interactions, putting out surrogates on a daily basis, and registering and mobilizing voters," says RNC spokesman Sean Conner.

As both parties prepare for grassroots mobilization efforts at their back to back conventions (Democrats, last week of August and Republican, first week of September), non-partisan groups have intensified their efforts with grassroots campaigns year round.

Melanie Campbell, executive director of the non-partisan National Coalition on Black Civic Participation, says because of the intensity

of voter registration efforts, there's a great possibility to take voter registration to a whole new level, particularly in the Black community, by intensifying voter education and focusing on issues.

"The potential is that you will create a whole new expanded electorate. It's something that we've been trying to

drive the turn-out, and that's going to be across all demographics." Campbell says. "Because traditionally, there's been about 15 million people not voting in the general election. So, this has potential for that number to go down tremendously...If the trend continues, because it's so competitive, it's going to drive the turn-out, and that's going to be across all demographics."



Campbell

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The intensity of the current election and get-out-to-vote efforts have caught fire from coast to coast and doesn't begin and end with the presidential election.

"There's elections from the school board to the presidency that impact your life," Campbell says. "We know the presidency is a big deal. But, it is one of many elections that's taking place on Nov. 4."

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