

News at a glance

National NAACP names civic engagement leader

BALTIMORE (NNPA) – Fulfilling a promise to prioritize voter empowerment among his first initiatives, new NAACP President and CEO Benjamin Todd Jealous, who began his tenure this week, has named among his first appointees voter registration activist Kirk Clay.

Clay, the NAACP's new national civic engagement director, will focus on mobilizing citizens to register and vote; and also ensuring equal justice for citizens and full participation in the democratic process.

Jealous said during his first press interviews in May that he was already mapping a strategy to maximize Black voter participation and issues in the general election Nov. 4.

The NAACP Civic Engagement Department's goal is to increase African-American participation in the democratic process by removing roadblocks and disincentives to voting. Its target areas include the voter empowerment, constitutional rights, redistricting and census statistics; and ballot initiatives that address social justice issues.

Clay's background in civic participation, social justice and community organizing spans more than two decades, according to a statement released by the NAACP.

Prior to joining the NAACP, Clay was the national field director for Power PAC, a new non-partisan membership organization dedicated to holding elected officials accountable to their constituents.

"I am proud to represent the NAACP during this historic moment," says Clay, in a release. "One of my priorities will be to ensure that every eligible American who wants to vote can, and that every vote is counted."



Clay

State finds that new HIV infections high among South Carolina blacks

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) – New estimates of HIV cases in South Carolina shows the infection rate among blacks is higher than for all other races combined.

The estimates released last week by state Department of Health and Environmental Control also show that men are infected at nearly twice the rate of women.

The estimates come from an analysis of repeat blood tests and testing history from people who initially were diagnosed in 2006. Before the state could only count the number of cases detected not track the true number of new infections.

The number of cases detected has declined steadily over the past several years.

DHEC estimates there were 990 new cases in 2006, while the number of people diagnosed that year was 777.



Wake County Dems Photo

The Order of the Long Leaf Pine is presented to Betty Ann Knudsen.

Democrats honor trailblazer Knudsen

RALEIGH – Wake County Democratic Men paid tribute to the Honorable Betty Ann Knudsen at a sold-out dinner at the Clarion Hotel in Raleigh on Monday, Sept. 8.

Knudsen – the first woman chair of the Wake County Board of Commissioners – will celebrate her 82nd birthday in October. She was called an inspiration to a generation of women in politics and a fearless advocate for progressive causes.

Rep. Jennifer Weiss (D-Wake) credited Knudsen as a role model and mentor to her and so many women candidates and elected officials in Wake County and beyond.

"Betty Ann is rich; rich in character. And, if she had a dime for every phone call she made on behalf of candidates, she could bail out Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae," quipped Rep. Weiss.

Several colleagues and friends came to the microphone to tell stories about Betty Ann. Recurring themes were her political savvy, her kindness, and the long hours and hard work she has put in for candidates over the decades.

Personal letters were read from Lt. Governor Bev Perdue and Democratic Presidential candidate Barack Obama. Perhaps the highlight of the evening was the presentation of The Order of the Long Leaf Pine, which is the highest honor to a citizen that the Governor may bestow.

Hearing postponed in Obama 'plot'

DENVER (AP) – A man who sparked fears of an assassination plot against presidential contender Barack Obama missed a federal court hearing on a drug charge Friday because he's in the Denver jail on another case.

Tharin Gartrell was to be arraigned last Friday. The hearing has been rescheduled for Sept. 19.

Details of the Denver case against him weren't immediately available.

Gartrell was stopped for a traffic violation in suburban Aurora the day before the Democratic Party convention in Denver. That led police to a witness who said Gartrell and two others talked about killing Obama because he's black.

Prosecutors didn't charge them with threatening Obama, saying they were high on methamphetamine at the time and posed no credible threat. Gartrell faces up to two years in prison if convicted on the drug charge.

Book: Davis' legacy taking a beating

BY MICHAEL RUBINKAM
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EAST STROUDSBURG, Pa. – For all the grief that Sammy Davis Jr. took in life – remember the uproar over his embrace of Richard Nixon? – he's getting it even worse in death.

Eighteen years after the legendary entertainer succumbed to throat cancer at age 64, his estate is in tatters, burdened by debt and infighting among family members and business associates. Despite recording hundreds of songs, starring in dozens of movies and TV shows, and giving countless live performances, his posthumous earning power is dwarfed by the likes of Elvis Presley and fellow Rat Packer Frank Sinatra.

"This is one of the most dysfunctional situations, and they still can't get it together," says Albert "Sonny" Murray Jr., who should know.

Murray, a lawyer based in the Poconos, was hired by Davis's widow to resolve his staggering \$7 million IRS tax debt and restore the legacy of one of the 20th century's greatest showmen.

His Herculean efforts, stretched out over seven years, are chronicled in

"Deconstructing Sammy: Music, Money, Madness, and the Mob," a book by journalist and author Matt Birkbeck, expected out this week that reveals Murray as a man of stubborn tenacity – and Davis as one of extraordinary complexity.

Here's Davis the showbiz legend: a consummate performer who got his start in vaudeville, a triple threat of singing, acting and dancing, a charter member of the high-flying, hard-partying Rat Pack.

Here's Davis the civil rights campaigner: a man who endured horrid acts of racism while serving with the Army's first integrated unit during World War II, and who later marched with Martin Luther King Jr. and used his fame to try to heal racial divisions.

And here's Davis the flawed family man: an absentee father, abusive husband, drug-addled hedonist, and bad businessman who surrounded himself with people who didn't always have his best interests at heart.

"I think everyone, for the most part, thought he was nothing more than a caricature, a guy who was always laughing, happy and up," says Birkbeck, 49. "I was really shocked at how his life behind

the scenes was falling apart over the last 15 or 20 years."

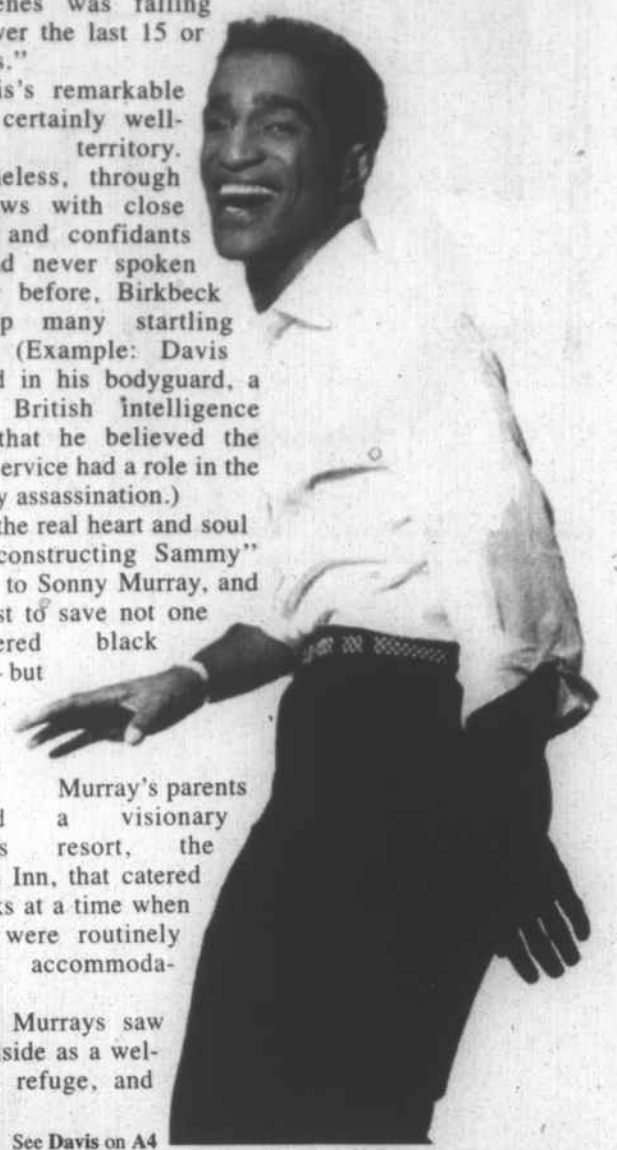
Davis' remarkable life is certainly well-trodden territory. Nevertheless, through interviews with close friends and confidants who had never spoken publicly before, Birkbeck digs up many startling details. (Example: Davis confided in his bodyguard, a former British intelligence agent, that he believed the Secret Service had a role in the Kennedy assassination.)

But the real heart and soul of "Deconstructing Sammy" belongs to Sonny Murray, and his quest to save not one endangered black legacy – but two.

In 1954, Murray's parents founded a visionary Poconos resort, the Hillside Inn, that catered to blacks at a time when blacks were routinely denied accommodations.

The Murrays saw the Hillside as a welcoming refuge, and

See Davis on A4



Warith Deen Mohammed passes away

BY YUSUF SIMMONDS
LOS ANGELES SENTINEL

LOS ANGELES (NNPA) – He turned the Nation of Islam towards the East and incorporated the fundamentals of Orthodox Islam to his followers.

Imam Warith Deen Mohammed, the spiritual leader of the American Muslim Community, and the son of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and Sister Clara Muhammad, died on Sept. 9. He was 74. He assumed the leadership of the Nation of



Imam Mohammed

Islam (Nation) in 1975 and began dismantling the Nation bringing it closer to traditional "Orthodox" Islam. He rejected his father's teachings and eventually changed the name of the followers to Bilalian and the "Muhammad Speaks" newspaper to "Bilalian News." Ministers became Imams and mosques became masjids.

In deconstructing the Nation, Mohammed seemed more focused on religion and spirituality than the rigidity that some of the Muslims considered as a way of life. He

disbanded the Fruit of Islam (FOI) and allowed the Muslims to choose their dress-wear as long as they maintained a modicum of modesty.

In the larger society, Mohammed reached out to other religions and sought to be inclusive rather than exclusive.

He was reportedly fluent in the Arabic language and well versed in the Holy Qu'ran, the Holy Book of the Muslim Scriptures. Mohammed's shift towards

See Mohammed on A4

In a time of uncertainty, we offer stability.

SunTrust has always been committed to bringing you sound strategies to meet your financial needs, helping you find the right solutions for any market condition. Now more than ever, you need ways to make your money grow but still have access to your funds. Consider these options that provide the guaranteed returns you want, with the flexibility you need.

4.30% APY

25-Month CD and CD IRA

Offers a guaranteed return at a competitive rate of interest for deposits of \$2,000 or greater.

3.30% APY

30-Month No-Penalty CD and CD IRA

Provides a guaranteed return with the option to withdraw some or all of your funds one time during the term without penalty. For deposits of \$2,000 or greater.

Now there are more sound reasons than ever to bank with us. For comprehensive solutions to all of your financial needs, visit your local SunTrust branch today or call 800.SUNTRUST.



*Annual Percentage Yield (APY) is accurate as of 08/20/08 and the term or APY is subject to change at any time and without notice. Offer good for consumer and business accounts. Not available for public funds. A penalty is imposed for early withdrawals on the 25-month CD and CD IRA. Fees could reduce earnings on the account.

**Annual Percentage Yield (APY) is accurate as of 08/20/08 and the APY is subject to change at any time and without notice. With the 30-month No-Penalty CD and CD IRA, SunTrust reserves the right to require seven (7) days' written notice of the intended withdrawal. After the first seven (7) days of the initial account term, you may make a one-time withdrawal of all or a portion of your funds without an early withdrawal penalty. The penalty waiver is available only during the initial term of the CD and CD IRA. Early withdrawal penalties will apply to subsequent renewals of this CD and CD IRA. Alternative CD and CD IRA terms are not allowed. Offer is not-transferable and may not be combined with any other offer. Business accounts offer not available for public funds or institutional funds; there is a \$1,000,000 maximum balance requirement.

SunTrust Bank, Member FDIC. ©2008 SunTrust Banks, Inc. SunTrust and Seeing beyond money are federally registered service marks of SunTrust Banks, Inc.

The Chronicle (USPS 067-910) was established by Ernest H. Pitt and Nduvusi Egemonye in 1974 and is published every Thursday by Winston-Salem Chronicle Publishing Co. Inc., 617 N. Liberty Street, Winston-Salem, N.C. 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