

South African president has sweetheart

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — Spring is in the air, and a gray-haired president's thoughts have turned to love.

Nelson Mandela has fallen in love with Graca Machel, the widow of former Mozambique president Samora Machel, and intends to quit hiding their relationship, according to a Sunday newspaper.

Both have denied rumors of a romance for months. Now that Mandela, 78, has divorced his second wife, Winnie Mandikizela-Mandela, he and Machel, 50, intend to spend two weeks together each month at his suburban Johannesburg residence, the Sunday Independent reported.

A spokesman for Mandela would only say that the newspaper story was basically accurate. There are no plans for marriage, according to the spokesman and the newspa-

per report.

The love affair takes on the proportions of an African fairy tale.

With spring flowers and seedlings just starting to bloom in the Southern Hemisphere, one of the world's most revered figures and a revolutionary ally who has her own admired record for leadership seem certain to become Africa's leading couple.

Mandela is a messianic figure at home, the first black president who is credited for negotiating with F.W. de Klerk a peaceful end to apartheid. The two men shared the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts.



Mandela

He spent 27 years in prison for trying to overthrow the former white government and wrote in his best-selling autobiography of wasted, lonely years away from his family.

At his divorce hearing earlier this year, Mandela described himself as "the loneliest man in the world" after he got out of prison in 1990 because of abandonment by his ex-wife, Winnie.

Machel's husband was killed in a plane crash in South Africa in 1986. The leftist Mozambican president had aided Mandela's African National Congress in its fight against apartheid, and former ANC leader Oliver Tambo became custodian, a kind of informal guardian, for Machel's seven children.

Mandela first met her in 1990 when he took over the custodian role from Tambo, and he and Machel became close friends two years later.

Now, according to friends of the Mandela family cited by the Sunday Independent, the two have fallen deeply in love and want to be together more.

Machel remains a highly popular and influential figure in Mozambique and headed the first United Nations study on the impact of war on children. She oversees a U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) office in South Africa and travels the world speaking on children's issues.

Mozambique officials and Machel family elders reportedly have blessed the relationship and the living arrangement, with Machel spending half her time in South Africa with Mandela. Two of her children already live in South Africa.

Marathon champion lives in fear

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BETHAL, South Africa — Josia Thugwane raced to world fame and new riches when he won the Olympic marathon last month. Now he questions if it was worth it.

Thugwane's family has moved from the shack that was a longtime home and he wonders if he'll be killed for the thousands of rand (dollars) in prizes he has gained for his Olympic victory.

"Everyone is talking about the plan to kill me," Thugwane told The Star newspaper of Johannesburg in comments published Tuesday. "I do not know who these crooks are, but if they say they will kill someone, they always do."

Thugwane, 25, said news of the rewards for his performance in Atlanta had spread

through the impoverished black settlement of Emzini, where he lived with his wife and four children.

As in most poor areas, success and wealth can easily breed jealousy and attempts by neighbors and gangs to grab some of the money for themselves.

"They think I'm rich now," he said. "More than my life, I fear for my wife and family."

Crime is ever-present in black townships, and Thugwane barely survived an attempt earlier this year to steal a car he won in a road race. He jumped out of the moving vehicle with his chin sliced open by an errant bullet.

A mine janitor who ran to earn extra money, Thugwane became a national hero when he finished first in the pre-

mier running event of the Olympic Games.

But he is sick of the endless dinners and events celebrating his victory. His family left the shack where they lived to take up residence in temporary housing inside the mine complex where he works near Bethal, about 130 kilometers (80 miles) southeast of Johannesburg.

Security guards have been posted at the house, and Thugwane even has a bodyguard who accompanies him to public functions. The bodyguard was sent by the provincial government to protect him.

"I want to stay at home now," Thugwane said. "No more functions. My life is in danger because of all this. I want to start training. Medals won't matter when I am dead. I don't care where I live, I just want to be safe."

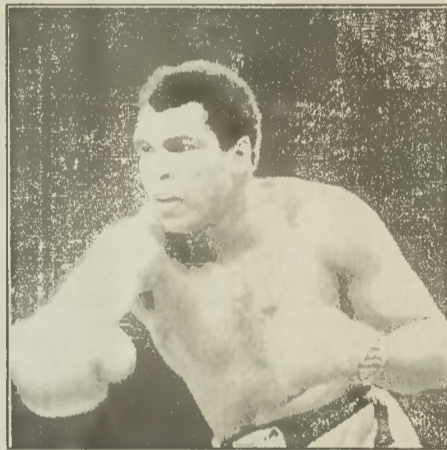
Ali may be moving back home

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to Louisville, The (Louisville) Courier-Journal reported.

"The city has made a commitment," Lonnie Ali said. "We have to be there with our commitment. It is difficult to do at arm's length." Abramson said he wants to find a full-time administrator "who wakes up in the morning and goes to bed at night thinking about nothing but making the Ali museum a reality."

He said he may assign help from his office until a staff can be hired to ensure that the museum gets off the ground. The Ali museum effort was temporarily knocked down last year. Several members of the original museum planning board resigned at the request of the Alis and former board Chairman Woody Boggs died. News of the new effort was greeted with excitement by museum supporters. Paul Porter, a lawyer with Greenebaum, Doll and MacDonald, the Louisville firm that represents the Alis, said, "It's long overdue. I'm happy that (the mayor) is stepping up to the plate to be part of what should be a suitable monument to this



Former world heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali may be moving to Kentucky.

man of the world, who just happens to be from Louisville."

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