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Obama: US must be place that rewards hard work

By Darlene Superville
WASHINGTON (AP) - Echoes of civil rights and justice, President Barack Obama said Sept. 21 that until S. becomes a place where who is willing to work can earn a way into the class "we can't let up and rest."

you can get ahead - has slipped out of reach for too many Americans. And that's especially true in communities with large African-American populations." Obama hewed to the theme of the dinner, which this year celebrated the "Spirit of 1963," including the civil rights movement and the March on Washington for Jobs and Justice led 50 years ago at the Lincoln Memorial by Martin Luther King Jr., and the advances it brought about for black Americans. Topping the list of achievements is Obama's election in 2008 as America's first black president. Without mentioning his place

in history, Obama acknowledged progress made since 1963, but said there was more to be done. He spoke of work needed to reduce a black unemployment rate that is twice that of whites, increase the minimum wage and provide health care and education for all.

"We must make this country a place where anyone who works hard can earn their way into the middle class," Obama told hundreds of his most ardent supporters packed into a cavernous ballroom at Washington's convention center. "And until we do, we can't let up and we can't rest."

Obama also sounded a note of caution about recent mass shootings, including at the Navy Yard in Washington last Monday where authorities say 12 people were slain by a gunman who later was killed by police. Two days ago in Obama's hometown of Chicago, 13 people were shot during a game of pickup basketball, including a 3-year-old girl.

Obama lamented the failure earlier this year to get gun legislation through the Senate and said "that means we've got to get back up and go back at it" to work harder than those he said want to make it easier for people to get firearms.

"We've got to work as hard as possible for the sake of our children," he said.

Online:
Congressional Black Caucus
Foundation: <http://www.cbccfinc.org>



Young and old came out for CenterFest. See photos on page 4.

'Invisible Man' banned from Randolph schools

By MUSEUR (AP) - The Randolph County School Board voted to take Ralph Ellison's "Invisible Man" from its shelves after a parent complained about the book's content.

The Asheville Courier-Tribune reports the board voted 5-2 at a regular meeting to remove all copies of the book from school shelves.

Board members took the action in response to a letter from another of a Randleman High School junior who said the book was "too much for teenagers." The woman also objected to language in the book and its sexual content.

The book is on a list of suggested supplemental works for school students compiled by the N.C. Department of Education.

"Invisible Man" is a first-person narrative by a black man who considers himself socially invisible.

N.C. Republican chairman criticizes protest tactics

By RALEIGH (AP) - The chairman of the North Carolina Republican Party says inflammatory rhetoric and symbolism by some protesters of GOP policies aren't helping create a respectful political dialogue.

Claude Pope made the comments Sept. 17, a day after marchers outside the Executive Mansion carried empty caskets to memorialize four girls killed in an Alabama church bombing 50 years ago this week. The Rev. William Barber of the state NAACP on Sept. 16 called on Gov. Pat McCrory to remember the blood that was shed to advance voting rights in the country.

Allies of Barber and Democrats have condemned an election overhaul bill approved by lawmakers and signed by McCrory as making it harder for many groups to vote.

Pope says it's a stretch to connect the governor with a tragedy from 50 years ago.



Desmond A. Jackson just returned from competing with the USA Team at the 2013 International Wheelchair & Amputee Sports World (IWAS) Junior Games. See story on page 3.

NC attorney general to handle police shooting case

By Mitch Weiss

CHARLOTTE (AP) - North Carolina's attorney general said Sept. 19 that his office will handle the prosecution of a police officer charged with fatally shooting an unarmed man.

Mecklenburg County District Attorney Andrew Murray said he requested the state help because before he was elected, Murray was a partner in the law firm representing the officer and he didn't want to give the appearance of impropriety.

Authorities say Jonathan Ferrell was shot 10 times early Saturday (Sept. 14) by Charlotte-Mecklenburg Officer Randall Kerrick. Police have said Ferrell may have been seeking help after a car wreck when he went to a home and knocked on the door, frightening a woman into calling 911 because she thought he was trying to break in.

"This case is clearly a tragedy and we will work to bring it to a just resolution," said Attorney General Roy Cooper. "We have accepted the Mecklenburg District Attorney's request to take over the prosecution of this case."

He said the Special Prosecutions unit will handle the case in the courts and State Bureau of Investigation agents will conduct an independent investigation.

Police Chief Rodney Monroe said he supports the decision. "The CMPD will fully cooperate by turning over all evidence collected during the investigation as the department has done in prior cases. The CMPD wants to ensure the community has complete confidence in the integrity and fairness of the judicial process," Monroe said in a statement.

Murray said he didn't have to withdraw from the case but "avoiding even the appearance of impropriety is essential to maintaining the public's trust."

"The nature of the case against Mr. Kerrick is such that the community will be affected by any and all decisions regarding the prosecution and final disposition of the case," he said.

The two attorneys representing Kerrick - George Laughrun and Michael Greene - were hired this week by the Fraternal Order of Police.

Earlier this week, Ferrell's family said the former Florida A&M University football player moved to Charlotte about a year ago to be with his fiancée and was working two jobs. He wanted to go back to school and eventually become an automotive engineer, they said. He had no criminal record.

Representatives of the NAACP questioned whether race played a role in the shooting of the black man by a white officer. Though there was praise for police for quickly filing charges, some said the shooting didn't surprise them, considering portrayals of black men in popular culture and previous instances of racially inflected violence.

Over the last few days, more details about the shooting have been disclosed. The encounter was set in motion around 2:30 a.m. Saturday when Ferrell's car ran off the entrance road to a suburban neighborhood about 15 miles from downtown Charlotte.

After crashing his car into trees, Ferrell kicked out the back window and headed up a hill to the first set of closely clustered houses he could see. He then started "banging on the door viciously" of a home to attract attention, police Chief Rodney Monroe said.

Kerrick and two other officers responding to the breaking and entering call found Ferrell on a road that only leads to the neighborhood's pool. Ferrell ran toward the officers, who tried to stop him with a Taser. Police said he continued to run toward them and Kerrick fired 12 shots, hitting Ferrell with all but two. Ferrell died at the scene.

But in an interview with The Charlotte Observer's editorial board, Chief Rodney Monroe said a Taser was fired by a second officer missed Ferrell. He also said that the first shots were fired from "a couple of feet," and there was physical contact between Kerrick and Ferrell after the first shots had been fired.

(Continued On Page 7)