

## Virginia Democrat chairman rebuts Wilder's Confederate flag claim

RICHMOND, Va. — The chairman of the state Democratic Party sent an open letter Friday to former Gov. L. Douglas Wilder rebutting Wilder's public criticism of a Democratic congressional candidate's campaign use of Confederate imagery.



Wilder

Party Chairman Lawrence H. Framme III said in his 1,020-word response to Wilder that Ben Jones, who starred in "The Dukes of Hazzard" television series, has no racist motive in using the show's famous "General Lee" hot rod with a Confederate flag painted on its roof.

Framme also noted that Wilder, a Democrat and the nation's first elected black governor, conspicuously scheduled campaign ads to air during "The Dukes of Hazzard" reruns in his successful 1985 race for lieutenant governor.

"Knowing your deep commitment to civil rights, I am confident that you would not have placed paid advertising on 'Dukes of Hazzard' (reruns) if you believed its constant display of the Confederate Battle Flag on an automobile was an affront to any voters, particularly African-Americans," Framme wrote in the letter, which the party provided to reporters.

Wilder, in his own open letter to Framme last week, criticized Jones' use of the Confederate flag to attract white voters in the rural and suburban 7th District — where he's challenging Republican incumbent Eric Cantor — and voiced his dismay that the party was not denouncing it.

In an interview, Wilder said the use of the flag was a slap in the face to black voters, a vital Democratic constituency, and said party leaders "can't be involved in kowtowing to these subliminal messages."

Jones portrayed the genial, down-home mechanic Cooter Davenport on "The Dukes of Hazzard." He won two terms in Congress from Georgia a decade ago. He said that invoking his background to appeal to rural voters is in no way racist.

"We're not trying to refigure the war. We're just proud of our Southern heritage. We're NASCAR Democrats," he said.



Jones

## Black population continues to grow

The African-American population has grown 16 percent over the last 10 years, according to a report from the U.S. Census Bureau.

The report indicates that the number of African-Americans has grown three times as fast as the white population between 1990 and 2000. The nation's white population increased 6 percent over the last decade. Blacks still are 12 percent of the nation's residents.

While 3 million African-Americans live in New York City, 19 million of the nation's 35 million blacks live in the South's 10 states, which each have more than 1 million black residents. The majority of whites live in the South and Midwest.

"We expected the numbers in the South to be high because that has been a general trend over the years," Jesse McKinnon of the Census Bureau told reporters. "Blacks tended to reside in the South at least over the last 30 or 40 years."

Gary, Ind., has the highest concentration of African-Americans, with 85 percent, followed by Detroit with 83 percent. The highest proportion of whites is in Livonia, Mich., where they are 97 percent of residents.

The Census Bureau has previously reported that the nation's white majority will diminish in numbers, with whites becoming a minority shortly after 2050.

## Anonymous donor gives \$5 million to Muhammad Ali Center in Kentucky

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — An unidentified donor pledged \$5 million to the Muhammad Ali Center, matching the largest private gift awarded to the project.

The pledge "offers a tremendous boost to our campaign," said Ina Brown Bond, the center's governing board chairwoman.



Ali

The Ali Center endowment fund will receive the donation over 20 years starting in 2004. It will be paid in 20 yearly payments of \$250,000. The endowment funds are invested, with the interest helping underwrite operating costs.

As a condition, the donor stipulated that he or she not be identified. The donor "doesn't want the attention," said center president Michael Fox.

Named for the Louisville-native and former heavyweight boxing champion, the center will honor Ali's humanitarian and peacemaking efforts.

The six-level, 93,000 square foot center will include interactive exhibits, an auditorium, classrooms and conference space. It also will house the Muhammad Ali Institute for Peacemaking and Conflict Resolution, a University of Louisville program.

Groundbreaking is expected for next spring, with the center scheduled to open in fall 2004 near Sixth Street and River Road.

The largest public contribution toward construction has been \$10 million from the state.

— Compiled from staff and wire reports

# Justice comes back to haunt mayor

BY MARC LEVY  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

YORK, Pa. — Jury selection began Monday in the murder trial of three white men, including the city's former mayor, accused of the fatal shooting of a black woman during 10 days of paralyzing race riots in 1969.

Prosecutors say Charlie Robertson, a young police officer who later became mayor, gave ammunition to white gangs that ambushed a car in which Lillie Belle Allen was riding with relatives. The other two men are accused of taking part in the ambush.

The slayings of 27-year-old Allen and a white rookie police officer during the riots helped fuel a subsequent effort to build bridges between blacks and whites, even as the truth of the killings remained elusive.

"I think it's important for all



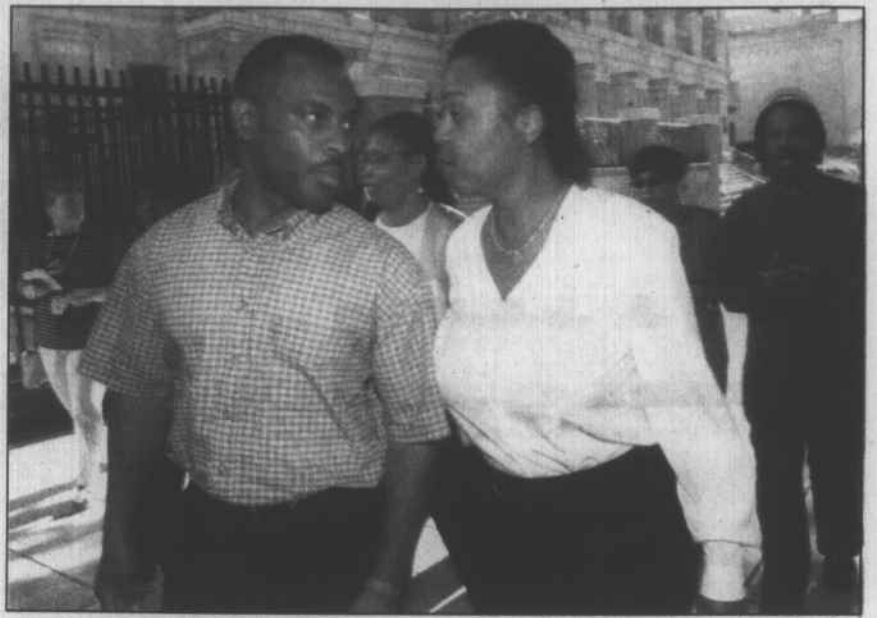
Robertson

Yorkers to know the truth, to know what happened in 1969," said John Brenner, York's current mayor, who was

just a year old when the riots erupted. "I think we all want the same thing: who did it, who's responsible for both murders. And we want them to be held accountable."

Allen's shooting remained unsolved until late 1999, when prosecutors say new information surfaced and investigators reopened the case.

Since then, 10 white men have been charged in Allen's killing. Six pleaded guilty to shooting at the car or being gang lookouts. Some may testify. A 10th man is to be tried separately. One former white gang member killed himself in April 2000 after talking to prosecutors.



The children of the late Lillie Belle Allen, Michael Allen and Debra Taylor, walk in York, Pa., on Sept. 23. Their mother was allegedly killed by three white men in 1969.

Two black men await trial in the killing of the white rookie officer, 22-year-old Henry Schaad.

Years of tension found a spark on July 17, 1969, when a black youth said he had been set on fire by whites, a story he later recanted. The same day, white gang member Robert Messersmith shot two black youths. Rumors spread that a white police officer was responsible for the shootings and rioting broke out.

The next day, Schaad was killed. Allen was killed three days later.

During the rioting, whole city blocks were burned, police barricaded black neighborhoods and enforced curfews, 60 people were injured, and 100 were arrested before National Guard tanks rolled into town.

At the time, little national attention was focused on the violence in York, then a manufacturing town of 50,000 in Pennsylvania dairy country. Earlier rioting

had scarred cities, including Los Angeles and Detroit. And it was the same week that a woman drowned when Sen. Edward Kennedy drove his car off a bridge at Chappaquiddick, Mass., and Neil Armstrong walked on the moon.

During the riots, Robertson was a seven-year veteran of the city police force. He gave up his pursuit of a third term as mayor last year after he was charged with inciting white gang members to violence against blacks and handing out ammunition to at least one of the shooters.

Robertson, 68, has admitted shouting "white power" at a rally the day before Allen's killing, but he has denied the other accusations.

Messersmith is accused of firing the shot that killed Allen. Another former gang member, Greg Neff, is accused of shooting at the car in which Allen, her sister, brother-in-law and parents

were riding when they took a wrong turn into a white neighborhood.

Over the last dozen years or so, prosecutors have reached back to investigate 22 civil rights-era murders, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center, a Montgomery, Ala., nonprofit group that monitors extremist groups.

"There have been 13 years of careful looking back at these cases, and it could be soon that this era will come to a close," said Mark Potok, who edits the law center's newsletter, the Intelligence Report.

York today is a city of 41,000. Some 19,000 whites have left while the black population has risen from 12 percent to 20 percent.

The slain officer's brother, Barry Schaad, speaks of better race relations, of people who "are more aware of the things they say and do, and how it affects other people."

## Former senator may run for White House

BY HAZEL TRICE EDNEY  
NNPA CORRESPONDENT

WASHINGTON — Former U.S. Sen. Carol Mosely-Braun, having concluded an ambassadorship to New Zealand, is thinking about running again for a public office, including the Democratic nomination for president in 2004.

"I have been honored and delighted that now that I have returned to the United States from New Zealand, my supporters are encouraging me to advance to public office again, and the suggestions range from running for re-election to the United States Senate in '04, to running for the mayorship of Chicago in '03, to running for president of the United States in '04," Mosely-Braun told NNPA.

"I'm having listening sessions right now and considering getting a sense of all the issues," she said. "Frankly, every other day, something compelling happens to encourage me to get back into elective office... Which office depends on where I can be the most service to the people, I think. I mean it could be just as easy for the Senate or the mayorship or the presidency, frankly."

Mosely-Braun, who in 1992, became the first and only black woman to serve in the U.S. Senate, lost her re-election bid in 1998 to a Republican, Peter Fitzgerald.

But Mosely-Braun and her supporters say political losses have never precluded future victories.

"Why shouldn't Carol Mosely-Braun, who has national name recognition, ...who lost an election just like everybody else loses an election, like Bill Clinton lost the governorship and went on to become president?" asked Yvonne Scruggs-Leftwich, a personal friend of Mosely-Braun. "So, there is no reason that there cannot be a confluence of elements and of issues and of time and of events, so this would be a good time for her."

Scruggs-Leftwich is perhaps best known as executive director and chief operating officer of the Black Leadership Forum, a nonpartisan coalition of 22 black organizations. She is also privately a charter member of Future Political Action Committee, a PAC established Sept. 12 at

the Washington headquarters of the National Council of Negro Women for the purpose of advancing black women in politics.

Mosely-Braun confirms she was among the more than 250 women who became members of the PAC during the luncheon meeting, which was held during the Congressional Black Caucus annual legislative conference. Other members of the PAC include Susan Taylor, senior vice president and editorial director of Essence Communications Inc.; Regina Thomas, N.J. secretary of state; and C. Delores Tucker, chair of the National Congress of Black Women.



In the early 1990s, Carol Mosely-Braun became the first black woman elected to the U.S. Senate. She represented Illinois for one six-year term.

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