

News at a Glance

Farrakhan named in lawsuit against son

VALPARAISO, Ind. (AP) — A Gary couple claims in a lawsuit that Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan is partly to blame for a hit-and-run accident that led to his son's arrest on drunken driving charges.

The elder Farrakhan acted negligently when he turned his 1997 Hummer over to Joshua Nasir H. Farrakhan when he knew, or should have known, his son's driver's license was suspended or revoked, Gladys and Charles Peterson alleged in documents filed last Thursday in Porter Superior Court.

The court documents add Farrakhan's name to a lawsuit originally filed in May. The Petersons were injured May 10 when Nasir Farrakhan struck their car on the Indiana Toll Road in LaPorte County about 50 miles east of Chicago, according to the lawsuit.

In a separate but related case, Farrakhan, 44, of Chicago, has pleaded innocent to charges of driving while intoxicated, possession of drug paraphernalia and leaving the scene of an accident.

A portable breath test given to Farrakhan at the time of his May 10 arrest showed he had only a blood-alcohol concentration of 0.001 percent, well below Indiana's legal limit of 0.08 percent to drive.

There was no number for Louis Farrakhan in published listings for Chicago. A message seeking comment was left after hours at Farrakhan's mosque.

Marchers accuse Georgia sheriff of 'slave labor' for using local inmates

BLAKELY, Ga. (AP) — About 30 people marched Wednesday in a demonstration demanding the resignation of Early County Sheriff Jimmie Murkerson, claiming he engaged in "slave labor" by using county prisoners for private work.

The protest came almost a month after a grand jury in the southwest Georgia county declined to indict Murkerson on charges of using inmates for private gain.

The marchers, some from Americus and Albany, said most inmates who worked on private property — including that of Murkerson and his relatives — were black.

"Apparently the sheriff feels we are not 'we the people,' but 'we the slaves,'" said Cynthia Edwards, pastor of Greater Works Outreach Ministry of Blakely.

Murkerson said his attorney had asked him not to comment. A June 6 grand jury said Murkerson allowed inmates to work on private property both with and without compensation. Though no charges were brought against the sheriff, the panel recommended that inmates must have a written order from a judge to work outside the county jail, and that they must wear jail uniforms.

Africare to honor Bill and Melinda Gates

Bill and Melinda Gates will receive Africare's 2003 Bishop John T. Walker Distinguished Humanitarian Service Award on Oct. 9 at the Africare Bishop Walker Dinner in Washington, D.C.

The award is presented each year to individuals internationally distinguished for their service to Africa and to world development as well as their embodiment of the principles of peace, justice, and multiracial harmony that were espoused by the late John T. Walker, the first African-American Episcopal bishop of Washington, D.C., and long-time chairman of Africare, for whom the Africare Dinner is named. Past award recipients have included Nelson Mandela, Archbishop Desmond M. Tutu, Sargent Shriver, and Andrew Young, among others.

Africare will honor Bill and Melinda Gates for establishing the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which is working to improve equity in global health, education, and access to technology. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation exemplifies cutting-edge philanthropy in the 21st century. The foundation's primary global health priority is to stop the transmission of HIV. Its ground-breaking research and prevention programs are achieving outstanding results, while significantly raising public awareness of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Through their foundation, Bill and Melinda Gates have utilized their position as leaders in the technology world to provide access to digital information to all people, regardless of age, race, income, or geographic location. The couple have also been particularly committed to minority student achievement, through scholarship programs, including the Gates Millennium Scholars Program, and their support of small, rigorous schools that give all students the opportunity to succeed.



Bill and Melinda Gates

Campaign seeks Marvin Gaye stamp

(Special to the NNPA) — A campaign is under way to honor the late singer Marvin Gaye on his 65th birthday with a commemorative U.S. postage stamp.

The three-month "A Stamp for Marvin" campaign is organized by the Los Angeles Chapter of the Motown Alumni Association (MMA). Fans of the legendary R&B singer are being asked to write letters of support to the Citizen Stamp Advisory Committee, a group of independent citizens appointed by the U.S. postmaster general who meet four times a year to review more than 40,000 suggestions for stamps. Commemorative stamps are issued to honor anniversaries, important people or special events. According to the U.S. Postal Service, individuals must be deceased for at least 10 years before they can be considered for a commemorative stamp.

Gaye died almost 20 years ago on April 1, 1984; his next birthday is April 2, 2004.

"The committee has turned down Marvin for a stamp several times," Ron Brewington, executive director, L.A.'s MMA chapter, told reporters. "No reason for the denial was given."

Fans are asked to send a letter of support to: Dr. Virginia Noelke, Chair, Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee; U.S. Postal Service; 475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW; Room 5670; Washington, D.C. 20260-2437.

Blacks concerned about environment

BY RACHEL KIPP
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ALBANY, N.Y. — Black Americans are as committed to the environment as whites, recent research shows, and more minorities are finding leadership positions in established environmental groups.

Using data from voting records, three decades worth of national surveys and studies on attitudes in the Detroit area, University of Michigan associate professor Paul Mohai examined the environmental actions, priorities and concerns of blacks.

Among the study's findings:

- In the National Opinion Research Center survey in 1993, 37 percent of blacks said they bought pesticide-free foods out of concern for the environment compared with 29 percent of whites. Larger percentages of blacks also said they consumed less meat and drove less for environmental reasons. Sixty-four percent of white Americans indicated they often or always recycle, compared with 44 percent of blacks.

- A 1990 survey of Detroit residents showed 26 percent of blacks and 3 percent of whites named neighborhood pollution problems, such as high noise levels or abandoned houses, as among the most important environmental problems facing the country. A 2002 survey showed similar results.

- Analysis of voting records from the past two decades showed black members of Con-



A woman works in a recycling plant in South Carolina. A recent survey found that more blacks and other minorities are beginning to recycle.

gress support conservation and pro-environmental legislation. Average pro-environmental voting scores for members of the Congressional Black Caucus in the U.S. House have ranged from about 75 to 85 percent. Average scores for other House Democrats and Republicans have ranged from about 60 to 80 percent and 20 to 40 percent, respectively.

In recent years, a number of blacks have moved into leadership positions at the Sierra Club, said Melanie Griffin, director of the national organization's environmental partner-

ship program. Griffin said the Sierra Club's partnership and environmental justice programs have resulted in more work being done with diverse communities.

"When I ask our African-American leaders what their experience has been, it seems to be mixed," Griffin said. "We have a long history, we have a long way to go, and we can definitely do better."

Mohai's study indicates that blacks were as likely as whites to identify themselves as members of an environmental group. But the data also

showed blacks frequently formed their own groups or joined grass-roots organizations rather than existing ones, a trend Mohai said may be changing.

"National organizations were not giving a lot of time to the environmental priorities and concerns of people of color," he said. "I think that's the reason why people of color began forming their own organizations. Since then, there's been a lot of evidence to indicate that national organizations have been responding."

See Environment on A5

Young issues call to 'go back to Africa'

SPECIAL TO THE NNPA

WASHINGTON — Ambassador Andrew Young, chairman of the Leon Howard Sullivan Summit, issued a call to African Americans to "go back to Africa" as they celebrate the sixth convening of the biannual event. The summit will take place in Abuja, Nigeria, July 12-19.

The summit, the largest gathering of African-Americans and Africans, will focus on a week-long series of workshops concentrating on sustainable development efforts in Africa, including business, trade and investment, education and HIV/AIDS. More than 5,000 delegates are expected to attend.

"African-Americans have traveled all over the world; but few have ever gone 'home,'" said Young, who was appointed chairman of the summit in 2001. "This conference allows African-Americans to see how far we have come: We left Africa in shackles and are now returning in business suits. We should come together to celebrate our accomplishments and ensure that we move forward, united as a people."

In addition to the workshops, summit delegates will have the opportunity to partici-

pate in world-class dialogue with African leaders, enjoy black-tie evening affairs and concerts and participate in the special "last rites" memorial ceremony to Rev. Sullivan, the first ever bestowed on an American citizen. As a final send-off, delegates will enjoy an overnight stopover in Dakar, Senegal, to participate in an exclusive celebration for people of African heritage hosted by

Abdoulaye Wade, president of Senegal.

Formerly named the African-American Summit, the summit was the vision of the late Rev. Leon Howard Sullivan. Since its inception in 1991, the summit has been one of the world's leaders on Africa and Africa-related issues.

The summit has led to significant gains in improvement of life and trade relations on the

African continent and has resulted in more than \$20 million worth of books, educational and relief supplies. The summit has raised the consciousness of the world about the importance of Africa as a global citizen and a viable player in the economic arena.

For registration information, contact the Summit office at (202) 736-2239.



Young

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