

News at a Glance

Blacks in Wax museum gets \$5 million

BALTIMORE — The city's Great Blacks in Wax Museum will receive \$5 million to expand education and outreach programs under a bill approved by the U.S. Senate.



Cummings

The Senate approved the bill recently, following approval by the U.S. House of the measure to expand civil rights and violence-prevention initiatives at the nation's first wax museum honoring African-Americans.

Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski and Rep. Elijah E. Cummings introduced the National Great Black Americans Commemoration Act of 2003. The bill would add Justice Department money to state, city and private funds aimed at expanding exhibits, facilities and programs at the museum, which drew 220,000 visitors last year.

The \$5 million is to be used to create a Justice Learning Center where youths can learn lessons from the civil rights era and strategies to stem community violence.

Museum founder Joanne Martin, a former educator, said the learning center would help fulfill the museum's teaching mission.

Martin started the museum 21 years ago with her husband, Elmer, opening in a 1,200-square-foot storefront before moving to a cavernous former firehouse. Once a \$60 million expansion that began last fall is completed, the museum will encompass 120,000 square feet, Martin said.

NAACP barred from organizing chapter

WASHINGTON (AP) — The head of the oldest and largest civil rights group in the country lashed out at Catholic University of America leaders Friday for not allowing the formation of a student chapter.

NAACP President Kweisi Mfume said the decision was "narrow-minded."

"It is outright discrimination and intolerance all rolled into one," Mfume said, just outside of CUA's campus and surrounded by about 20 activists and student chapter leaders from other universities.

According to Mfume, this is the first time in decades that a university has attempted to bar formation of a National Association for the Advancement of Colored People student chapter. He threatened to sue if the group was unable to come to an agreement with the private Roman Catholic university.

CUA rejected an attempt by a student to start a chapter in April, saying there are already two main groups that represent black students.

William Jawando, 21, who tried to start the chapter, dismissed the school's reasoning, saying there are no civil rights groups on campus.

Administrators also raised concern about the group's support of the April 25th "March for Women's Lives," an abortion rights rally. Official NAACP policy does not take a side in the abortion debate, Mfume said.

The NAACP has chapters at 150 colleges, including Georgetown, Fordham and St. Johns universities and Trinity College — all Catholic schools.



Mfume

Federal government won't prosecute Minneapolis officers in plunger case

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — A federal investigation has cleared two police officers accused of putting a toilet plunger in a drug suspect's rectum, Police Chief William McManus said Friday.

The Justice Department's Civil Rights Division found no evidence of "prosecutable violation" federal criminal civil rights laws, McManus said at a news conference where he stood side by side with one of the officers, Jeff Jindra.

Jindra acknowledged a cavity search was done during the Oct. 13 police raid on a Minneapolis home. But he said the raid included "no struggle whatsoever. It was a run-of-the-mill crack house raid."

McManus said Jindra and the other officer, Todd Babekuhl, were returned to full duty Friday morning. They had been suspended with pay after the allegation surfaced.

Stephen Porter, 25, accused Jindra of assaulting him with the plunger after a drug raid. It's not clear what role Babekuhl, who drove Porter to the jail after the raid, played in the alleged assault. Both officers had denied the assault allegations.

Porter stood by his story Friday, saying the investigation was a cover-up of police brutality.

'Cops' re-invited to film in Cincinnati

CINCINNATI (AP) — The "Cops" television show will chronicle the Cincinnati Police Department after all.

Police Chief Tom Streicher re-invited the Fox network program on last week, six days after canceling an earlier invitation because of pressure from City Council members who questioned the show's impact on tourism and the city's image.

Some council members said they were concerned whether nationally televised images of officers arresting people on the streets could aggravate tensions that have lingered between police and some members of the black community since the city's 2001 riots.

Filming won't start for at least two months. Streicher said he didn't want to take the opportunity to be on the show away from three other police departments that stepped into the void.

Vice Mayor Alicia Reece said she opposed the invitation to the program because the city is still working to overcome the stigma of the riots that happened after a black man was fatally shot as he ran from police. She said showcasing crime in Cincinnati would do little to improve its national image.

Reece, Councilman Christopher Smitherman and Councilwoman Laketa Cole did not sign the memo to Streicher.

"They ('Cops') ... are going to be showing predominantly African-American men being chased down by white officers," Smitherman said. "And I'm saying I don't like that."

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

Don King is touting Bush on national tour with GOP chairman

BY MICHAEL RUBINKAM
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PHILADELPHIA — Wild-haired and oft-investigated boxing promoter Don King is touring the country with Republican National Committee Chairman Ed Gillespie to promote President Bush's re-election.

As King himself might say — and did say at a stop in Philadelphia last week — "Only in America."

The flamboyant, voluble promoter, speaking to a group of black business leaders at a downtown jazz club, touted Bush's economic policies and said Democrats have taken blacks' votes for granted.

"People understand that George Walker Bush is the man with the plan to make America better," King, wearing an American flag tie and plenty of diamond-encrusted jewelry, said to raucous applause. "Sometimes, just sometimes, it ain't too bad to be in the Bushes."

King might seem an odd choice for Bush front man. He was convicted in the 1967 beating death of a man who owed him money and spent nearly four years in prison. In 1954, he killed a man who was robbing a numbers house he operated in Cleveland, but it was ruled self-defense.

He has also beaten tax evasion and fraud charges, faced numerous lawsuits from boxers and their handlers, and endured three grand jury investigations and an FBI sting operation — all the while cementing his status as one of the world's top boxing promoters.

Republicans see King as a way to reach the ever-elusive black vote.

"I said to him, you know they are going to come after us, they are going to attack us, and they are going to try to smear us," Gillespie said. "But the fact is,



Don King cheers on President George W. Bush (seen on monitor) at the Republican National Committee gala on May 5 in Washington, D.C.

See King on A10

Black Republicans question party's commitment

BY HAZEL TRICE EDNEY
NNPA CORRESPONDENT

WASHINGTON — As the Republican Party tries to gain a larger share of the black vote in the 2004 presidential election, skepticism over whether that will



Fletcher

happen comes from a surprising source — black Republicans. "I'm not sure they're going to even try," said Arthur Fletcher Jr., former assistant secretary of labor in the Nixon administration. "Nixon won the White House without a black vote two times. Reagan won the White House without a black vote one time. Bush junior has won it without a black vote. When they look at their dollars and realize that the Hispanics are chomping at the bits to get aboard, I'm not sure they're going to make a bona fide effort to attract blacks."

Republican Party Chairman Ed Gillespie, who has been touring the country with black boxing promoter Don King, says he's working to prove that the Republicans are serious about the black vote.

"We want to do better than the 9 percent that President Bush got in 2000. I'm confident we can do that," Gillespie said. "The president has done a lot to reposition

the party and reach out to African-American voters."

Gillespie says the "No Child Left Behind Act," despite criticism that it's under-funded, has resulted in higher test scores for inner city students; the black business ownership rate increased 17 percent last year; and funding for historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) is to its highest level ever, a 40 percent

increase. "These things are all resonating with African-American voters as I travel the country."

But former Republican Sen. Edward Brooke, the first black elected to the U.S. Senate in the 20th century, is unimpressed.

"I saw some hope in Ed Gillespie as the new chairman of the Republican Party, that he would recognize the need to make the Republican Party inclusive and

open up its doors to black voters and organizations," Brooke said. "But in order to achieve that goal, they've got to, from the very beginning, make it known to black voters that they stand for issues, that they support issues that affect the lives of black people. The Republican Party should be far more representative of the entire population. And it doesn't

See GOP on A9

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