

# News at a Glance

## Marchers rally to support Wilson

DOUGLASVILLE, Ga. (AP) - Under the threat of a thunderstorm, about 2,000 marchers took to the streets in Douglas County on Saturday in support of a man being held in prison for having consensual oral sex when he was a teenager, despite a judge's ruling that he should be freed.

The group, led by the NAACP, marched from Douglasville High School to the county courthouse, chanting "Free Genarlow Wilson" and singing civil rights songs.

Wilson was convicted of aggravated child molestation for having oral sex with a 15-year-old girl when he was 17. He has served more than two years of a mandatory 10-year sentence.

Attorney General Thurbert Baker is appealing a Monroe County Superior Court judge's decision to reduce Wilson's felony conviction to a misdemeanor and free him from prison.

Baker said the judge overstepped his authority when he granted Wilson's motion last month. Wilson's attorney is arguing his 10-year prison sentence is cruel and unusual punishment.

Speakers denounced Baker and Douglas County District Attorney David McDade, whose office convicted Wilson. The U.S. attorney's office said McDade violated federal law when he distributed a videotape from a rape and child molestation case to legislators and journalists.

The law Wilson was convicted of breaking made consensual oral sex between teens a felony. It has since been changed by the Georgia Legislature, but the state's courts have held that the new law cannot be applied retroactively.



Wilson

## Snoop Dogg's life to be E! reality show

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Snoop Dogg's home and work lives will be on display in a new reality series, E! Entertainment Television said last Friday.

The series, scheduled to debut in late 2007 and described by the cable channel as "hilarious and heartwarming," will show the hip-hop heavyweight trying to balance his different worlds.

"The juggling act that Snoop faces day-in, day-out between career and family is certain to resonate with our viewers," said Ted Harbert, president and CEO of Comcast Entertainment Group, which operates the E! channel.

The rapper, whose real name is Cordozar Calvin Broadus Jr., has three children, is active in community causes and is involved in a youth football league he founded, E! said.

He's also had court-ordered obligations on his plate. In April, he was sentenced to five years' probation and 800 hours of community service after he pleaded no contest to felony gun and drug charges. The charges followed his arrest last year at an airport in Burbank for investigation of transporting marijuana. Police later found a gun at his home.

Also recently, in 2006 he and five other men were arrested on charges of violent disorder and starting a brawl when some in his party were denied entry to British Airways' first-class lounge at Heathrow Airport.

His platinum-selling albums include his most recent, "The Blue Carpet Treatment." He's also a producer and actor.

## Scholarship created in Tisdale memory

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) - The Charles Tisdale Memorial Scholarship is being established by the Jackson Association of Black Journalists, the president of the organization announced Friday.

"We talked with his wife Alice and we just felt as African American journalists that the black press is the genesis of where we started. We want to foster that legacy as Mississippi's oldest African American newspaper," said Kevin Richardson, president of JABJ and business editor at The Clarion-Ledger newspaper.

Tisdale, an Athens, Ala. native and owner and publisher of the Jackson Advocate, died July 7. He was 80.

Richardson said the first scholarship will be awarded in the spring of 2008 to any black student attending a Mississippi college or university and pursuing studies in journalism, communications and media. He said the nonprofit organization plans to award a \$500 scholarship.

Tisdale took over the newspaper in the late-1970s, and was an outspoken critic of elected officials, both black and white. Services for Tisdale were scheduled for Saturday in the Rose Embly McCoy Auditorium at Jackson State University.

## Indictment nothing new in Newark

NEWARK, N.J. (AP) - The mayor of Newark was indicted by a grand jury on charges stemming from land deals, as well as conspiracy to cheat and defraud the city, closing a yearlong investigation.

Last Thursday's indictment of former Newark Mayor Sharpe James makes him at least the fourth person who has served as the top elected official in the state's largest city to be charged with wrongdoing in the last 70 years. But only one has gone to prison.

James is charged with using city credit cards for more than \$58,000 in personal expenses and with arranging the cut-rate sale of city properties to friends.

Given the long history of corruption by public officials in both the city and the state of New Jersey, Newark residents say they aren't surprised by James' indictment.

"I think he's a product of his environment," said Eric Arrington, 53, a postal worker and lifelong city resident.

Recently, mayors of Asbury Park, Paterson and Hoboken have spent time in prison. The former mayor of Camden was convicted of taking payoffs from the mob, laundering drug money and stealing campaign funds. He was the third mayor of that city in recent years to be indicted.

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

# Hudlin defends 'Hot Ghetto Mess'

BY LYNN ELBER  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. - "Hot Ghetto Mess," a BET series that has provoked criticism and sent advertisers fleeing before it has even aired, will prove detractors wrong, BET entertainment head Reginald Hudlin said.

"It's unfortunate that people are making an erroneous presumption based on absolutely zero information," Hudlin told a meeting Sunday of the Television Critics Association.

"Hot Ghetto Mess," making its debut July 25, combines viewer-submitted home videos and BET-produced man-on-the-street interviews that the channel said are intended to challenge and inspire "viewers to improve themselves and their communities."

The six-episode series is hosted by comedian Charlie Murphy ("Chappelle's Show"). It is based on a Web site that features photos of men and women, mostly black, with extreme hairstyles and clothing typically linked to hip-hop fashion.

At least two companies, State Farm Insurance Cos. and Home Depot, asked BET to drop their ads from the series' debut. Sponsors had yet to see the show, Hudlin said Sunday.

Observers including What About Our Daughters, a blog and audio podcast that focuses on how black women are depicted in popular culture, have accused the site and the show of demeaning blacks.

Hotghettomess.com was



BET airs lots of original programs, including the popular reality show "College Hill," which follows the goings-on of a group of college students.

created by Jam Donaldson, 34, a black lawyer from Washington, D.C., who is an executive producer on the BET program. On her site,

Donaldson calls for a "new era of self-examination."

The show builds on the Web site's effort to take "a hard look at some dysfunctional elements of our community," Hudlin said.

"The intent of the show is no different than what Bill Cosby is doing as he's going across the country and lecturing as he talks

about the problems of the (black) community that we need to address," he said.

"Hot Ghetto Mess" approaches its goal in a lively way that will engage BET's young audience, Hudlin said.

Donaldson told reporters that the series has "exceeded my expectations."

"Everyone that sees the show will be pleasantly surprised. ... I think they will learn something. There's black history. We go to the community and ask what their opinion of some

of these images are," she said.

"The show is so much more than the name," Donaldson said. She started the site because of "images of black dysfunction" that were being distributed on the Internet without discussion of the need for change.

With shows such as "Hot Ghetto Mess" and "Hip-Hop vs. America," Hudlin said, BET is trying to be part of the solution.

"At the end of the day, the most responsible thing we can do is create a dialogue about those things," he told The Associated Press.



Hudlin

# Schools replace lesson about racial slur

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ROCKVILLE, Md. - A Maryland school system is replacing a lesson that called for students to read about and discuss a racial epithet against black people after a student complained

that she was upset by the class.

The student complained about an essay called "The

Meaning of a Word" by black writer Gloria Naylor. The lesson, which focused on the N-word and how the author was hurt by its use, was used to prepare Montgomery County ninth-grade English students to read "To Kill a Mockingbird."

The teacher, who is white, read aloud from the essay and asked students to mark the word each time it was used. Maya Jean-Baptiste, 15, told the school board the teacher imitated stereotypical body language and elocution of black people as she read.

"We knew she was a little over the top on some lessons. But this was not a lesson to be over the top about," said Maya, who was joined by a county NAACP official in asking the school board to stop using the lesson.

After Maya's complaint, school officials surveyed teachers and other students about the lesson.

"What we heard from enough community members and some teachers is that it's sensitive, it's emotionally charged," said Betsy Brown, curriculum director for the county's schools.

The Montgomery schools decided to replace the Naylor essay with a piece by Harvard scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr., called "What's in a Name." It tells of the disparaging treatment of his father by a white man who calls all black men "George."

Most complaints about racially insensitive language in classroom literature have not focused on Naylor's



Gates

essay or Harper Lee's novel but instead on Mark Twain's "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn."

Twain scholar Jocelyn Chadwick, a former Harvard University professor, said teachers should prepare students for sensitive language

without dwelling on racial slurs or reading inflammatory material aloud. Undue

focus on epithets "unnecessarily stresses students," she said.

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BOTTOM: From: Manuel Soto, Compton, California, Free Rudy Roff, Oakland, 1961

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