

News at a glance

Joyner cites Obama flak as reason that Smiley is leaving radio show

DALLAS (AP) — Tavis Smiley is leaving Tom Joyner's popular morning radio show after 12 years, and Joyner told listeners Friday he thought the political commentator's criticisms of presidential hopeful Barack Obama might be to blame.

But Smiley said in a news release issued later Friday: "Contrary to what has been suggested, I have decided to clear some things off my plate so that I can devote my time and attention to some exciting and empowering projects ... this summer, this fall and beyond." Joyner said he thinks Smiley is tired of getting flak for criticizing Obama.

"We're so emotional about this Barack Obama candidacy," Joyner said on his Dallas-based show. "If you don't say anything for Barack Obama, you're considered to be a hater."

Smiley criticized Obama for not attending an annual "State of the Black Union" symposium Smiley held in February. Sen. Hillary Clinton was the only presidential candidate who accepted Smiley's invitation.

"I'm catching hell," Smiley said in an earlier interview with BlackAmericaWeb.com.

Joyner urged listeners to show Smiley the love he needs via e-mails and calls.

Troopers disciplined for photo prank involving Klan costume

SANDUSKY, Ohio (AP) — A highway patrolman dressed in a handmade Ku Klux Klan-like outfit while on duty was suspended without pay, while another trooper who forwarded a cell phone photo of the trooper in the costume has been demoted, authorities said.

Craig Franklin, a 12-year veteran of the Ohio Highway Patrol, is pictured in the Jan. 20 photo with a white cone on his head, white paper mask with eye holes and a white cloth covering his shoulders, according to a highway patrol report.

Franklin is otherwise in trooper uniform. A handgun holster, a radio normally issued by the patrol and other police equipment can be seen in the photo, the report said.

Franklin and Trooper Eric Wlodarsky told an investigator that the picture was taken as a joke while both were on duty at the patrol's Sandusky post and was modeled on a television skit by comedian Dave Chappelle.

Highway patrol officials began an investigation after the patrol's Administrative Investigative Unit received an anonymous letter, postmarked Jan. 22 from Mansfield, that included two photographs of Franklin in the outfit, an interoffice memo said.

"What a way to represent the Ohio State Highway Patrol!" said a note included in the envelope.

Franklin, Wlodarsky, another trooper and a dispatcher discussed Martin Luther King Jr. Day at the post on the day the photo was taken, the report said. The national holiday took place the following day. None of the 13 troopers assigned to the Sandusky post are black.

Dethroned queen alleges racial bias

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A Hispanic woman who won the Miss California USA contest only to have her crown yanked days later is suing the pageant, alleging rigging and racial bias.

The pageant director rejected the claims last Thursday, saying winners during his tenure have been some of the pageant's most racially diverse ever.

Christina Silva, 24, was crowned Miss California USA on Nov. 25. Three days later, the pageant's executive director, Keith Lewis, told her "there has been a mistake and you are not the winner," according to the lawsuit filed in Superior Court.

Raquel Beezley, 21, was subsequently crowned.

Silva is of Ecuadorean and Mexican descent. The lawsuit claims Lewis was "uncomfortable with the fact that Miss Silva spoke Spanish with certain vendors; he felt that it may detract from the caliber of the pageant and some of the 'all American girls' may not opt to compete in the following year."

Lewis told The Associated Press the allegations of racial bias were unfounded.

The lawsuit seeks \$500,000 in damages for public humiliation and lost prizes.

Wright to speak at NAACP dinner

DETROIT (AP) — The Detroit branch of the NAACP said last Thursday it has selected the embattled former minister of Democratic presidential hopeful Barack Obama as the keynote speaker at its 53rd Annual Fight for Freedom Fund dinner.

The civil rights organization called the Rev. Jeremiah Wright a man that has "challenged the nation" and "challenged our comfort zone," in naming him its speaker at the April 27 event, which typically draws about 10,000 people.

Past speakers have included Obama, Sen. Hillary Clinton and former President Bill Clinton.

Wright has been criticized for remarks about everything from race relations to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. He recently retired from Chicago's Trinity United Church of Christ.

Obama has denounced the most inflammatory of Wright's comments, but says he shouldn't be judged solely on a handful of remarks.

The Rev. Wendell Anthony, the Detroit NAACP branch's president, called Wright an accomplished lecturer and religious leader whose appearance offered "an opportunity for us all to go to school, to learn what goes on within our communities that we may not understand."

Lawmaker renews effort to ban saggy pants

BY KEVIN MCGILL
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW ORLEANS — Black and blazing red-orange boxer shorts flashed from beneath the T-shirt and above the belt that seemed to weigh down the lanky 19-year-old's baggy jeans, which just topped his thighs.

"Some people just don't like their clothes tight," Corey Evans said last week, sitting at a bus stop near the French Quarter.

While it's been in fashion for years, the saggy pants look also has been an affront to many authority figures, including state Sen. Derrick Shepherd. After losing a vote on the issue in 2004, Shepherd is again trying to pass legislation to ban droopy trousers.

"All the different municipalities around the state saying they want it tells me that a state ban on this type of idiocy is needed," said Shepherd, D-New Orleans.

About a dozen Louisiana municipalities have enacted or are considering their own bans on "sagging." They reason that those adopting the dress are emulating the beltless look of prison inmates, that baggy clothes could conceal weapons or that exposure of underwear is offensive and just plain indecent.

Not all cities are joining in. Mayor Thomas Nelson in the Acadiana city of St. Martinville said leaders there have decided against a ban, fearing a lawsuit.

"My concern was — don't get me wrong, I'm not for the saggy pants — you're leaving yourself open, especially with the civil liberties union."

Indeed, the American Civil Liberties Union has consistently opposed efforts to ban low-slung pants and helped defeat



Cities across the nation are taking on sagging pants.

Shepherd's 2004 effort.

"I welcome a challenge," Shepherd said. He dismisses complaints that the law violates the First Amendment or that it could be used to target young black men who adopt the fashion.

"I've heard that from some more liberal-minded blacks and some liberal-minded whites," said Shepherd, who is black. "But my counter to that is: Why is it that we believe that young black men or black women, whoever would show themselves in such a manner, can't simply follow the law and pull up their pants?"

The future of his bill is uncertain. Aside from any court challenges, and the Legislature's 59-34 defeat of his last effort,

Shepherd faces a new distraction in his fight for moral rectitude. Last week, he was indicted on money laundering and fraud charges. Shepherd proclaimed his innocence and will continue serving while fighting the charges.

His bill is tentatively set for its first committee hearing April 22. If it makes it through the House and Senate, the bill would carry a penalty requiring anyone convicted of wearing clothing that exposes undergarments or "any portion of the pubic hair, cleft of the buttocks, or genitals" to perform three days of public service at a local fire station with a possible fine of up to

See Pants on A8

Village Voice editor apologizes for using racial slur

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PHOENIX — The co-owner and executive editor of alternative newspaper chain Village Voice Media has apologized for using a racial slur at a journalism gathering.

Michael Lacey was accepting an award from the local chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists recently when he used the N-word to refer to his late friend, Pulitzer Prize winning reporter Tom Fitzpatrick. His short speech also included vulgar phrases.

The group also presented a special recognition award to the mother of late East Valley Tribune sportswriter Bob Moran, a black journalist.

Moran died last month, and his mother was accompanied by

fellow Tribune journalist Billy Paulson, who also is black.

Paulson called the speech "offensive" and sent an angry e-mail to Lacey demanding an apology.

"I found your acceptance speech at the April 4 SPJ awards banquet disgusting, inappropriate and vulgar. And I DID take offense. But the obscenities take a back seat to the use of the n-word, which was not necessary and very insulting," she wrote in the e-mail.

Lacey said he was sorry that "comments about a dead colleague rankled listeners."

"My words, meant to honor a friend, were inappropriate," Lacey said. "All present have my sincere apology. It is regrettable that any phrase of mine

offended those attending a First Amendment awards banquet."

Lacey was accepting the SPJ's President's Award, which recognizes outstanding contributions in the field of journalism.

Lacey and business partner Jim Larkin were honored for stories they wrote and published that exposed efforts of a special prosecutor hired by the Maricopa County Attorney's Office to obtain Internet records

of anyone who had ever visited the Phoenix New Times Web site through a grand jury subpoena.

The story led to their late-night arrest on suspicion of violating grand jury secrecy, although charges were soon dropped.

Village Voice Media publishes a chain of weekly newspapers, including the Phoenix New Times.



Lacey

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FORSYTH COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS PRIMARY ELECTION 2008

Forsyth County Voters may vote one of three ways:

- Vote at a One-Stop Early Voting Site
- Vote at your Precinct on Election Day (May 6, 2008)
- Vote by Mail Absentee (by written request, no later than April 28th)

One-Stop Early Voting Locations:



Main Location: April 17th—May 3, 2008

Monday – Friday 8:00 am—5:00 pm (April 17th – May 2nd)
Saturday 10:00 am—1:00 pm (April 26th and May 3rd)
Sunday 12:00 pm—5:00 pm (April 27th Only)

Forsyth County Board of Elections
Forsyth County Government Center
201 N. Chestnut St., Winston-Salem, N.C. 27101

Satellite Locations: April 28th—May 3rd
Monday—Wednesday 11:00 am—7:00 pm
Thursday—Friday 10:00 am—5:00 pm
Saturday 10:00 am—1:00 pm

Carver School Road Library
4915 Lansing Dr., Winston-Salem, N.C. 27105

Polo Park Recreation Center
1850 Polo Park Rd., Winston-Salem, N.C. 27106

Kernersville Library
130 E. Mountain St., Kernersville, N.C. 27284

Southside Library
3185 Buchanan St., Winston-Salem, N.C. 27127

Lewisville Library
6940 Shallowford Rd., Lewisville, N.C. 27023

Clark Campbell Transportation Center
Corner of Fifth, Trade and Liberty Streets, Winston-Salem, N.C.

Malloy/Jordan East Winston Heritage Center
1110 E. Seventh St., Winston-Salem, N.C. 27101

WSSU (Anderson Center)
800 Price St., Winston-Salem, N.C. 27107

How To Register and Vote During One-Stop Absentee

If a North Carolina resident has missed the 25-day deadline (April 11, 2008) for voter registration and has lived at their current residence for at least thirty (30) days, he/she may register and vote during One-Stop Absentee Voting.

To vote during One-Stop Absentee Voting, a resident must fill out a voter registration application and prove residency by providing appropriate identification with current name and current address, such as a government issued ID, current utility bill, current paystub, etc. (please see our website for the complete list of acceptable forms (www.fcvotes.com)). The new registrant may vote ONLY at a One-Stop Absentee Voting Site in the county of registration during One-Stop Absentee Voting and not on Election Day.

Contact the Board of Elections Office at (336) 703-2800 with questions or visit our website www.fcvotes.com

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, 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