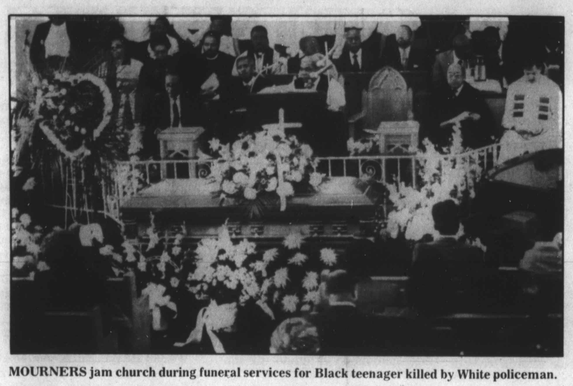


MOURNERS jam church during funeral services for Black teenager killed by White policeman.

Wake held for slain Teaneck youth

ENGLEWOOD, N.J. — Hundreds of friends and family jammed a church for the Easter Sunday wake of a Black teenager whose slaying by a White policeman sparked a night of unrest in neighboring Teaneck.

The mother of Phillip Pannell collapsed and had to be helped outside the Community Baptist Church in Englewood, about a mile from the New York City suburb where the shooting occurred. A friend of the slain youth fainted and was taken away in an ambulance.

A Nation of Islam honor guard comprised of a dozen solemn men stood in strict military formation outside the white brick church. Pannell was buried April 16 after funeral services at the church.

The quiet crowd surrounding the two-story church erupted into cheers at the arrival of the Rev. Al Sharpton, civil rights attorney Alton Maddox and Nation of Islam Minister Louis Farrakhan, but became quiet when a church official stepped outside the building and appealed for calm.

Mr. Sharpton, Mr. Farrakhan and Mr. Maddox arrived in a fleet of white cars and were accompanied by Moses Stewart, the father of Yusef Hawkins, who was shot in New York after being chased by a group of White youths last summer.

"I feel sadness, sorrow, anger and rage, we're talking about a young man who's just 16," said the Rev. Herbert Daughtry, a Brooklyn civil rights activist, after helping the dead youth's overwrought mother, Thelma Pannell, into a waiting limousine.

A friend of the dead youth, who would not give her name, collapsed onto a friend's shoulder, sobbing, "It's not going to be all right because he's gone, he's gone."

Pannell was killed April 10 by officer Gary Spath, who said the youth was armed and refused oral commands to surrender. A .22-caliber revolver was found on the dead youth.

Spath has since been suspended with pay pending an investigation of the shooting, and Franklin Wilks, a lawyer for the Pannell family, said he wanted the officer to be indicted in the case.

Bensonhurst witness tells of seeing suspects

NEW YORK — A young mother told jurors of seeing both the accused triggerman and ringleader in the Bensonhurst racial slaying near the site of the shooting before hearing "something that sounded like firecrackers."

Irene DeSerio, 16, said she saw the accused gunman in the attack, Joseph Fama, 19, flee the scene of the shooting "holding his right side" and saw the alleged ringleader, Keith Mondello, 19, wielding a bat before the attack on Yusef Hawkins, a Black teenager.

Her statements April 20 marked the first time any witness in trial testimony has placed the two suspects near the scene of the shooting at the same time.

Fama and Mondello are on trial in state Supreme Court in Brooklyn on second-degree murder charges in the Aug. 23 slaying of Hawkins, 16. The killing ignited racial tensions citywide and sparked a series of protests, some of them violent.

DeSerio, an unemployed mother from Sheepshead Bay, said she was in the predominantly White neighborhood visiting a cousin with her infant daughter when she saw four Black teenagers, one of whom said "hello."

Five minutes later, she saw about 30 to 40 White men running down the street, including Fama and Mondello.

Assistant District Attorney Jeanne Hammock asked if Mondello held anything in his hand.

"Yes," DeSerio replied. "A bat."

Asked if Fama had anything in his hands, DeSerio replied, "No. He was holding his left side."

DeSerio said that moments after seeing the White youths running down the block, "I heard something that sounded like firecrackers. Then they (the gang of Whites) came running back."

She said she saw Fama "holding his right side ... He looked like he had something in his pants. It wasn't flat."

Hawkins and three Black friends were in the neighborhood to look at a used car when, prosecutors say, the White youths mistook them for friends of a neighborhood girl who had invited Blacks to her birthday party.

Demonstrators won't be charged

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — Albemarle County Commonwealth's Attorney Lindsay Dorrier has decided to dismiss charges against 31 U.Va. students who were arrested while protesting the school's investments in firms that do business in South Africa.

In return, U.Va. officials said, the students, who staged a sit-in April 20 in the Rotunda and were charged with trespassing, must perform 10 hours of community service.

The university will not take disciplinary action against those students who perform community service, said Ernest Ern, vice president for student affairs.

"Dorrier reached his decision after conferring with U. Va. officials," Ern said.

The agreement did not apply to one student who faces a charge of obstructing justice. Mark Bowie, 19, of Randallstown, Md., the incoming president of the Black Student Alliance, is accused of striking a police officer in the eye.

The alleged incident occurred outside the Rotunda, where several hundred students linked arms to form a chain around the building.

The sit-in began after the finance committee of the U.Va. board of visitors met in the Rotunda at the request of the Rainbow Coalition to hold a forum on the issue of divestment.

The university's investments in companies with links to South Africa amount to about $15.5 million, about 4 percent of the university's $473 million endowment.

Prosecutors defend Barry drug sting operation

WASHINGTON — Federal prosecutors said Mayor Marion Barry initiated the crack cocaine transaction that led to his arrest at a hotel in a Jan. 18 FBI sting, and that he was a regular drug abuser who put some of the crack in a coat pocket to take with him before the bust.

In a memorandum filed April 20 in U.S. District Court where Mr. Barry is scheduled to face a June 4 trial, U.S. Attorney Jay Stephens claimed a sting operation was set up after a grand jury heard repeated testimony that Barry used illegal drugs for years.

"The government submits that when all the evidence is placed before the court in the present case, the record will unequivocally establish that this was not a situation where the government simply launched an undercover operation as a fishing expedition to see if anyone would bite the bait," the government wrote in a scatching 23-page response to a request from Barry's attorney that the charges be dropped.

"Rather . . . the credible and substantial testimony of numerous witnesses indicated that in recent years the defendant had knowingly, willingly and repeatedly bought, possessed and used crack, cocaine and marijuana," the court papers state.

The memorandum also disclosed that on the night of his Jan. 18 arrest at the Vista International Hotel in downtown Washington, Mr. Barry's blood and alcohol level was measured at .005 - 20 times below the legal limit for drunken driving. Barry's attorney is expected to claim the mayor's problems stemming from alcohol abuse.

The government's allegations were the first extensive description of Mr. Barry's arrest after he was lured to the hotel by former model Rasheeda Moore, who was working with the FBI.

Mr. Barry's attorney, B. Kenneth Mundy, asked U.S. District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson to drop all eight charges of perjury and cocaine possession against Mr. Barry, claiming the government had "manufactured the crime."

In a legal response signed by Mr. Stephens and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Judith Retchin and Richard Roberts, the mayor is portrayed as a long-term drug user who cannot legally claim he was an improper target of the undercover investigation.

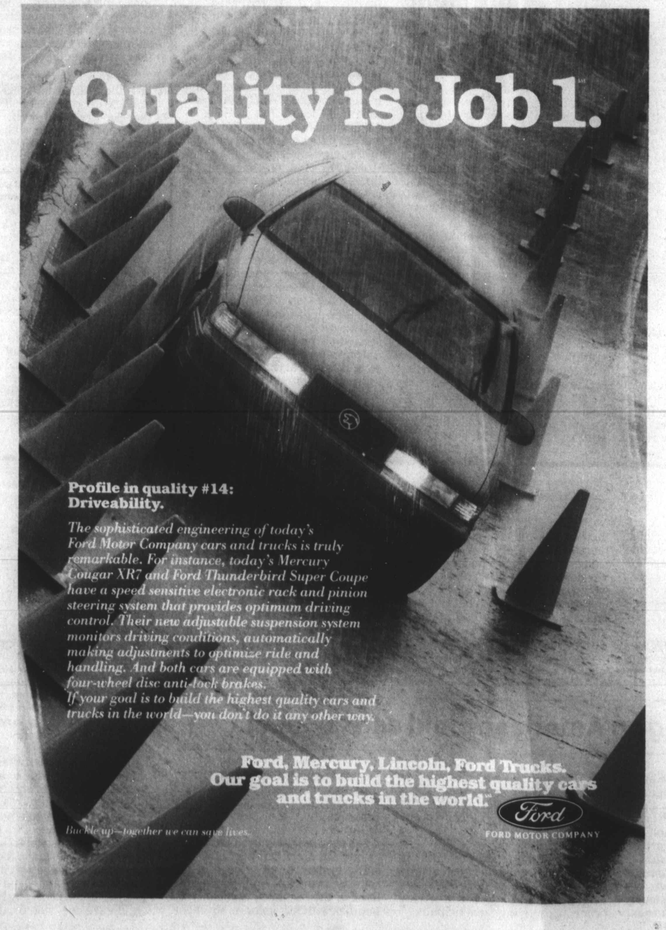
After his arrest, Mr. Barry spent seven weeks at inpatient substance abuse center in Florida and South Carolina. He has said he is an alcoholic who also was addicted to prescription drugs, but has not acknowledged using illegal drugs.

Tenn. congressman sees acquittal in fraud trial

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Rep. Harold Ford, the only Black Congressman in Tennessee history, predicted a quick acquittal in his influence-peddling trial, grinning and telling crowds of courthouse supporters "I feel good!"

Mr. Ford, a flamboyant eight-term Democrat, strode through the packed courtroom April 20 shaking hands as his lawyer completed an emotion-charged closing argument to the federal jury in his nine-week trial.

"I thought it was very touching, Mr. Ford said of William McDaniels' final plea to the jury. "I think he showed that they don't have any evidence, I'm definitely not worried.



ENTERTAINMENT/ LIFESTYLE

Vereen to pay $7,500 after incident with ex-girlfriend

LOS ANGELES — Actor Ben Vereen, arrested last month for allegedly storming into his ex-girlfriend's home and throwing her to the ground, agreed to pay her $7,500 and to stay away from her.

The woman, Christine Rich, sought a restraining order in Superior Court March 2, one day after she called police to have Vereen arrested after he allegedly kicked in the door to her house and assaulted her.

"He grabbed my arm, causing injuries, grabbed my neck, clothing and threw me to the ground," Rich said in her court petition. "Then he shouted obscenities and threats at me. I was able to dial 911 and the police arrived and placed the defendant under arrest."

Vereen was not in court April 18, but his lawyer, Anthony Maniella, Jr., negotiated an agreement with Rich's lawyer, Larry Epstein, and it was signed by Superior Court Commissioner Robert Zakon.

Under the agreement, Vereen, who lives in Malibu, will pay Rich $7,500 by June 18, will stay at least 100 yards away from her home and work place, and will not make any contact with her.

In return, Rich agreed that, upon receiving the money, she will return to Vereen two Les Brown tapes, any answering machine tapes, photographs of Vereen and letters from him, according to the court document.

Moreover, Rich will have to stay away from Vereen and not make any contact with him.

Vereen could be charged with contempt of court if he fails to adhere to the agreement.

Rich's original petition said she had to seek medical treatment for strained arm muscles after experiencing "loss of feeling alternating with numbness and tingling of the fingers."

The petition said Vereen made threatening telephone calls to Rich shortly after the incident, requiring her to leave her home and stay with friends.

LATE NIGHT TALK host Arsenio Hall talks with CBS news correspondent Connie Chung about his seldom-seen serious side in an interview to be broadcast on a "Special Evening With Connie Chung," to be aired May 7 at 10 p.m. Hall says his three idols are Martin Luther King, Gandhi and Johnny Carson. "My mission, through laughter," he says, "is to bring people together."

Glover honored

On Sunday, April 8, the Black American Cinema Society (BACS), A Subsidiary of Western States Black Research Center (WSBRC) presented the Eighth Annual BACS Awards. Mr. Danny Glover, co-star of the box office hit, Lethal Weapon 1 and 2, The Color Purple, and Places In the Heart, was at the Gary Grant Theater on Columbia Pictures' Culver City lot (formerly the MGM Studio lot) to receive BACS' prestigious Phoenix Award. Mr. Glover also recently completed work on the feature film, "To Sleep With Anger," a story about three conflicting generations of a modern Black family wrestling with its own values, as well as with the influences of a mysterious old friend from the past, played by Mr. Glover. He not only starred in this project, but served as executive producer, as well. The film is scheduled to be released soon.

Ms. Beah Richards, the incomparable lady of screen, stage, and television was also presented with the Phoenix Award.

SHOW BIZ NOTES

'Heat Wave' Coming

Blair Underwood of "L.A. Law" will star in "Heat Wave," a television movie to mark the 25th anniversary of the Watts riot in Los Angeles. He will play Robert Richardson, the first Black reporter at the Los Angeles Times, who won a Pulitzer Prize for his coverage of the riots. The show, which will be aired on the TNT network, also will star Cicely Tyson and James Earl Jones . . . Singer James McMurtry, son of writer Larry McMurtry, is returning to the studio to start work on his second album.

Star Treatment

Janet Jackson got the star treatment in Los Angeles this month. Mayor Tom Bradley declared April 20-27 to be Janet Jackson Week to honor her for music and lyrics that "reinforce a positive social message to kids."

Starting with the Los Angeles concerts and continuing through the rest of her tour, Jackson intends to give 25 cents from every ticket sold to a program to discourage kids from dropping out of school.

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