

INSIDE THE BELTWAY

By John McCaslin

POST-IT PRICE

Like presidents before him who even signed flesh, George W. Bush has grown accustomed to autographing anything ink will adhere to — now including “Post-its” handed to him by unprepared CIA employees after the president’s impromptu lunchtime remarks in the agency’s cafeteria in recent days.

Don’t laugh. Hollywood Collectibles, as we speak, is peddling a 3x5 index card signed by former President George Bush for \$175.

BOYDA’S HOLIDAY

Controversy surrounding the August congressional recess is hanging tough like the heat.

Now it’s Rep. Nancy Boyda, Kansas Democrat, coming under fire from the National Republican Congressional Committee, which says after “casting the deciding vote to give Congress a monthlong vacation, Boyda is now disingenuously claiming she had nothing to do with it.”

“Nancy Boyda is desperately hiding from the fact that she cast the deciding vote to send Congress on a monthlong vacation instead of addressing critical energy legislation to lower the cost of gasoline,” says NRCC spokesman Ken Spain.

The final vote tally to vacate Washington was a razor-thin 213-212.

So, says Mr. Spain, while Congress is taking its vacation against the wishes of Republicans, “families all across the country have had to cancel their vacations because of the high gas prices.”

BELK BILK

The Federal Election Commission (FEC) has closed the unusual case of one-time U.S. Senate candidate Marcus Belk and his phony National Democratic Congressional Committee (NDCC).

Under a settlement with the Justice Department, Mr. Belk admitted to operating his so-called NDCC as a political committee without registering and reporting with the FEC.

“In addition . . . he admitted that he knowingly and willfully received excessive contributions, commingled NDCC funds with his personal funds and fraudulently misrepresented himself as acting on behalf of a political party,” the FEC says.

“Mr. Belk also acknowledged other knowing and willful reporting violations related to his own campaign for the U.S. Senate in South Carolina in 2004.”

Mr. Belk was sentenced to 36 months’ probation, ordered to pay restitution and perform 100 hours of community service. Furthermore, he is prohibited from working or volunteering in federal campaigns in a capacity involving finances or disclosure reports for a period of 10 years, says the FEC.

LOU’S SERMON

That will be 72-year-old Oscar-winning actor Lou Gossett Jr., making history this Saturday by becoming the first black American to deliver a Shabbat morning sermon in the 122-year history of the National Synagogue in Washington.

“To him whom much is

given, much is expected,” Mr. Gossett remarked in anticipa-

tion of his 11:30 a.m. appearance. “I see myself as a vessel that God uses to do the work I am on the planet to do.”

It was in 1886, when Grover Cleveland was president, that a group of devout Russian immigrant Jews founded Ohev Sholom Congregation in Washington. The first services were held on the second floor above Myer Fisher’s clothing store in the 1100 block of Seventh Street Northwest.

Today, the Orthodox synagogue on Jonquil Street Northwest has more than 350 families as members.

We might point out that Mr. Gossett will be showcased Monday in the HBO documentary “The Black List,” a collection of portraits surrounding 20 influential black Americans.

ODD COUPLES

Given that past “enemies” such as Democratic Rep. Dennis J. Kucinich and White House counselor Ed Gillespie declared a truce in the spirit of comedy, organizers of next month’s Funniest Celebrity in Washington Contest are breaking new ground for the show’s 15th anniversary: presenting the internationally acclaimed Israeli-Palestinian Comedy Tour.

“Some of the best comedy comes from conflict,” said show producer Richard Siegel. “And who’s got more conflict than Israelis and Palestinians? It’s like ‘The Odd Couple,’ but of biblical proportions.”

The laughter begins at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Sept. 10, at the world famous DC Improv. Also featured will be former Republican presidential candidate Mike Huckabee and Libertarian presidential nominee Bob Barr of Georgia, among others.

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