

Innocent verdict ends Denny beating trial

LOS ANGELES — Damian Williams was found innocent Wednesday of attempting to murder trucker Reginald Denny during the 1992 riots...

Spectators gasped as the court clerk read "Not guilty" in the finale of the tortured series of jury deliberations...

Williams smiled and hugged his attorneys. "They didn't have a case," said defense attorney Edi Faal.

"The power of prayer had led to the verdicts," said Georgiana Williams, the defendant's mother.

Superior Court Judge John Ouderkirk declared a mistrial on one deadlocked count, assault with a deadly weapon...

The judge ordered Watson released without bail because he had been convicted of only one misdemeanor...

There were people who got sick. There were nerves that were frayed, and that's the only way we're going to solve the racial problem in America — to risk that type of trauma.

— Murray, South Central Los Angeles minister

of six months. Williams remained jailed. Both defendants had been jailed 17 months since their arrest.

Williams and Watson, both black, were accused of attempted murder and other charges in the attacks on Denny...

The riots swept the city April 29, 1992,

following the state acquittals in the 1991 beating of black motorist Rodney King.

On Monday, the racially mixed jury acquitted Williams and Watson of some of the most serious counts...

States strengthen gun laws after recent youth violence

DENVER — Following a summer of violence that left four children wounded by stray bullets...

Nineteen states and the District of Columbia have stiff anti-gun laws and a half-dozen more are considering action.

Getting guns away from young people "is definitely the hottest issue in gun policy," said Denise Griffin...

Among a package of bills signed by Gov. Roy Romer last month is a law barring people under age 18 from

possessing handguns, except for hunting, instruction and target shooting.

Florida has a special legislative session on crime beginning Nov. 1 in the wake of last month's arrests of young people...

"Right now the laws we have in existence have no meat in them," said Lee Condon, spokeswoman for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

"The law for juveniles has no real consequences, and the kids know this. We're looking for something to make

Juvenile gun possession

Nineteen states and the District of Columbia have adopted strict anti-gun laws, and a half-dozen more are considering action.



AP/Wm. J. Castello, Alex Sibirny

it a felony, and provide a penalty for parents who allow their children to have guns.

In Utah last week, lawmakers approved a package that Gov. Michael Leavitt plans to sign. It outlaw handgun possession by people under 18.

Haitian prime minister threatens to leave post

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — Haiti's embattled civilian prime minister threatened Wednesday to quit in 10 days if Haiti's army and police chiefs remain in power...

Prime Minister Robert Malval's comments added even more pressure to international mediators trying to implement a plan to return ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide...

Malval's departure could cripple international efforts to restore democracy to Haiti. He has been under considerable pressure to push Aristide for further concessions...

law instead of an amnesty for political crimes after the 1991 coup.

Malval, in an interview with Radio Tropic FM, said the exiled president told him by phone Tuesday night that he could not come back Oct. 30...

Malval said he, too, would step down if Aristide didn't come back as scheduled. "Morally, I don't want to be an accomplice of these maneuvers," Malval said...

An aide to the prime minister said Malval would only consider staying on if Aristide himself extended the Oct. 30 deadline.

STATE WIRE

Nelson questions high gasoline prices

OMAHA — State officials will be asked to investigate higher gasoline prices in Nebraska, Gov. Ben Nelson said Wednesday.

"On its face, it appears something is haywire. We're looking into it. We have to see what kind of evidence we have here," Nelson said during the Nebraska Association of County Officials Convention in Omaha.

Nelson said he will ask the State Energy Office and the Department of Revenue to look into the higher prices. Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad on Tuesday called for a state investigation of higher fuel prices.

A 10-cent-per-gallon increase was expected Oct. 1 because of a 4.3-cent-per-gallon increase in the federal fuel tax.

to a new federal law requiring truckers to burn cleaner fuel, also was part of President Clinton's deficit-cutting tax package.

But diesel fuel prices have jumped 25 cents to 30 cents per gallon in Nebraska and up to 40 cents per gallon in Iowa.

The Clean Air Act required that truckers burn cleaner, more expensive fuel starting Oct. 1. Oil industry officials said the low-sulphur fuel now required is in short supply.

The American Automobile Association reported Wednesday that the average price of self-serve regular unleaded gasoline increased nationwide 5.2 cents to \$1.134 per gallon in October.

SPORTS WIRE

Hurricanes' Costa loses starting job

CORAL GABLES, Fla. — Frank Costa's teammates have said the Miami quarterback has received a disproportionate amount of blame for the team's offensive problems.

But now, it has cost him his starting job. Costa, a junior chosen by Miami coach Dennis Erickson to succeed 1992 Heisman Trophy winner Gino Torretta, lost his starting job to sophomore Ryan Collins.

Costa threw just four touchdown passes in Miami's first five games, and he's the first Hurricanes quarterback to be benched since Mike Rodrigue was replaced by Jim Kelly in 1979. Costa's demotion contributed to a rare subdued mood among the Hurricanes...

with a loss at top-ranked Florida State on Oct. 9. They haven't played since.

"We're still kind of down," defensive end Darren Krein said.

Sixth-ranked Miami (4-1) seeks a measure of redemption Saturday night against No. 23 Syracuse (4-1-1).

However, some of the Hurricane players are not excited about the change at quarterback.

"Everybody can't put the burden on Frank," receiver Chris Jones said. "I wonder why things are coming down on him. We receivers dropped balls; we could have been blamed for the offense not moving, too. It takes 10 players besides the quarterback to do the job."

The Future of Space Travel

A Presentation by John W. O'Neill, Deputy Director, NASA Mission Operations, Houston, TX

Thursday, October 21, 3:30 p.m. Nebraska Union, Georgian Suite

Growing up in Jackson, Nebraska, John O'Neill was aware his ancestors were pioneer settlers in Dakota County, but he never imagined he'd be a pioneer himself in what many consider man's final frontier.

O'Neill has scaled the ranks at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to become deputy director of The Missions Operations Directorate at NASA's Johnson Space Center.

Come hear O'Neill talk about NASA and the future of space travel. He'll discuss how far we've come in 30 years and how much more there is to learn about the universe we've only begun to explore.

Mr. O'Neill is visiting UNL as part of Master's Week.



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