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Democratic presidential hopeful Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., arrives to a packed crowd at Kennett High School in Conway, N.H., on Sunday. Obama's New Hampshire campaign trip continued Monday, where he visited a war monument in recognition of Memorial Day and called for improved services for America's war veterans. (AP photo/Jim Cole)

Obama: Improve mental health care for military vets

Philip Elliott

LITTLETON, N.H. — Though he said Memorial Day shouldn't be politicized, Democratic presidential hopeful Barack Obama used a visit to a war monument Monday to repeat his call for better services for veterans.

Obama, campaigning in the first-in-the-nation primary state with his wife and daughters, laid a wreath at a war monument before attending a town hall-style meeting.

"This is a day on which we reflect on those who have fallen and reflect on the sacrifices they have made for all of us," Obama said, talking with reporters after the brief ceremony. "This is a great day to think about what we're doing on behalf of our veterans, and what we're not doing on behalf of our veterans."

Obama also responded to news that the American ambassador to Iraq had held extensive talks with his Iranian counterpart Monday to discuss Iraq's future.

"I have to give the administration credit, which I rarely do," Obama said, adding that he wants President Bush to push more diplomacy in the region.

"Not because I trust the Iranians, but because I think they have a self-interest. They don't want to see Iraq completely collapse because they're going to have millions of people pouring over their borders," he said.

Obama has made his opposition to the war in Iraq a central part of his campaign.

At a town hall forum Sunday in Conway, his comments on the war prompted a standing ovation, complete with whoops and hollers.

The Illinois senator said he supports the troops, just not their mission.

"There's nobody who doesn't support the troops," Obama said. "This really is a political argument that is designed to deflect criticism of the president's policies in Iraq."

On Sunday, Obama said the coun-

try is not providing enough mental health services for active duty troops and veterans. He proposed spending hundreds of million dollars more each year for better care.

"We cannot expect our young men and women to serve in our armed forces, if we are not making sure they get the treatment they deserve," Obama said.

Obama is urging the Pentagon to recruit more mental health professions to help identify and treat problems. He said improvements are needed at every stage of military service: recruitment, deployment and re-entry into civilian life.

(Associated Press)

Civil rights sites now used for teaching

Regina L. Burns

JACKSON, Miss. — The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated just one day before Sharon Matlock turned 10.

Her birthday brought gifts and her mother's tears, and ever since she has tried to understand the hatred and violence of those times.

Now 49 and a college staff member, Matlock recently joined professors and students on a five-state trip to civil rights landmarks to find answers.

More and more colleges are leading trips through the South — to cities such as Memphis, where King was shot in 1968, Little Rock, Ark., Atlanta, Selma, Ala., and Jack-

son — to help students understand the long, bitter struggle for equality.

The trips bring events of that period to life and provide students with insights they could not get in a classroom, say officials of Southern Methodist University, sponsor of the tour Matlock joined.

"Seeing Medgar Evers' house was sobering because we saw how that family had to live back in that time," said Matlock, describing the

"Seeing Medgar Evers' house was sobering because we saw how that family had to live back in that time."

— Sharon Matlock

home where the Mississippi NAACP field secretary was fatally shot. It is in Jackson, the tour's first stop. "The house was designed with no front door. They had to live on the floor. They were prisoners in their home."

In 2005, SMU created its Civil Rights Pilgrimage Travel Seminar, which takes students during spring break to historical sites. Matlock, who works in the university's human resources department, traveled with 40 others, including four from another Dallas school, historically black Paul Quinn College. Their chartered bus stopped in eight cities over eight days.

Clotie Graves led the tour at Evers' house. Graves, who has a business that works with the Jackson Convention and Visitors Bureau, noted, "Civil rights tours are very popular among colleges, senior citizens' groups, historical groups and high schools."

Evers' house was restored by Castle Rock Entertainment, which used it for scenes in the 1996 movie "Ghosts of Mississippi," Graves said while leading another tour on a recent Saturday, during which cura-

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Talk anything but cheap at City-Wide Dialogues

Michelle Sedaca

Seeking to evoke both Boston's proud history of abolitionism and the city's ugly past of racist attacks and violent protests during desegregation, Harvard Law School Professor Charles J. Ogletree Jr. took a page from one of Charles Dickens' most famous books.

"This," said Ogletree, "is a tale of two cities."

That tale was an important topic in the keynote address Ogletree delivered last Wednesday morning at the Boston Private Bank and Trust Company, where more than 60 people gathered for a seminar in the company's "social invest-

ing series" to discuss one important piece of the puzzle on how to unite those two disparate sides of Boston — The City-Wide Dialogues on Race and Ethnicity.

Launched in 2003 by a broad-based coalition of organizations, the Dialogues attempt to bring together Boston residents from a variety of backgrounds to address their fellow citizens' attitudes on race and ethnicity — and, perhaps more importantly, to challenge their own.

"The Dialogues make a difference," Ogletree said. "They change the way we see each other. The Dialogues will be even more important as we go forward."

Dialogues, continued to page 14



Brig. Gen. Robert M. Radin (left) presents a U.S. flag to Conroy Wright, father of Sgt. Gregroy A. Wright, of Boston, Mass., at burial services held at Arlington National Cemetery on Jan. 26, 2007. Wright died Jan. 13 in Muqdadiyah, Iraq. He was one of six Bostonians killed in action in Iraq and Afghanistan recognized by Mayor Thomas M. Menino during Memorial Day. The others were Marine Lance Cpl. Alexander S. Arredondo, Army Capt. David S. Connolly, Army Chief Warrant Officer Kyran E. Kennedy, Army Sgt. Daniel J. Londono and Army Spc. Edgardo Zayas. (AP photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais)

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