

Clinton bringing classic funk to midnight show



GEORGE CLINTON

Special to the Sentinel-Voice

The original architects of the funk make a pledge to tear the roof off the sucker during a post Tyson-Holyfield fight concert at the Aladdin this Saturday.

George Clinton and the P-Funk All Stars featuring Parliament, the Brides of Funkenstein and Funkadelic will take the stage at midnight. Bootsy Collins, Bernie Worrell and Junie Morrison are among those slated to perform.

The crew is reunited on the 14-track The Awesome Power of a Fully Operational Mothership

which has been described as the best unadulterated P-Funk music in more than a decade.

During the summer of 1996, P-Funk was the surprise hit of the Lollapalooza Tour where they followed their regular daytime set with a four-hour club gig that same night. It was a fine twist to Clinton's long history.

In 1967, Parliament scored a top 20 pop hit with their single "(I Just Wanna) Testify," written and produced by George Clinton.

By this time, Clinton had begun collaborating with singers and players like Eddie Hazel,

Billy "Bass" Nelson, and Clarence "Fuzzy" Haskins, as well as Parliament's Ray Davis and Grady Thomas, all of whom would soon play important roles in the two-sided group known as Parliament-Funkadelic, formed in 1968.

The debut album Funkadelic was released in 1969; Parliament released its first album, Osmium, in 1970.

As the spiritual, musical and organizational leader of these groups, George Clinton's incredibly prolific career brought

forth such R&B singles as "Tear The Roof Off The Sucker," "Up For the Down Stroke," "Flashlight," "One Nation Under A Groove," and "(Not Just) Knee Deep." By 1980, the Parliament-Funkadelic combine was estimated to have sold over 10

million albums in the U.S. alone. In 1982, George Clinton released his first solo album, Computer Games; its hit single "Atomic Dog" held the #1 R&B position for four straight weeks.

Tickets are \$25 and \$35.

Business

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March. The movie caters to the naiveté of Hollywood's moguls and downplays Minister Farrakhan's stature as a national black leader obviously figuring that if you ignore him he will go away.

In reality, Lee and his associates, would have done better toward greasing the turnstiles in movie houses if they'd employed some of Farrakhan's techniques to the selling of "Get on the Bus." What seems to be continually overlooked by all in the mainstream media is the work Farrakhan and Ben Chavis put into the Million Man March long before Oct. 16, 1995. The mainstream media people, who continually seek to designate our leaders for us, invariably ignore the fact that Farrakhan literally went door-to-door for a full year to build a constituency for the Million Man March. They are still

missing the marketing and positioning importance of the "Men Only Meetings" that Farrakhan held from Boston to Birmingham in 1994 and 1995. Lee, and his mainstream associates, give no credence to the role that the black media played in reporting about the "Men Only Meetings" and trumpeting of the Million Man March. And surely, Lee & Associates missed the message that Farrakhan was delivering, in messianic-enough magic to invoke a powerful word-of-mouth communication among black men about a massive display of black male solidarity.

Its very important to note that Spike Lee's mainstream media associates didn't know that the Million Man March was happening until long after the buses to Washington had already been chartered. And, that Lee has no first-hand knowledge of the march's magic he didn't attend. The mainstream community is trying to downgrade Farrakhan illustrating that the attendees didn't bond to produce viable corps in Black American communities. (In contrast, Farrakhan, and the FBI, report that murders, burglaries and

violent crimes are down since last year's march.) Eventually it may become evident to the mainstream community, and Lee, that trying to separate Farrakhan from the Million Man March is akin to having an elephant in your living room and pretending it's not there.

One of the other ruses employed toward getting blacks to patronize "Get on the Bus" is the half-truth that it was produced, directed and financed by wealthy black men. While people such as Danny Glover, Wesley Snipes, Will Smith, Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr., Jeryl Busby, Robert Guillaume and Black Entertainment Television CEO Robert Johnson, among others, did pony up between \$100,000 and \$250,000 apiece toward the production of "Get on the Bus," in a move that is considered extremely unusual in the industry, they all got their money back, plus an eight percent profit, before the movie's release. The problem Lee faced in "shopping" a film about the Million Man March was that no Hollywood studio would touch a film featuring Farrakhan. So, as a part of the film's evolving concept, and plot, any depiction of Farrakhan was left on the

cutting room floor. After the film was safely in the can, minus Farrakhan, "Get on the Bus" was salable to a mainstream company. Lee & Associates made a tidy profit when they sold "Get on the Bus" to Columbia Pictures for \$3.6 million for distribution.

The chickens have come home to roost because the black community is showing those associated with "Get on the Bus" a type of passive protest and boycott by withholding their purchasing power for the film. The industry did not buy into the film at first because of the looming impact of Farrakhan. Now that the image of Farrakhan, and stature, has been cut out of it, Sony's Columbia Pictures has bought into a film with the central figure for African-Americans gone. Those blacks who were expected to buy tickets for "Get on the Bus" are staying at home, probably looking at pictures that adorn their walls depicting the throngs of blacks at the greatest triumph of black men in the past 20 years.

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MONEY MANAGEMENT

Employee's benefits of choice: Maximizing your package

Chances are, you and your coworkers in the next office are not receiving the same company benefits. That's because employers are offering employees greater flexibility in designing their own benefits packages. However, the Nevada Society of CPAs points out that this greater flexibility also brings with it greater employee responsibility for choosing benefits that meet the personal and financial needs of his or her family. In fact, now is the time of year employers schedule enrollment periods during which employees are asked to review their benefits options and make new selections for the coming year. Here are some tips to guide you in selecting and making the most of your company benefits.

Investigate managed care

Be sure to evaluate all the options available to you before selecting a medical plan. In most cases, you'll find that a health

maintenance organization (HMO) or PPO (Preferred Provider Organization) will cost less than a traditional fee-for-service indemnity plan. Check to see which plans your doctor or doctors belong to before signing up. If your doctors don't participate in any of the plans offered by your employer, get references on some of the physicians in other plans to determine whether you feel comfortable changing your primary care physician.

Flex your spending account

If you have a health care flexible spending account (FSA), find out whether you have any balance left. Then, make every effort to use it up because you'll forfeit any funds not spent by the end of the year. You can buy new glasses of prescription sunglasses, get your teeth cleaned, or even stock up on several months worth of contact lens solutions.

If you don't have a health care flexible spending account, you might consider signing up for one. An FSA allows you to put aside as much as \$5,000 of your pretax salary each year for medical expenses. You decide how much you want to contribute and the amount is deducted from your paycheck in equal. When the bills come in, submit them to your plan for reimbursement.

In effect, health care FSA lets you use untaxed wages to recover the costs of a wide range of medical-related services and supplies, including vision and dental care, prescription drugs, well-child visits, as well as insurance deductibles, co-payments and other expenses your healthcare policies do not cover. The savings can be significant—so don't let the "use it or lose it" rule scare you away. Because of the tax benefits, it's very possible you could break

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