

ENTERTAINMENT

Gospel play opens today

SIMPSON'S DAUGHTER SENTENCED FOR DRUNKEN DRIVING

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. — Arnelle Simpson, O.J. Simpson's daughter, was sentenced to 48 hours in county jail and fined \$2,810 for driving drunk. Simpson, 29, originally pleaded innocent to misdemeanor drunken driving charges but changed her plea to "no contest" during her appearance last week in Beverly Hills Municipal Court. Her sentence also included five years probation, restricted driving privileges and admittance to an alcohol treatment program. She was arrested April 4 and hospitalized for injuries after her black Saab convertible ran into a bus bench, then crashed through an apartment wall. No one inside the apartment was hurt. The Los Angeles County district attorney's office said Ms. Simpson's blood alcohol level was .20 percent. A driver is legally drunk at .08 percent. The complaint against her said she had a prior drunken driving conviction in 1993.

SHAQ PLEDGES TO GET CHILDREN ON INTERNET

LOS ANGELES — Shaquille O'Neal, who admits he can't program his VCR, wants to get kids on the technology bandwagon. The Los Angeles Lakers center said that when the Internet first became popular, he wanted nothing to do with it. Now, he can't stay off of it. "If Shaq can work technology, anybody can," he said in a recent interview. He added that "right now, certain kids have access to the Internet and certain kids don't." O'Neal said he has donated \$1 million to the Boys and Girls Clubs as part of a \$15 million plan to open 10 technology centers a year for the next 10 years. "I'm going to do it even if I have to give the \$15 million myself," he said.



SHAQUILLE O'NEIL

COLEMAN'S LAWYER SAYS PLAINTIFF MONEY-HUNGRY

LOS ANGELES — A bus driver suing former "Diff'rent Strokes" actor Gary Coleman for allegedly punching her is trying to exploit his stardom "to gain fame and fortune," Coleman's lawyer said. "We have no intention of allowing Gary to be bullied by his accuser and become a winning lottery ticket and publicity pawn for her," lawyer Adam London said last Wednesday, two days after Tracy Fields filed a \$1 million lawsuit. Fields, a Metropolitan Transportation Authority driver, said the attack has caused headaches and muscle spasms. On July 30, Fields asked Coleman for an autograph at a uniform shop, but he became angry after she asked him to personalize it for her son, her lawsuit claims. The actor then pushed her into a gumball machine and kept punching her until an off-duty police officer stopped the fight, she said. Coleman surrendered to authorities and was later released on his own recognizance. He was scheduled to be arraigned Aug. 25 in Inglewood Municipal Court. Coleman, 30, played Arnold on the NBC series "Diff'rent Strokes" from 1978 to 1986. He is currently a security guard at a mall in Culver City.

BASSETT REFUSES NUDE SCENES IN STELLA

NEW YORK — Angela Bassett showed "How Stella Got Her Groove Back" without showing it all. Playing an unhappy 40-year-old who hooks up with a 20-year-old hunk in a Caribbean paradise, Bassett refused to do any nude scenes in the new movie. "It's always the girl who takes her clothes off," Bassett said in Sunday's *Daily News*. "We're the objects. It's just not necessary." The film, co-starring Whoopi Goldberg, is Bassett's second movie based on a Terry McMillan novel. The first was "Waiting to Exhale." She was nominated for an Academy Award for "What's Love Got to Do With It," playing singer and abused wife Tina Turner. Bassett, 40, waited until finishing "How Stella Got Her Groove Back" to marry fellow actor Courtney B. Vance, insistent that she feel ready career-wise. "The timing was right. I have some security. I have some success. I have some visibility," Bassett said. "I can let my focus shift to my family, as it should."



ANGELA BASSETT

By Deborah Kohen
Sentinel-Voice

The Las Vegas Black Gospel Theatre, Inc., has been packing in the audiences for its unique productions since 1991.

Its newest offering, "Lord of the Ungodly," opens today at the Summerlin Performing Arts Center, 1771 Inner Circle Drive.

Performances begin at 8:15 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, with a 2 p.m. matinee and a special 8:15 p.m. showing on Sunday to benefit SAFE House, a shelter for women and children.

"Lord of the Ungodly" tells of the moral dilemmas faced by members of an extended family.

At the center story stands Ruby, who is married to Winslow, best friend of her true love Montgomery, whose child she had and gave up for adoption.

Toni, Ruby and Winslow's daughter, is about to graduate from high school when Montgomery finds his son and brings him back. The half-siblings, unaware of their kinship, grow close. Their relationship sparks family



Photo special to the Sentinel-Voice

Performers of the gospel musical "Lord of the Ungodly" are rehearsing for this weekend's show. The cast includes Henry "Pops" Regan (standing), Jean Brei (left). Seated left to right are Brian Archibald, Carmen Brady and Juan Williams.

conflicts and provides the central crisis of the play.

Guest director Carl Butto comes to the Las Vegas Black Gospel Theatre armed with credentials. His entertainment career began with a 10-year stint as a singer and band musician on Las Vegas stages before he became an actor in

1980. He began teaching acting workshops in 1991 but continued to perform. In his most recent role, he co-starred with Mariette Hartley in a sold-out run of Don Taylor's "Silver Buckles on his Knee." Butto's wife owns the Creative Talent Agency and he owns the Off

Broadway Theatre, a local production company.

Impressed with some of his company's productions, board members of the Las Vegas Black Gospel Theatre asked Butto to guest direct "Lord of the Ungodly."

Butto had never before (See Play, Page 11)

O'Neal hopes to dunk loads of funk in new album

By Malik Russell
Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON — Whether dunking or funking on his newest album, Shaquille O'Neal lets it be known that he is just as committed to hip-hop as he is to helping young people or winning an NBA championship. And whatever he does, O'Neal's skills demand utmost respect.

"I said to myself when I first started (in the music industry), 'I'm going to do 10 albums,' because I knew when I first started (that) this (hip-hop) wasn't a faddish type thing, I was serious about it," said O'Neal, in town to promote "Respect," his latest release on TWiSM/A&M Records.

"Of course, the world knows me as a basketball player and most athletes or people who have one profession normally stick to that profession, but I consider

myself a renaissance man and I like doing different things," he said.

O'Neal fires back at critics who say he's not really into hip-hop.

He said he's been rapping since he lived in Newark, N.J., alias, "Brick City." An early exposure to jazz led to the funk of groups like the Commodores.

"The Commodores moved me," O'Neal said. "Brickhouse moved me. I liked the beat and drums."

While listening to hip-hop legend DJ Red Alert's radio show on New York's Kiss FM, O'Neal and his cousin Kenny Bailey were swept into hip-hop by Afrika Bambaata and the Soul Sonic Force.

No more Commodores, no more jazz.

O'Neal became glued to hip-hop shows on Kiss and its rival station 107.5 WBLS's Mr. Magic's Rap Attack with Juice

Crew All-stars Emcee Shan, Big Daddy Kane, and DJ Marly Marl.

"I had the thick shoe strings, four-fingered rings, chain ... I was a breakdancer and all that," O'Neal said.

O'Neal said rap music has helped him become a good basketball player.

"It enables me to bob my head and when I start dancing, it gives me rhythm. That's why when I do certain things (on the court), people are like how'd you do that? It's all about rhythm," he said.

The music on O'Neal's fourth album is more reflective of his roots in hip-hop.

He's enlisted potent partners to better lace his production: Artist and TWiSM label-mate Peter Gunz, Jay-Z, supa-producer and underground legend DJ Clark Kent, Eric Sermon, and DJ Quik are the guests on the album due out in September.

His first single and video "The Way its going down (TWiSM for life)" is currently making noise on the charts.

In February, Shaq signed a distribution and marketing deal with music giant A&M records which should take his TWiSM (The World Is Mine) Record label to the next level along with his TWiSM clothing line in conjunction with Cyrc.

O'Neal says he's a renaissance man in the truest sense — whether it's providing million of dollars to youth organizations, opening factories creating jobs in Compton, collecting every Superman comic book in the world, or flowing on the mic or court.

The NBA's man of steel says he's serious about the business of his business.

"Critics, whoever they may be or people in general (I just want them to know) I'm serious about everything I do," he said.

C & T Communications
Specializing in pagers, cellular phones & watch pagers by Seiko
360° Service • Pacific Cellular
(NO CREDIT APPROVAL)
\$6.00 FIRST MONTH AIRTIME **657-0400**
Open 10:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday through Friday
3254 N. CIVIC CENTER, STE A • OFF I-15 & CHEYENNE
(in the Cheyenne Square Shopping Center, just before NAPA Auto Parts)

Davey Deals
AUTOS • BIKES • BOATS
1717 FREMONT at BRUCE SHELDON WELCH
E-Z FINANCING & LOW PAYMENTS
HOME OF THE \$300 DOWN
WE SELL 'EM FAST
CUZ WE SELL 'EM CHEAP **474-7777**