

## ENTERTAINMENT

## Entertainment Briefs

JAMES EARL JONES TO CONDUCT  
READING FOR LIBRARY

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (AP)—James Earl Jones will read two books to young children at Blodgett Elementary School to help in the inner-city school's ongoing effort to open a new state-of-the-art library. The 70-year-old actor, whose deep voice is one of the best-known in show business, will read books he selected himself: "Stellaluna," by Janell Cannon, and "Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears," by Verna Aardema. Blodgett is famous as the birthplace of the National Basketball Association's 24-second shot clock. In August 1954, the league's founding members gathered in the school's gym to watch an experimental game with the clock. On July 21, Jones will read to about 25 children in the "Roman amphitheater" section of the unfinished library. Some of the audience will be Blodgett pupils and some will be children of supporters of the library project.

LOUISIANA AIRPORT TO BEAR  
LOUIS ARMSTRONG NAME

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Beginning next month, visitors will be flying in and out of Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport. The City Council on Thursday unanimously approved the name change Mayor Marc Morial had proposed. The change will take effect on Aug. 2, two days before the late jazz great's 100th birthday. Jazz buffs have complained for years that the city has never adequately recognized Armstrong. Council member Marlin Gusman said that at one time, musicians were the only black Americans to grab national attention. "The power of his genius, combined with his loving manner, forced whites to rethink their racism whether they knew it or not, and whether they wanted to or not," Gusman said. The airport, which New Orleans owns although it's in suburban Kenner, opened in the 1940s as Moisant Field, named after aviator John B. Moisant, who died in 1910 when his plane caught a gust of wind and crashed in the city. It became New Orleans International Airport in 1962. Armstrong died in his sleep at age 69 in July 1971.

RAP ARTIST DMX INDICTED FOR  
FAILURE TO APPEAR

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP)—An Erie County grand jury has indicted rap artist DMX on charges he failed to show up at Cheektowaga Town Court to begin serving jail time for a traffic conviction last year. DMX, whose real name is Earl Simmons, was released in March after belatedly serving 13 days at the Erie County Correctional Facility for driving without a license. He is expected to be arraigned within the next week on the new charges. Simmons also faces felony assault charges in Alden after a scuffle with corrections officers while in prison.

SINGERS TO HELP EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS  
IN EL SALVADOR AND INDIA

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP)—Lauryn Hill, Marc Anthony and Luther Vandross are teaming up to help earthquake victims in El Salvador and India by playing a benefit concert in San Jose this month. Organizers of the concert, which is being dubbed Aftershock, hope to raise \$5 million for quake relief. The event, scheduled for July 29, also will feature sitar player Anoushka Shankar, daughter of sitar master Ravi Shankar. More than 20,000 people were killed in quakes in India and El Salvador in January and February. Over 1 million people were left homeless.

REBBIE JACKSON DEBUTS  
AT THE CASTAWAYS

Multi-talented gold-record artist Rebbie Jackson marks her debut in the Windjammer Lounge at the Castaways Hotel, Casino & Bowling Center on July 19-21 and July 26-28. Show times are at 8pm and 10pm. There is no cover or minimum. As part of the world famous Jackson Family musical dynasty, Rebbie (pronounced Ree-bee) has emerged as a powerful, dynamic and critical acclaimed performer in her own right. She exploded on the R&B charts in 1984 with her RIAA-certified gold record and top-five single Centipede, written and produced by Michael Jackson. Rebbie followed this initial success with the albums Reaction (1986), RU Tuff Enuff (1988), Rebbie Jackson Collection (1996) and her fourth LP, Yours Faithfully (1998).

## Event yields laughs aplenty

Nyla Pickett  
Sentinel-Voice

In the tradition of the old school stand-up comics, Russell Simmons' DefComedy crew gave Vegas something to laugh about on a Saturday Night. Headed by comedian host Ricky Harris, The Jam featured a bit and a taste of this and that... enough to keep Sam's Town's live audience alive and kicking for the two-hour show.

The "Live" venue at Sam's Town played first-time host to the show, which has become a favorite showcase for young comics across the country to "get back to the real," says Harris.

The late night cable show has also become a favorite target of self-dubbed progressive thinkers who have heralded the show to be a modern day minstrel show.

Though the show did seem watered down from its normally raw state, Vegas had no problem in giving it up. The showroom was at attention each time as the comics delivered each joke. And as all vanguard pop culture pilots become politically correct, so has DefComedy, with a showing of all walks of life in the spotlight.

Opener Jo Koy, a Phillipino-cinnamon mixture of ghetto eclectic comedy, gets big ups for putting together a set in what, he says, was a matter of hours before the show.

Having produced his own tours, and even secured major backing from footwear giants, Jo honors DFJ as "the best comedy show ever." Honest Joe, a just-released-from-the-institution George Carlinesque crazy man, revels in the light of being "the

oldest funniest white man on the tour."

Neither the age nor the creed seemed to bother the fans who apparently thought Joe was the bomb- with respect, of course, to sister Melanie Camarcho who brought the house to its feet and kept it up for her 20-minute set.

There was certainly no shortage of support for the show from all walks. Harris appropriately pointed that out with a quick shout-out to the "Bennie and the Jets" fans in the crowd, following an opening from DJ Showtime.

The notion of mixing music and laughter is not a new one, but DJ Showtime brings the whole concept to present day- as in now- as in "we don't need no water!"

Brothers Mike Epps, Rudy West and Ricky Harris kept it real with the usual relation-

ship and neighborhood humor. Apparently, there never seems to be enough commentary on fornication, miscegenation, masturbation, the altercations of copulation, the deplorable state of affairs in this nation... and all the other so-called unspeakables of everyday life. And all of this commentary seems to fit very neatly into one form of profanity or another.

In the tradition of the old school stand up, the DefComedy crew followed suit and gave the crowd a show-and-tell on the daily of their own lives.

Says Harris, "Nothing better to make you laugh, than to have a laugh at yourself!" The tour will hit the L.A. scene next and travel the comedy circuit until the end of the year. For more information on tour dates, log onto [www.defcomedy.com](http://www.defcomedy.com).

## Soulful musical production satiates

Dianna Saffold  
Sentinel-Voice

Something got a hold on me on Saturday, and it wasn't the glitz and glitter of the Las Vegas Strip. It was the electricity of the stage production, "An Evening Of Soul."

Directed and choreographed by Platinum Production founder Oscar Robinson, the musical revue was in commemoration of the West Las Vegas Library Theater's sixth anniversary.

The quaint proscenium-styled theater is adequate for community productions. The lobby was adorned with African artifacts for sale, with the lovely ladies of LACE (Ladies Advocating Christian Entertainment) hosting the concession stand.

A master of monologues, Robinson, set the pace, paving the way for an evening of music and poetized theater. The opening song, "Something Got A Hold On Me," was powerful and uplifting. Singer/songwriter Cynthia Wilson and local songstress Elisha Brown shared the spotlight on this "in your face" gospel song. It was the kind of energized opening that quickly captivates a theater-thirsty audience. Led by Elisha Brown, the cast brought forth a version of "Peace Be Still" that shook the house.

The pace of the show never let up, as local gospel vocalist Burmie Davison took the show in the direction of the blues with "Tobacco Road."

The musical conversions were easily achieved by the four-piece band under the direction of pianist Carlton Malone. Malone, having trav-

eled with the stage production, "Is That Man Your Husband," understood what was expected of him and kept his eyes on director Robinson for

any signals to speed it up or slow it down. He was accompanied by horn player, "Jiggs" Hemsley and bass, (See Soul, Page 9)

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