

Entertainment Briefs

WHITNEY HOUSTON'S FATHER MAY DROP \$100 MILLION LAWSUIT

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Whitney Houston's 82-year-old father told a syndicated television show from his hospital bed that he would dismiss a \$100 million lawsuit against his daughter if she pays him money he says she owes him and gets her "act together." John Houston's entertainment company filed a lawsuit in New Jersey in September, claiming his daughter failed to pay for work done negotiating a \$100 million contract with Arista Records. The lawsuit also claims lawyers from Newark, N.J.-based John Houston Entertainment LLC helped have charges dropped against Houston in 2000 after security guards at a Hawaii airport seized a handbag containing half an ounce of marijuana. "I never thought about suing my daughter. I never thought about it that way," John Houston said. "I thought about suing the corporation that belongs to Whitney and she happened to be right in the middle of it." He also addressed his daughter directly during the interview, saying, "You get your act together, honey, and you pay me the money that you owe me. If you do that, you haven't got a lawsuit."

'BROWN SUGAR' LEADS NAACP IMAGE AWARD NODS

LOS ANGELES (AP) - The romantic movie "Brown Sugar" received a leading eight nominations Thursday for the NAACP Image Awards. "Barbershop," a comedy about an urban hair salon that sparked complaints from the Revs. Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton in September over jokes about civil rights icons Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks, had five nominations that included best picture. "Barbershop" also had acting nominations for star Ice Cube and supporting performers Eve, Anthony Anderson and Cedric the Entertainer, whose character spoke the King and Parks jokes. "Brown Sugar" stars Sanaa Lathan and Taye Diggs were nominated for best actress and actor, respectively, and the movie had a best film mention. Co-stars Queen Latifah, Nicole Ari Parker, Mos Def and Boris Kodjoe had supporting performer nominations and the movie's soundtrack had a music nod. "Soul Food" had seven nominations.

JERMAINE JACKSON: BROTHER MICHAEL MEANT NO HARM

NEW YORK (AP) - Michael Jackson was "caught up in the excitement" when he dangled his infant son from a hotel balcony while fans below watched, but did not mean to harm the boy, his brother Jermaine Jackson said Tuesday. "You judge a person by their intentions," Jackson said on CNN's "Connie Chung Tonight." "He is a wonderful father. He's a great dad. He's great to our kids, my kids." Michael Jackson sparked worldwide outrage when he briefly lifted his son Prince Michael II over the rail of a fourth-floor hotel balcony in Berlin last month. He later said he had made a mistake and would never endanger his children. The 44-year-old entertainer has two other children, 5-year-old Prince Michael I and 4-year-old Paris. Jermaine Jackson conceded that dangling the child out the window may have been unwise but said the media took the matter out of context.

'CHILLI': TLC DOESN'T REVOLVE AROUND ONE PROMINENT MEMBER

NEW YORK (AP) - Rozonda "Chilli" Thomas says one reason Grammy-winning TLC is one of the best-selling female groups of all time is because they don't revolve around one prominent member. "They often compare us to The Supremes," but they were "all about Diana Ross," Thomas told The Associated Press in a recent interview. "With Destiny's Child, it's about Beyonce (Knowles), everybody knows that," the 31-year-old singer said. "And 3LW, you don't really care if they replace a member or not." Thomas said TLC has always treated one another like family. "If I get into it with my sister who is not my biological sister ... I'm not going to contemplate if I want her in my life or not," she said. "She's there for good, and we just have to stick it out, so that's how we are." TLC recently released "3D," their fourth - and possibly last - album. Thomas and Tionne "T-Boz" Watkins, 32, finished the disc after the death of Lisa "Left Eye" Lopes in April, and her voice is featured on the disc.

ENTERTAINMENT

Ashanti grabs 8 Billboard Awards

LAS VEGAS (AP) - R&B newcomer Ashanti made an impressive debut at the Billboard Music Awards, taking home eight awards Monday night while rap star Nelly won honors in six categories. The album of the year went to Eminem for "The Eminem Show."

Ashanti, 22, was named the year's top female artist, R&B/hip-hop artist and female R&B/hip-hop artist. She also picked up awards for her single "Foolish."

"It's definitely an honor," the singer said. "It took me such a long time to get me to where I am. I'm just really blessed and thankful."

Nelly was named 2002's top artist, top male artist and R&B/hip-hop artist. He also won honors for his song "Hot in Herre," which he performed after emerging onstage from a massive replica of a stainless steel oven with flames shooting out of its burners.

"The Eminem Show" is the Detroit rapper's third disc. Eminem beat out Nelly's "Nellyville," Creed's "Weathered" and Pink's "Missundaztood."

The Billboard Awards honor the year's chart-topping artists. Cedric the Entertainer hosted the show, which aired live on Fox except on the West Coast.

Comedian Chris Tucker gave a special "Thriller" award to Michael Jackson, who accepted the honor by satellite.

"I thank all the people who appreciate my work," Jackson said.

Tyler joined rap stars including Nelly, Busta Rhymes and Ja Rule in a tribute to Run-DMC. The pioneering hip-hop group disbanded last month after DJ Jam Master Jay was shot to death in his New York recording studio.

"I think Run-DMC's greatest achievement was its longevity," said a tearful Darryl "DMC" McDaniels.

Ashanti, whose singles "Foolish" and "Happy" made her a soul sensation this year, has already been honored as entertainer of the year at the Lady of Soul Awards. She leads the American Music Award nominations with five. Those will be announced Jan. 13.

The Billboard Awards are determined by the magazine's year-end chart listings, which are based on record sales and airplay. Winners in several categories won't be announced until later this month.



R&B singer Ashanti won 8 awards Monday, at the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas during the Billboard Music Awards.



Rapper Nelly, left, and Steven Tyler of the rock group Aerosmith perform a tribute to slain Run-DMC DJ Jam Master Jay.

Lopez performs amiably as maid in romantic, New York comedy

By Kam Williams
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Last year, Jennifer Lopez became the first singer/actress to have both the nation's #1 movie (The Wedding Planner) and #1 music CD (J.Lo) at the same time. This year, she might also become the second to perform that previously unheard of feat. Her latest album, This Is Me... Then, is sitting at #6 on the Billboard Pop charts, with a bullet, as they say in the industry. And now her new

movie, Maid in Manhattan, is opening in thousands of theaters across the country.

Can lightning strike twice for "Jenny from the Block" as she refers to herself in her latest hit song? Of course, it can, since she has that star quality which Hollywood honchos are always looking for. The studios know that it's easy to make money on a movie that's good, but that it takes something special, that certain je ne sais quoi, to get fans to fill the theaters for a

dud. Thus, the mark of the true matinee idol, in case you never realized it, is the ability to put fannies in the seats even when a movie is mediocre.

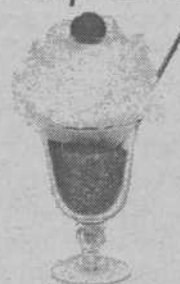
This sets up the perfect test of Ms. Lopez's magnetism, because Maid in Manhattan, if nothing else, is a mediocre offering. And I actually had very high expectations of it, given that the script was written by John Hughes, the brains behind so many

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La Crème des la Crèmes

"Red Hot Delta's Rising to the Top-2003"

The Las Vegas Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and Unique Party Planning invite you to ring in the New Year at the fabulous Sky View Terrace (6565 South Spencer), located 1/2 block south of Sunset and approximately one mile from the Las Vegas strip, close to the 215 and I-15.



New Years Eve Gala

Tuesday, December 31st at 8:30 pm until ?

Enjoy the panoramic view of the Las Vegas Strip and spectacular fireworks. Cocktails and Hors d'oeuvres, dancing, party favors and Champagne Brunch after Midnight.

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