

Entertainment Briefs

WHITNEY HOUSTON ENTERS DRUG REHAB CENTER

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Grammy-winning pop singer Whitney Houston has entered a drug rehabilitation facility, her publicist said. Houston "thanks everyone for their support and prayers," publicist Nancy Seltzer said in a statement Monday. She declined to offer any further details. Houston, 40, admitted in a December 2002 television interview that she had abused drugs in the past, but told interviewer Diane Sawyer on ABC's "Primetime" that she had gotten beyond that time through prayer. Houston's husband, R&B singer Bobby Brown, was sentenced to 60 days in jail in late February for violating probation. One of the violations included a December misdemeanor battery charge for allegedly striking Houston, leaving her with a bruised cheek and a cut inside her lip. In January 2000, Houston left behind a bag at Keahole Kona International Airport in Hawaii that allegedly held less than half an ounce of marijuana and three partially smoked marijuana cigarettes. In 2001, a petty misdemeanor drug charge relating to the incident was dismissed against Houston after a drug counselor filed an assessment with prosecutors stating that Houston did not require treatment for substance abuse.

MOTOWN TAPS CEDRIC THE ENTERTAINER AS CO-HOST

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Justin Timberlake is out, and Cedric the Entertainer is in as the new co-host of ABC's "Motown 45" special. Cedric, the co-star of "Barbershop 2: Back in Business," will emcee the show with singer Lionel Richie. Among the artists slated to perform in the tribute to Motown Records are The Commodores, The Four Tops, Macy Gray, Gladys Knight, The Temptations and Supremes Mary Wilson and Cindy Birdsong. Timberlake dropped out of the show because of a conflict with filming his first movie, "Edison," as a young journalist who discovers an elite team of corrupt police. Timberlake was engulfed in controversy for much of February after he ripped off part of Janet Jackson's costume during the Super Bowl halftime show, revealing her breast. The special will tape at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles on April 4 and is scheduled to air sometime in May.

DIANA ROSS CLAIMS SHE'S SERVED JAIL TIME

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) - Singer Diana Ross, ordered to return to Arizona to serve a drunken driving sentence, says she has already met a state requirement to spend 24 consecutive hours in jail. "I think we actually have proof from her," said Jim Nesci, an attorney for Ross. "She documented it in her diary." Ross pleaded no contest last month to a drunken driving charge in Tucson in December. She arranged to serve her 48-hour sentence in Greenwich, Conn., where she lives. But Tucson City Court Magistrate T. Jay Cranshaw found that Ross failed to serve 24 consecutive hours as required by Arizona law. Ross served 47 hours in the custody of Greenwich police over a three-day span, Cranshaw found. On her last stay at the jail, police logs show Ross arrived on Feb. 11 at 8 a.m. and stayed for 22 hours until 6 a.m. the next day. Cranshaw has ordered Ross to return to Tucson "to serve 48 consecutive hours in the Pima County Jail" and has scheduled an April 1 court hearing on her sentence.

RAPPER LUDACRIS SURPRISES DOWNTRODDEN FLORIDA STUDENTS

KISSIMMEE, Fla. (AP) - A surprise visit by rapper Ludacris to a central Florida high school gave some much-needed diversion to students who'd experienced a string of tragedies in the past year. The concert came in response to an e-mail from sophomore class president Nada Taha, who explained the school's rough year after the death of two classmates in a drag race and the loss of a beloved English teacher to breast cancer. With state testing coming up, Taha asked Ludacris to come and "help our school regain the once-lost spirit and make a difference in our lives." Already in town for a performance at Orlando's House of Blues, Ludacris and fellow rappers Chingy and David Banner gave a 30-minute performance that set off screams and cheers from the over 2,000 students in attendance. Ludacris also donated \$5,000 to the school district's fund-raising arm, the Osceola County Foundation for Education. The money came from his nonprofit Ludacris Foundation.

ENTERTAINMENT

Prince leads class into rock hall

NEW YORK - Prince burst into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Monday with some blistering funk, joined by the regional stew of Bob Seger's heartland rock, ZZ Top's Texas boogie and Jackson Browne's California smoothness.

It was clearly Prince's night, though, as he opened the ceremony with a trio of 1980s hits and came out later to upstage Tom Petty, Jeff Lynne and Harrison's son, Dhani, on "While My Guitar Gently Weeps."

Dressed in a white suit and displaying nimble dance steps, Prince performed three songs that caught the breadth of his work: the rock anthem "Let's Go Crazy," the topical "Sign O' the Times" and funk groove of "Kiss."

A restless perfectionist, the Minneapolis-based singer often played every instrument on his discs. He said he was preoccupied early in his career with maintaining his free-



Prince performs Monday at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City after being inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. The artist's performance stole the show.

dom.

"I embarked on a journey more fascinating than I could ever imagine, but a word to the wise to the young artists — without spiritual guidance, too much freedom can lead to

spiritual decline," he said.

He also warned youthful musicians: "A real friend and mentor is not on your payroll."

Chart-topping rappers OutKast and soulful singer

Alicia Keys both cited Prince as influences.

"There are many kings," Keys said. "King Henry VIII, King Solomon, King Tut, King James, King Kong and the three kings. But there is only one Prince."

The Dells, a vocal harmony quintet that hit with "Oh What a Night" in 1955, were the inspiration for the film "The Five Heartbeats." With only one personnel change, a group formed in high school is still performing together more than 50 years later.

Dells member Chuck Barksdale said he hoped the hall would open its doors to other vocal groups, like the O'Jays, the Manhattan and the Whispers.

Rolling Stone magazine founder Jann Wenner also received a lifetime achievement award.

Highlights of the awards ceremony will be shown on VH1 on Sunday.

Author offers solutions for social inequity

By Kam Williams
Sentinel-Voice

"The American Dream promises that Americans who work hard will achieve success and just rewards. But this depends on your starting point. As I spoke to families, I became increasingly aware of the profound difference between those who have a tremendous head start in life because of their family wealth and those who struggle just to obtain opportunities for themselves and their children. Inheritance is the enemy of meritocracy and, perhaps, of democracy, as well. My data demonstrates that when we examine equally achieving white and black families, black families have only 26 cents for every dollar of wealth that white families hold. The racial wealth gap is the fundamental fault line of racial inequality in the new century, for it gives us a new understanding of how inherited wealth distorts equal opportunity." — Excerpted from the Introduction.

I remember when I applied to college, many of the applications asked whether you were related to anyone on a long list of alumni with WASPy-sounding surnames.

Obviously, if you were White, and could supply proof of this pre-approved lineage, you were likely to be admitted. Meanwhile, if you were Black, you were denied

automatic entry, even if you shared the same last name and bloodline from a slave-owning forefather.

It is the ongoing fallout from this sort of discrepancy which Thomas M. Shapiro so succinctly addresses in "The Hidden Cost of Being African-American: How Wealth Perpetuates Inequality."

Shapiro, professor of Law and Social Policy at Brandeis

University, has addressed similar subject matter before in "Black Wealth/White Wealth," a book which attributed the country's deep economic divide due to a disparity in ownership of assets quite apart from income.

His latest work, a natural extension of that earlier opus, is an exhaustive study which ably illustrates how racial inequality gets passed down from generation to genera-

tion via the distribution of family assets. Shapiro offers a blend of interviews, empirical data, personal anecdotes and insightful analysis to convey the dramatic social consequences of allowing the leveraging of accumulated private wealth into unwarranted advantage.

For instance, when it comes to schooling, he found that, "In America today, the

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