

## Entertainment Briefs

### FIGHT CUTS SHORT LUDACRIS ALABAMA APPEARANCE

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — A charity appearance by rap star Ludacris at Montgomery Mall was cut short Thursday evening after two small fights broke out. Ludacris donated \$300 in toys to the WZHT Hot 105/Magic 97 13th annual Children of Christmas Campaign and was signing autographs and posing for pictures at the mall's newly opened store Citi Gear. Though scheduled for two hours, he was asked to leave by police after about 20 minutes when security could not control the crowd, the Montgomery Advertiser reported. Well over 100 people had been waiting for more than 30 minutes for the rapper to arrive. "I would have liked to stay, but I understand I was part of the problem," Ludacris, a College Park, Ga., native, told the newspaper. "We expected a lot of people to show up but not to this degree," said Kristy Jansen, marketing director at Montgomery Mall. Montgomery police said no arrests were made and declined further comment. Those who attended weren't pleased.

### JAMES BROWN UNDERGOES SUCCESSFUL SURGERY

ATLANTA - James Brown underwent successful surgery Wednesday to treat his recently diagnosed prostate cancer. "Mr. Brown has successfully undergone a localized prostate cancer procedure and is resting comfortably," Dr. James Bennett, his urologist, said in a statement. "We expect a full recovery. With proper follow-up and care, we can also expect a full cure." The 71-year-old "Godfather of Soul" was released Wednesday afternoon from the Midtown Urology Surgical Center in Atlanta. As he walked out of the clinic to his limousine, Brown was wearing sunglasses, a hat and a big smile. "I feel good," Brown told reporters outside, playing off the title of one of his most popular songs. Brown, best known for hits such as "Please, Please, Please" and "Cold Sweat," announced his diagnosis late last week. Dubbed the "hardest working man in show business," he just finished a two-week Canadian tour. He is expected to spend three weeks recovering from the procedure.

### WYCLEF JEAN LAUNCHES HAITIAN AID EFFORT

NEW YORK (AP) — Wyclef Jean has launched a nonpolitical humanitarian effort to help rebuild his native Haiti — and he's not "calling bluff." Yele Haiti seeks to use music and community development as an outreach to the Caribbean country's youth. The organization plans to help rebuild schools in slum areas and hold a free concert in Haiti in the spring. Jean launched Yele Haiti with a concert Thursday night. Among those on the arrivals line were Susan Sarandon, a member of a task force that is assisting the former Fugees rapper, and her partner, Tim Robbins. "The objective of Yele Haiti is to restore pride and a reason to hope, and for the whole country to regain the deep spirit and strength that is part of our heritage," Jean says on the Yele Haiti Web site. His 1997 solo hit, "We Trying to Stay Alive," reworked the Bee Gees disco classic into an anthem of Haitian slums.

### O'JAYS, US TO BE INDUCTED INTO ROCK HALL OF FAME

NEW YORK (AP) — R&B singers The O'Jays, soul balladeer Percy Sledge and Irish rockers U2 are among five musical legends to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame during the foundation's 20th annual induction ceremony next year, the organization announced Monday. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Foundation will hold its induction ceremony March 14 at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in Manhattan. The O'Jays had eight No. 1 R&B hits during the 1970s and '80s, including "Love Train" and "Use Ta Be My Girl." Sledge will forever be associated with "When a Man Loves a Woman," one of the songs that made him a figure in deep Southern Soul in the late 1960s. U2, which became one of the planet's most popular bands in the 1980s with their megahit "The Joshua Tree," is still making the charts: Their November release, "How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb," is the No. 2 album according to Billboard. The Pretenders and blues guitarist Buddy Guy will also join the organization's Class of 2005. Artists are eligible to be inducted into the Rock Hall after at least 25 years have passed since their first record was released.



## HOST WITH THE MOST

(Left, middle) Big Boi, one half of Atlanta's Grammy-winning rap duo Outkast, chills out Wednesday at the Monte Carlo Pub and Brewery during Outkast's Billboard Music Awards Afterparty inside the Monte Carlo Hotel-Casino. Also present: (Top) Entertainment company owner Kevin Brown, KCEP FM 88.1 personality Carlaya and V108 personality Smooth C; (below) singer Serena Henry; (bottom, left to right) Public Enemy hype man Flavor Flav, undefeated boxer Floyd Mayweather and Omarosa Manigault-Stallworth of "The Apprentice" television show.



Sentinel-Voice photos by Isaac Sawyer



## Arrests—

(Continued from Page 9) the south side, you hear talk of the Team," rapper 50 Cent says in one song. "See (people)... respected 'Preme.'"

As for Gotti and his associates, they say they're proud of their friendship with McGriff.

"That's like my brother, I love this boy," Ja Rule said when asked about McGriff in a recent interview with The Associated Press.

The Inc. was founded as Murder Inc. in 1997. Gotti changed his label's name earlier this year to deflect negative publicity from the investigation. Its new single, "Wonderful," featuring Ja Rule and Ashanti, was No. 2 on Billboard's list of hot rap tracks last week.

Gerald Lefcourt, Gotti's lawyer, insists The Inc. is a legitimate business financed by part owner Island Def Jam, a Universal Music label.

"All we see is government pressure on all kinds of people to provide negative information with no justification," Lefcourt said.

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