

## ENTERTAINMENT

## Entertainment Briefs

**D'ANGELO PLEADS GUILTY TO DRUG POSSESSION**

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) - Michael Eugene Archer, better known as D'Angelo, has pleaded guilty to possession of marijuana and driving under the influence of alcohol after a January traffic stop. Archer, 31, a Richmond native, waived his preliminary hearing on a third charge of possession of cocaine, a felony. A Chesterfield General District Court judge certified that charge to a Chesterfield Circuit Court grand jury. The R&B singer was fined \$250 Wednesday and given a 90-day suspended jail term on the DUI conviction. Archer's driver's license was suspended for one year. On the marijuana charge, Archer was fined \$50 and given a 10-day suspended jail term. His driver's license was suspended for an additional six months. In an unusual legal maneuver, authorities said Archer appealed both the marijuana and DUI convictions to Chesterfield Circuit Court. Archer was pulled over on Jan. 9 in suburban Richmond, where he was charged with driving under the influence. Authorities said a subsequent search yielded marijuana and .029 grams of cocaine.

**RUSSELL SIMMONS PUTS OUT YOGA VIDEO WITH RAP BEATS**

NEW YORK (AP) - As country is to line-dancing, rap is to yoga? Hip-hop guru Russell Simmons has entered the fitness world with the release of a yoga video set to rap beats. "Russell Simmons Presents Yoga Live" is an otherwise traditional instructional video that teaches the basics of yoga postures and breathing. "For me, this is a very serious venture," Simmons recently told The Associated Press. "If I could move the meter and take yoga and spread it ... then everyone in the world would do it." The 47-year-old Simmons has practiced yoga for nearly a decade. The creator of rap label Def Jam also has introduced a host of other hip-hop flavored products including an HBO comedy series, clothing lines and beverages — but says this yoga series is especially important. "Everything you sell has got something to do with happiness," Simmons says. "So this is the best thing that I can sell." Hosted by Sara Ivanhoe, the video (also available in DVD) has a soundtrack with relatively tame rap beats. "It's really about silence," Simmons said. "The world can be a backdrop, but you've got to use your breath as the real soundtrack."

**DMX ARRESTED AFTER CRASH INVOLVING COPS**

NEW YORK (AP) - DMX was arrested following an accident on a Bronx expressway that injured three people, including two police officers, police said Monday. DMX, whose real name is Earl Simmons, was driving southbound Friday evening on the Major Deegan Expressway when his car struck a vehicle being driven by an unidentified woman, police said. Her car then hit an unmarked police cruiser carrying two officers. The woman was taken to Lincoln Hospital with minor injuries, while the officers were taken to Columbia-Presbyterian Hospital, also with minor injuries. All three were treated and released. Simmons wasn't injured. Police said the 34-year-old rapper was given a desk appearance ticket and was expected to appear in court sometime next month. Simmons' lawyer, Murray Richman, wasn't available for comment, a woman who answered the phone at his office said Monday morning. Last June, Simmons was arrested for allegedly smashing his sport utility vehicle into a gate at Kennedy Airport after telling a parking lot attendant he was a federal agent. He later admitted to being on Valium at the time. Simmons pleaded guilty in that case and was sentenced to a conditional discharge, meaning further violations within a year could land him in jail. He also was fined and ordered to forfeit his sport utility vehicle. Besides his top-selling rap records, DMX has acted in films including "Never Die Alone," "Romeo Must Die" and "Cradle 2 the Grave."

**P. Diddy, Warner Music sign venture**

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Sean "P. Diddy" Combs and Warner Music Group inked a joint venture deal that gives the record company a 50 percent stake in the hip-hop mogul's Bad Boy Records label.

Under the deal announced Thursday, Warner will market and handle digital and physical distribution of Bad Boy's new and catalog releases worldwide.

The label's roster of current and former artists includes Mase, Mario Winans, Notorious B.I.G. and P. Diddy himself. Financial details of the partnership were not released.

Two sources familiar with the deal said Warner paid about \$30 million for an agreement that will last at least three years.

**'Diddy Day' marred by a no-show**

LAS VEGAS (AP) — "Diddy Day" was a dud. Sean "P. Diddy" Combs was a no-show at an event scheduled Friday at the Aladdin hotel-casino. Mayor Oscar Goodman had been set to proclaim it "Diddy Day," but plans were scrapped at the last minute when word came that the hip-hop mogul wouldn't attend.

"Due to an unfortunate miscommunication, I will not be able to make the anticipated trip to Las Vegas on April 15," Combs said in a statement. "I am flattered the mayor saw fit to honor me with a day and hope to join him soon."

The event at the V Theatre inside the Desert Passage mall at the Aladdin had been billed as part-ceremony and part-announcement, hinting that Combs would reveal a business venture.

"I am looking forward to speaking with P. Diddy and seeing what the future may hold for him as far as Las Vegas ventures go and hope to host him in Las Vegas soon," the mayor said in a statement.

It has been speculated that Las Vegas businessman and producer David had been in talks with Combs to develop a nightclub and "other P. Diddy-related ventures," including a restaurant in the V Theatre, but those plans may now be on hold.

Combs, whose entertainment empire also includes music publishing, clothing, restaurants and television ventures, will remain chief executive of New York-based Bad Boy Records.

The deal also marked an early end to Combs' distribution deal with Universal Music Group, which had been set to expire in mid-2006.

Bad Boy's releases in recent years haven't burned up the charts like its offerings in the 1990s. Mase's latest album was a disappointment, while a comeback album by R&B group New Edition languished with sales of just 244,000.

The infusion of cash and other resources from Warner should help Bad Boy reinvigorate its release schedule to about 10 albums a year, Combs told The Associated Press from New York.

"There have been a lot of boutique record labels that come and go, and we're still here," Combs said.

"This has ensured for the next couple of years that we have the right financial back-

ing, the right financial structure, the right partners to remain a force in the music industry." The deal for Bad Boy comes as Warner, the third-largest record company, prepares to go public.

Warner was acquired last year for \$2.6 billion from Time Warner Inc. by a private investor group led by Edgar Bronfman Jr., now its chairman and chief executive.

A Warner spokesman declined to elaborate on the deal, citing disclosure restrictions in effect as the company approaches its IPO.

In a statement, Bronfman praised Combs and his record label, calling them "an exciting new addition to Warner Music Group."

Bad Boy Records had almost instant success when it began in the early 1990s as a boutique label with Arista Records. Back then, the label generated hits from acts like Notorious B.I.G., Faith Evans and Combs' own solo work. But the label's sales suffered after B.I.G., whose real name was Christopher Wallace, was killed in 1997

and Combs' popularity started to dip.

Reports surfaced that the label had become a costly venture for Arista.

That partnership ended in 2002, with Combs retaining his artist roster and rights to the Bad Boy catalog.

The following year, he signed a distribution deal with Universal Music Group for about \$10 million.

Universal didn't fight Combs on his decision to leave early, he said.

Combs intends to release a solo album and another B.I.G. record along with albums by several new acts. He hopes the new offerings will find the same success as earlier albums.

Rapper Mase's 1997 album "Harlem World" sold 3.2 million copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. But his two follow-up efforts combined to sell just short of a million copies.

Other Bad Boy albums have also failed to reach the coveted platinum status that comes with sales of a million or more.

## LAS VEGAS JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION

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