

## Entertainment Briefs

### COMPLAINTS CANCEL BUJU BANTON CONCERT

LOS ANGELES (AP) - A nightclub has canceled a performance by Biju Banton, a reggae star whose violent lyrics about gays and lesbians have made him a controversial figure, after receiving complaints from patrons. E-mail messages and phone calls from concerned customers prompted the cancellation of the Oct. 2 show, said Adam Manacker, general manager of the Highland nightclub and restaurant. Full refunds will be given. In July, concerts featuring Banton and Beenie Man were canceled in Britain after activists said both artists refused to stop using anti-gay lyrics. Two of Banton's songs released early in his career, "Batty Rider" and "Boom Bye Bye," glorify the shooting of gay men. Banton's most recent album, "Too Bad," released earlier this month, omits homophobic lyrics. The husky-voiced Banton has been a major star in his native Jamaica since the early 1990s with brash dancehall music and, more recently, a traditional reggae sound.

### GANG DVD PRODUCER ORDERED TO TRIAL

FRESNO, Calif. (AP) - A producer of a video portraying gang life was ordered to stand trial on two felony weapons charges. Lonnell "Nitti" Greene, 29, helped produce "Fresno Uncensored," a 91-minute DVD released locally last year that showed gun-toting gang members mocking police, growing marijuana and showing off gang tattoos. "A great percentage of the video contains criminal acts," Fresno police detective Ron Flowers testified Thursday in Fresno County Superior Court. Officers said Greene supplied gang members with two assault weapons for use in the DVD. Greene and his business associate, Marshall Day, have said they made it strictly for entertainment and to showcase local hip-hop artists. There was no intent to promote gangs or violence, though the DVD did show gang members, they said. Greene faces up to eight years in prison if convicted on the weapons charges with gang enhancements. He was being held in county jail Friday in lieu of \$150,000 bail.

### COMBS ENCOURAGES KIDS TO STAY IN SCHOOL

PHILADELPHIA (AP) - The principal at Benjamin Franklin High School wanted a speaker who would get students' attention. The cheers of 750 students when Sean "Diddy" Combs took the stage told Principal Christopher Johnson he had found one. "This is a really important time for you all right now," Combs said. "This is the time that is going to dictate your future." The 36-year-old founder of Bad Boy Records looked the part in sunglasses and flashy jewelry. He called some students on stage and talked to them one on one about their goals. His advice: Work hard and stay in school. "Take responsibility for your future. No excuses!" Combs said. The school district also plans to use Diddy's message in an anti-truancy campaign, said Cecilia Cummings, senior vice president for communications and community relations. "We wanted someone whom they would sit down and listen to, someone who comes from the same type of background," said Johnson. "To have a superstar come in to talk is extremely powerful." Combs' new album, "Press Play," is scheduled for release next month.

### BLUES GUITARIST ETTA BAKER DIES AT 93

MORGANTON, N.C. (AP) - Etta Baker, an influential blues guitarist who recorded with Taj Mahal and was awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts, died Sunday, her family said. She was 93. No cause of death was given, but her health had been failing for years. The *News & Observer* of Raleigh reported on its website. Baker died in Fairfax, Va., while visiting a daughter who had suffered a stroke. Baker was raised in a musical family in western North Carolina. She made her first mark in music in 1956, when she appeared on a compilation album called "Instrumental Music of the Southern Appalachians." The recording influenced the growing folk revival, especially her versions of "Railroad Bill" and "One-Dime Blues." She won a 1991 Folk Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. Baker toured well into her 80s, but quit because of heart problems.

# Film shows ghetto trouble, hope

By Kam Williams  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Sheree Farmer is a single-mom raising a half-dozen, young children alone in the drug-infested, crime-ridden ghetto of Newark, New Jersey.

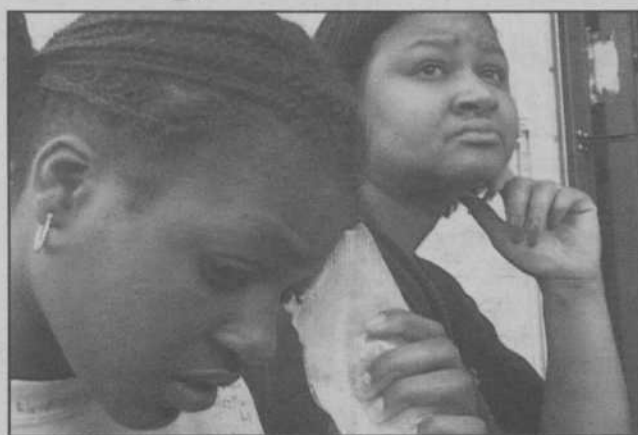
Fearful that the gang-controlled streets are about to swallow up her family's future, Farmer has been in dire need of a miracle to enable her to relocate her family out of the projects.

Her abusive ex-husband of 15 years, Larry, is no help, since the absentee father is an ex-con crackhead with a full plate of issues of his own to deal with.

The answer arrives in Mary Abernathy, a fashion exec-turned-community activist, who runs a nonprofit urban-renewal program to build affordable new houses for poor folks at half the going market rate. Abernathy, a breast cancer survivor, found this second calling as an angel of mercy following her diagnosis.

Looking for a more meaningful path in life, she left the corporate world behind with her husband's blessing, and decided to dedicate the rest of her life to alleviate the suffering of the less fortunate.

"Home," directed by Jeffrey Togman, interweaves the stories of both these women into a spellbinding, if bittersweet, examination of the concrete jungle. For this heartbreaking film not only effectively capture the woes



"I can't save them from everything, but I try to do what I can." Sheree Farmer, right, with her young daughter Alisha.

facing Farmer, but the frustration experienced by Abernathy in urging her to complete the qualification process whereby she'll qualify to buy a \$250,000

home at a deep discount.

Farmer hesitates, suspicious of the motivations of this altruistic White stranger, figuring there must be a catch. Furthermore, she

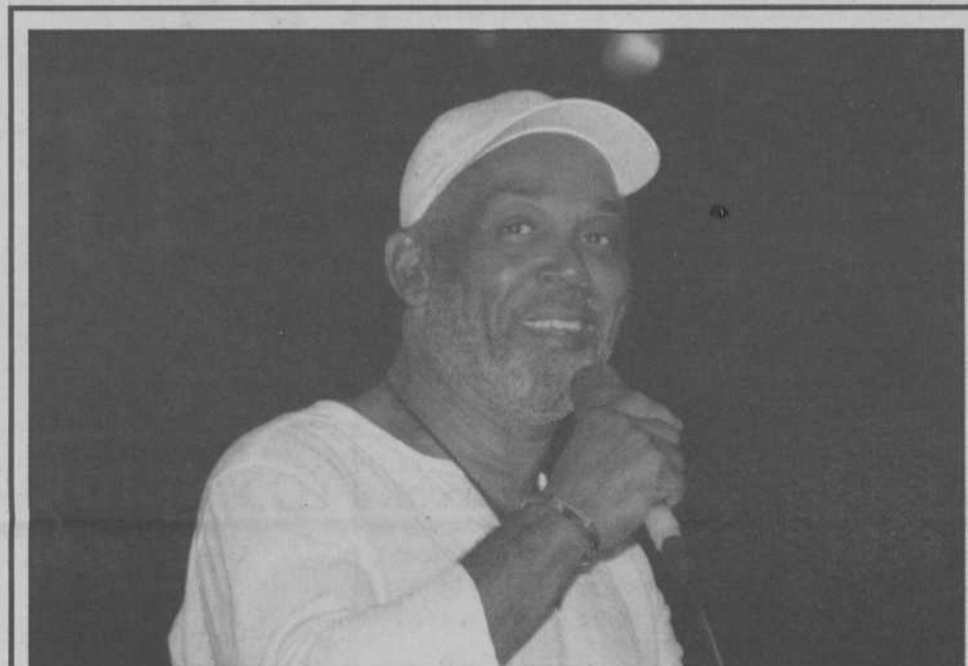
seems more concerned with regaining custody of Alisha, the rebellious, teenage daughter who had her arrested for corporal punishment.

Meanwhile, Abernathy becomes increasingly exasperated as she faces the realization that Sheree might squander this golden opportunity to escape the slums.

Togman earns high marks here for his directorial debut, a socially significant documentary.

"Home" discusses an array of taboos concerning color, class and the ever-elusive American Dream.

Excellent (4 stars). Educational content. Unrated.



### FRANKIE IS AMAZING

Sentinel-Voice photos by Marty Frierson

Frankie Beverly took to the stage at the Orleans over the weekend and, once again, put on an unforgettable performance to the delight of all those in attendance.

Performing Arts Division • City of Las Vegas Department of Leisure Services

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