



Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

Gerald Levert, far left, with father Eddie, far right, Gladys Knight and Smooth C, second from right. Levert left a musical legacy of smooth-grooving R&B ballads.

## Levert

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Nobody was prepared for this."

"It's very sad. He was an amazing talent, obviously," friend and fellow R&B singer Will Downing said. "Gerald was a hard worker. He would go out there and do his thing, and be in places where the folks were. He would touch the people, and that's really what it's all about."

Over his two-decade music career, Levert sold millions of albums and had numerous R&B hits.

Levert first gained fame in 1986 as a member of the R&B trio LeVert, which also included his brother, Sean, and childhood friend Marc Gordon. They quickly racked up hits like "(Pop, Pop, Pop, Pop) Goes My Mind," "Casanova," and "Baby I'm Ready."

But Gerald Levert's voice — powerful and soulful, almost a carbon copy of his father's — was always the focal point, and in 1991, he made his solo debut with the album "Private Line," which included a hit duet with his dad, "Baby Hold on to Me." His father also recorded the successful al-

bum "Father & Son."

Levert was known for his sensual, romantic songs, but unlike Luther Vandross, whose voice and songs were more genteel, Levert's music was explosive and raw — his 2002 album was titled "The G Spot."

"When we would do shows together, we would get on stage and battle for the hearts of women. Every night, that was our thing," Downing said.

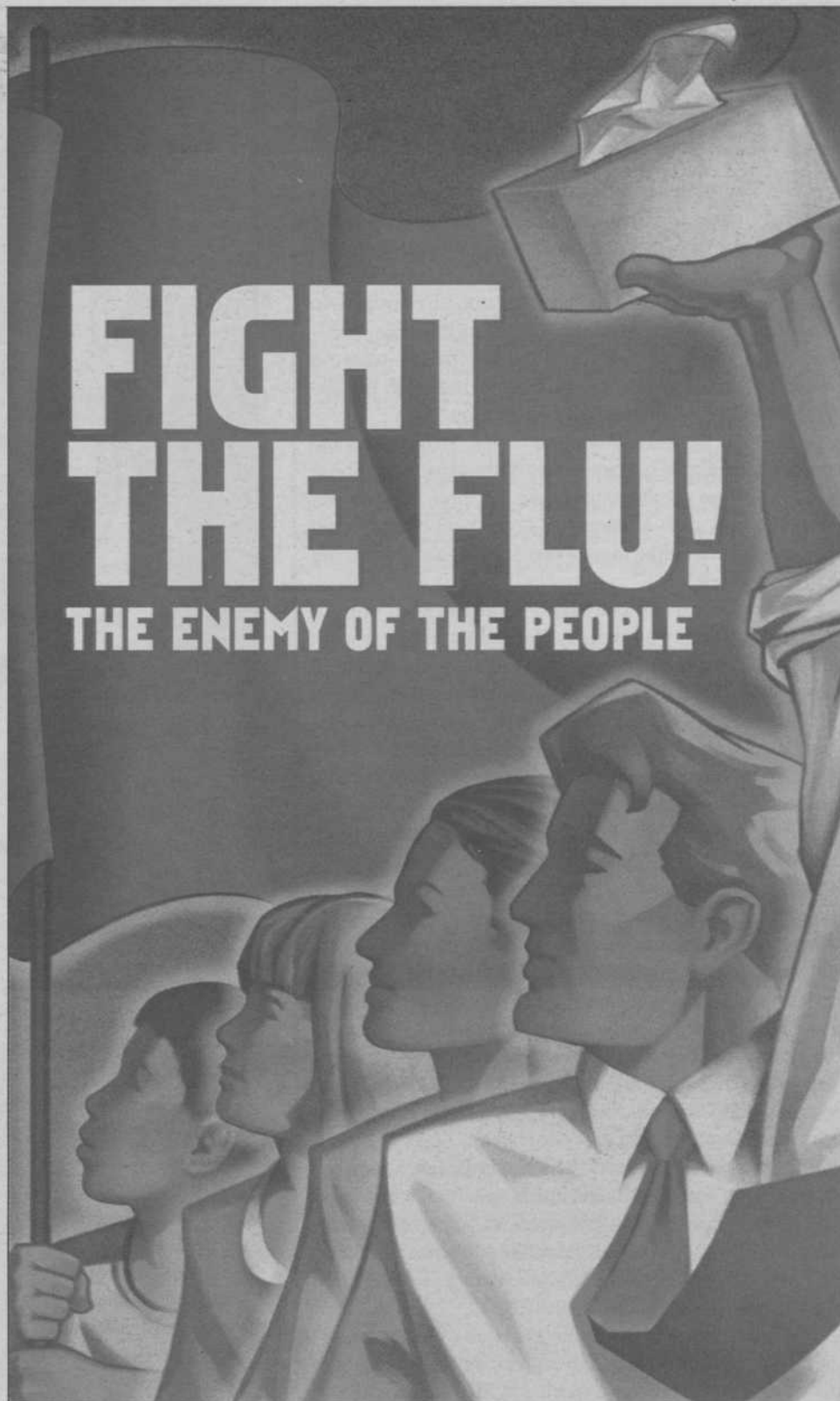
Though Levert was successful as a solo singer, in 1997 he got into group mode again, joining with R&B singers Johnny Gill and Keith Sweat for the super group of LSG. The self-titled album sold more than two million copies, and their hits included the sensual "My Body." Levert also worked with other artists as a songwriter and producer. His most recent album was 2005's "Voices."

Levert had four children. Memorial services are at noon Friday at the Cleveland Convention Center Music Hall. The official website has additional information at [www.geraldlevert.com](http://www.geraldlevert.com).

## FANCY FOOTWORK



*It's official: Former NFL running back Emmitt Smith is the champion, but now on the dance floor, in addition to the football field. On last night's finale show of "Dancing with the Stars," Smith and his professional dancing partner, Cheryl Burke, took the coveted ball—a huge, glass-tiled, ballroom dance globe for winning the votes of millions of Americans coupled with the judges' scores.*



### RALLY AROUND RESISTANCE

This year, 1 in 5 people will get seasonal flu. Do your duty. Keep your community flu free.

- Get your flu shot
- Wash your hands often
- Use tissues when you sneeze and cough
- Stay home when you get sick

### THE REAL ENEMY IS A FLU PANDEMIC

Be prepared. Know the facts:

- A flu pandemic occurs with the emergence of a new flu virus
- There is no vaccine and it can spread easily
- Be prepared by keeping a two-week supply of food and supplies for families and pets

## BECOME A FLU FIGHTER AT FLUREVOLUTION.COM

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