

Ball hails Obama inauguration

Special to Sentinel-Voice

The Las Vegas Black Historical Society will host the Las Vegas Obama Ball to coincide with the events taking place Tuesday in Washington D.C. The event, set for the Triple Crown Ballroom at the Plaza Hotel downtown, will commemorate the inauguration of President Barack Obama.

The gala will run from 6 p.m. to midnight and is collaboration between the non-profit historical society, the Ward 5 Chamber of Commerce and Phil Flowers Entertainment. Proceeds will be used to establish, operate and maintain a Black Historical and Cultural Center in Las Vegas. The center's mission

is to serve as a repository of information about the Black experience in Las Vegas and as a reference point for locals, tourists and historians seeking information about African-American contributions to Clark County.

In addition to food, dancing, gifts, prizes and vendors, Flowers will perform along with his tribute band, A Tough Act to Follow. Flowers has performed with the White House Orchestra in the last three presidential inauguration balls. Other artists scheduled to perform include Freda Payne, Genevieve, Bobby Rose and Tyriq Johnson.

Guests will receive a collectible program souvenir,

can purchase memorabilia of Obama and Martin Luther King Jr. and have the chance to bid in a silent auction for more great items.

Katie Duncan, president of the Ward 5 Chamber of Commerce, said this will be a night to remember. "We are celebrating the inauguration of Barack Obama as president of the United States, and the magnificent turnout of voters across the nation. Change is all about transformation and it is a thrill to help make and witness history."

The Inaugural Ball is a black-tie fundraiser, so guests are expected to dress to the nines. "Our gala will be a dignified and elegant celebration of this historic

and transformative inauguration," said Katherine Joseph, president of the Las Vegas Black Historical Society. She wants residents to have "the opportunity to experience the most festive gathering in Las Vegas," as it relates to inaugural celebrations.

Tickets are \$44, \$55 and \$75 in advance. Tickets may be purchased at the Plaza promotions center.

Sponsorship and vendor opportunities are also available; call the Ward 5 Chamber of Commerce at (702) 646-2551 or just e-mail uptownward5@gmail.com. For more information, you can call (702) 646-2551 or 649-4444 or log on to www.lasvegasobamaball.com.

Inductees

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"I love it when it's this broad and this eclectic," Rock Hall President and CEO Terry Stewart said of the Class of 2009.

"It's a great representation of the kind of music that we celebrate here," Stewart said. "And hopefully, it makes people understand that it's not a narrow band of artists and stereotypes of folks with guitars. It's a lot more than that."

Before the inductions, honorees and 1,000 or so other VIP guests will gather for a black-tie dinner, with tables set up on the main floor of Public Hall. Later in the evening, fans will be seated in the balcony to witness the actual ceremony. They can look forward to a long night of performances, acceptance speeches and celebrity presenters who have not been announced yet.

Run-DMC once hailed themselves as the Kings of Rock, so it's fitting that the pioneering rappers have been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Though Run-DMC wasn't among the first rap acts, they were the first to achieve widespread mainstream success, and the first to notch a platinum album with 1986's "Raising Hell." The rapping duo of Joseph "Run" Simmons and Darryl "DMC" McDaniels — plus their DJ, the late Jam Master Jay — were rap's first rock stars. They had hits with songs like "My Adidas" and "It's Tricky," but had their greatest success when they remade Aerosmith's "Walk This Way" with the rock act for a groundbreaking collabora-



In this Feb. 25, 2002, file photo, Hip hop pioneers RUN-DMC, from left, the late Jason 'Jam Master Jay' Mizell, Darryl 'DMC' McDaniels, and Joseph 'DJ Run' Simmons create handprints in cement as they are inducted into Hollywood's RockWalk in Los Angeles.

tion.

In a later interview, McDaniels called Run-DMC's induction "inconceivable."

"I'm a rap dude, I'm an MC from Hollis (a neighborhood in New York's borough of Queens), just rockin' the mic, and to be in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, with the Beatles, and [Bob] Dylan, and the rock 'n' roll gods? It's ridiculous! Ridiculous in a good way," he said.

He also gave a nod to the predecessors who paved the way for the group's success: "I share this nomination and the induction and the whole award with those cats, everyone from the Bronx and Harlem who started this."

Jam Master Jay — whose real name was Jason Mizell — was shot to death in his recording studio in 2002. McDaniels doesn't consider

the induction bittersweet — "because Jay isn't here to celebrate doesn't mean he's not partaking in this event" — but said he couldn't see the duo performing during the April 4 induction ceremony in Cleveland without him.

"We can't do it without Jay," he said. "I want people to remember the last time they saw us together, the three of us."

The Class of 2009 includes two-time inductee Sammy Strain of Little Anthony and the Imperials, who was inducted in 2005 as a member of the O'Jays.

Artists become eligible for nomination 25 years after the release of their first recording.

Nominees on the latest ballot who were passed over include Chic, the Stooges and War. Ballots were sent to an

international pool of 600 voters, including record company executives and previous inductees.

For 21 of the past 23 years, the inductions have been held at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in Manhattan. Cleveland hosted the big night just once before, at the Renaissance Cleveland Hotel in 1997, when the honorees included the Jackson Five, the Bee Gees and Crosby, Stills and Nash. The ceremony was held in Los Angeles in 1993.

Rock Hall officials have said they are open to having the ceremony in Cleveland every three years.

"It's going to be a great celebration," Peresman said. "I think it will be terrific for Cleveland. That's always our goal, one way or the other — to build awareness and drive business to Cleveland."

Bits 'n' Pieces

TAYLOR MEDIA SERVICES

Michael Jackson acquires \$100,000-a-month Mansion in LA



Michael Jackson

Rumors that pop music superstar Michael Jackson was sick and nearly broke appeared to have been put to rest last week. The 50-year-old Jackson signed an agreement to lease a mansion in the ritzy Bel Air section of Los Angeles. The mansion will reportedly cost Jackson \$100,000 a month. The mansion contains seven bedrooms, 13 bathrooms and 12 fireplaces. Spokesman Tohme Tohme said Jackson moved to the city with his three children in order to be closer to Hollywood. He is said to have pledged to make the second half of his career better than the first.

NBC reportedly bans conservative Obama attacker Ann Coulter

She is a darling of the Republican Party and conservatives. She is one of the right wing's leading attackers of President Barack Obama, Democrats and liberals. But last week commentator Ann Coulter's sharp, and some say hate-filled, tongue landed her in trouble with NBC Television. The Drudge Report, citing inside sources, says Coulter has been banned from appearing on NBC. It was unclear what prompted the decision. But the top-selling conservative commentator is known for her biting, often personal, criticisms of Obama, his wife Michele and Democrats in general. She is a regular on right-wing talk radio and FOX Cable News. Coulter's latest book is entitled "Guilty: Liberal 'Victims' and their Assault on America."



Ann Coulter

Disgraced Black plastic surgeon Jan Adams gets one year in jail on DUI



Dr. Jan Adams

The Black, non-board certified plastic surgeon who operated on the mother of rap music star Kanye West the day before she died has been sentenced to a year in jail. However, Dr. Jan Adams' sentence did not flow from the operation. He was sentenced for a June DUI arrest. During the June incident in the San Francisco area, Adams was caught driving the wrong way on a freeway with a blood alcohol level twice the legal limit. Adams was never charged with a crime as a result of the operation even though Donda West died the day after undergoing one of his plastic surgery procedures.

TNT gives green light to new medical drama produced by Jada Pinkett Smith

The television network TNT has good news for you if you are interested in a new TV medical drama set in a Charlotte, North Carolina hospital. Last week TNT ordered 10 episodes of "Time Heals" — a series produced by and starring Jada Pinkett Smith. Smith is the wife of top Hollywood actor Will Smith. She will play the role of a head of nursing who battles hospital administrators, doctors and "don't care" staff. The series is produced in association with Sony Picture Television. Insiders expect the series to hit the television screen later this year.



Jada Pinkett Smith
