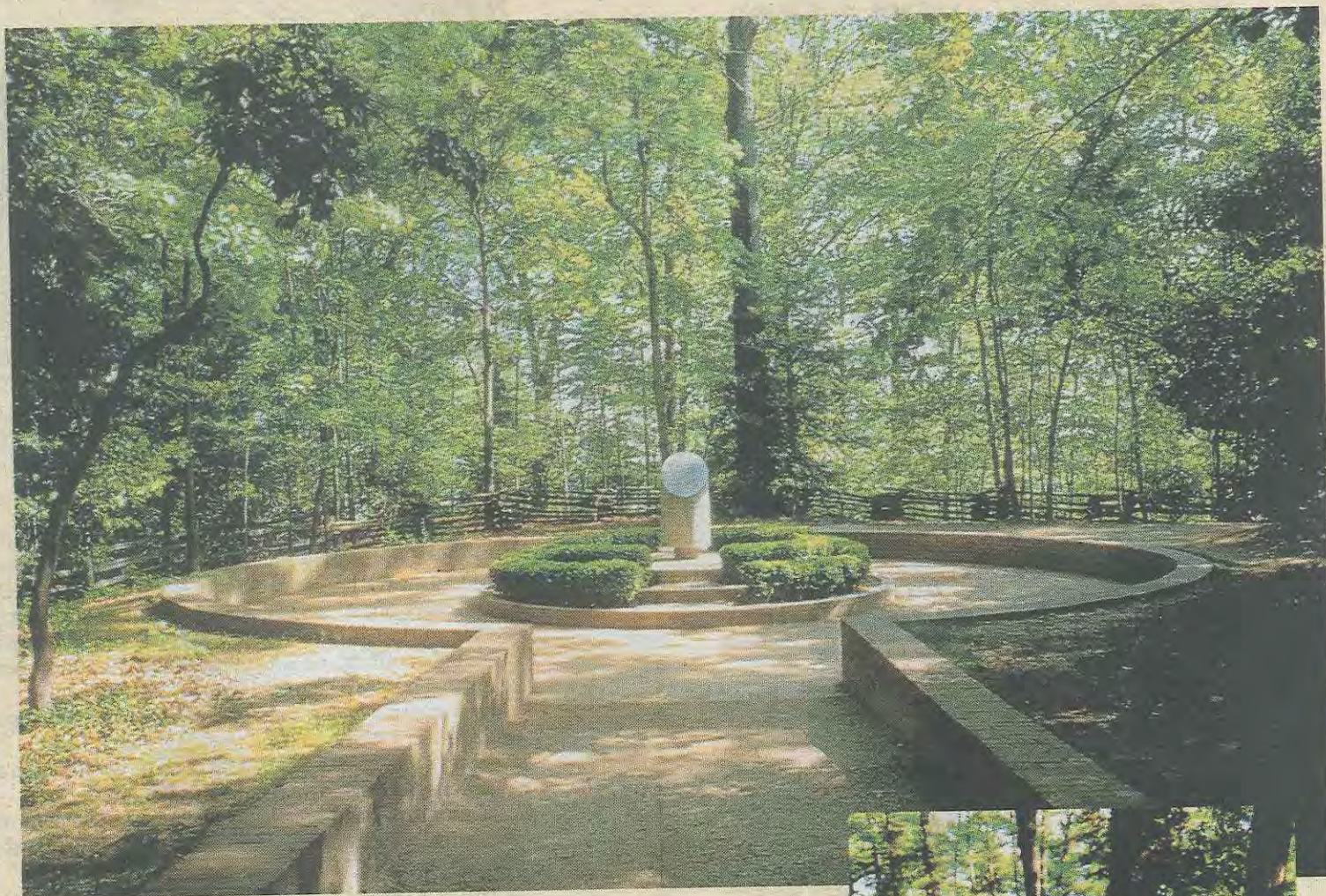


Get Out

The week's pocket picks

By SAMANTHA SAULT



Pick of the pack

History

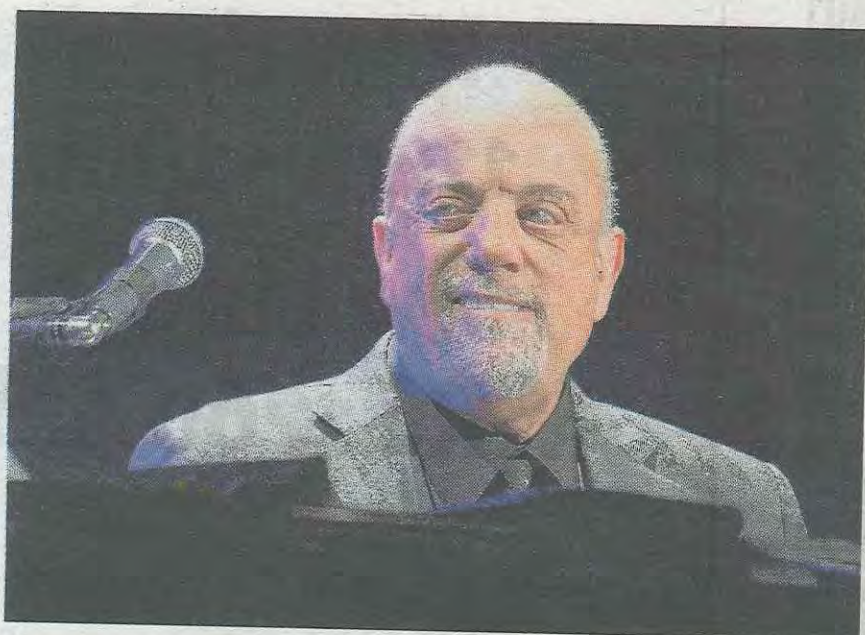
Black History Month at Mount Vernon

February is Black History Month, a time to recognize African Americans' contributions throughout U.S. history — and especially to remember those who lived in bondage before the Civil War. Beginning Saturday, Mount Vernon, the plantation home of George and Martha Washington, will mark the occasion with daily special events to pay respects to the blacks who lived there as slaves. At the time of his death in 1799, George Washington owned 318 slaves, but his views on the issue evolved and he stipulated in his will that his slaves would be freed upon the death of his wife. (Martha, for her part, decided to free them about a year after his death.) Every day next month, you can learn about the slaves' lives at Mount Vernon and participate in a wreath-laying ceremony at the memorial designed by Howard University architecture students that marks the burial place of many of the slaves.

Through Feb. 28 at Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Mount Vernon, Va. 703/780-2000. Web: mountvernon.org.



GEORGE WASHINGTON'S MOUNT VERNON



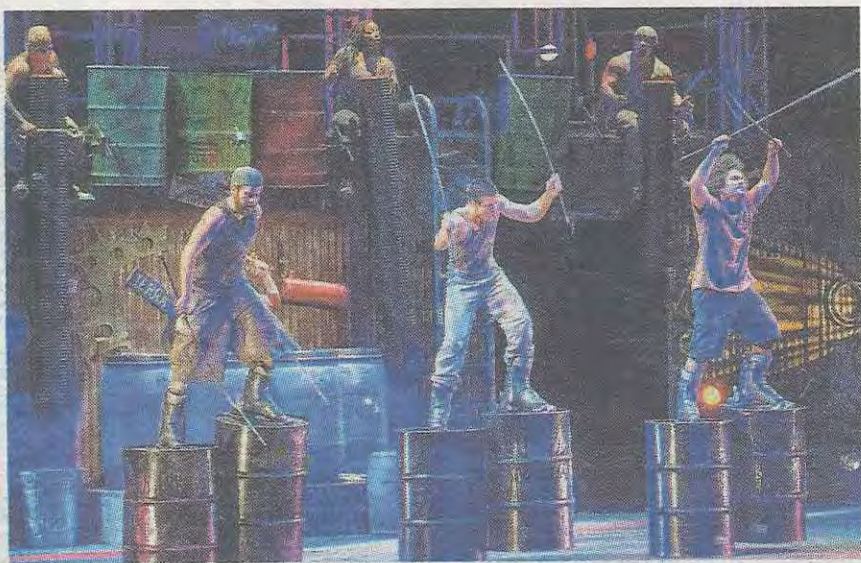
Concert Billy Joel

If you're in the mood for a melody, Billy Joel will have you feeling all right. The Piano Man returns to the Washington area this summer for a solo concert at Nationals Park in July — but we know tickets will go quickly, so you'll want to get them when they go on sale this weekend. The sixth best-selling recording artist, Mr. Joel has received honors that range from six Grammy Awards, including the Grammy Legend Award, to the Kennedy Center Honors right here in Washington in December. Mark your calendar now for a unique night at the ballpark that music fans of all generations will love — and get ready to sing along to favorites like “Only the Good Die Young,” “Just the Way You Are,” “Uptown Girl” and, of course, “Piano Man.” Tickets on sale to American Express cardholders on Friday, Jan. 31 and to the general public on Saturday, Feb. 1 at 10:00 a.m. **Concert on Saturday, July 26, at Nationals Park, 1500 S. Capitol St. Web: nationals.com/billyjoel.**

Football Jack Rose Super Bowl Party

On Sunday, sports fans everywhere will be watching the Seattle Seahawks and the Denver Broncos compete Super Bowl XLVIII. For many of us, however, the event is just as much about the junk food (and the half-time show) as it is about the game. Whether you're a diehard fan or just in it for the tasty treats, you'll want to head to Adams Morgan's Jack Rose Dining Saloon for a delicious (and almost free) party. From 5:30 p.m. until 11:00 p.m., every guest will receive a free bowl of chili to go with a menu of food and drink specials that include beers from Colorado and Washington state in honor of the teams, as well as a variety of cocktails. Oh, and the bar will have three jumbo flat-screen televisions showing the main event. **Sunday at Jack Rose Dining Saloon, 2007 18th St. NW. 202/588-7388. Web: jackrosediningaloon.com.**





Dance Stomp

Between the traffic and the politics, you probably need to stomp out some aggression. This week, you can, with the help of the critically acclaimed performance group, Stomp. In 1981, Luke Cresswell and Steve McNicholas began performing together in a street band called Pookiesnackenburger at fringe and street comedy festivals throughout the United Kingdom, which led to a percussion-focused commercial for Heineken that brought them widespread fame. A decade later, they produced the first “Stomp” performance, using ordinary objects in a thrilling show that’s part percussion concert, part dance and part physical comedy. After numerous awards on both sides of the pond, Stomp continues to use random objects — think trash cans, plumbing fixtures, hub caps, supermarket carts, anything except a drum set — in ongoing productions in New York and London, as well as two touring troupes that perform to sold-out audiences. Beginning Tuesday, the tour will stop in Washington for a limited run. **Through Feb. 9 at the National Theatre, 1321 Pennsylvania Ave. NW. 202/628-6161. Web: thenationaldc.org.**

Theater “The Adventures of Alvin Sputnik”

What do you get when you mix the wonder of “Wall-E” and the charm of “Finding Nemo” with a story that even adults will love? “The Adventures of Alvin Sputnik,” a one-man, multimedia production that opens at Rosslyn’s Artisphere Thursday. The show stars actor/comedian Sam Longley as the title role, a deep-sea explorer who races to the depths of the ocean find his long-lost wife — and a new place for humans to live after the Earth is destroyed. The production mixes not only Mr. Longley’s storytelling but also animation, puppetry, projections and music in what has been described as a funny, heart-warming and even emotional event. Produced by Weeping Spoon Productions, an independent theater company based in Perth, Australia, the show has won the Outstanding Solo Show at the New York Fringe Festival and Best Theatre Production at Auckland Fringe, and is touring the United States. Recommended for middle school-aged children and older due to some mildly mature themes. **Through Feb. 9 at the Artisphere, 1101 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Va. 703/875-1100. Web: artisphere.com.**

