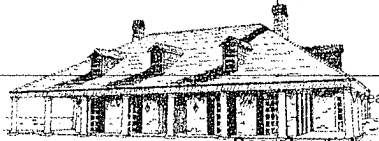


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Trill ENT executives in hot water

May 15, 4:07 PM - New Orleans Crime Examiner Arlene Culpepper



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Two of the managers of Trill Entertainment (also known as Trill ENT), a music label out of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, are accused of using violent threats to "further their business interests". Melvin Vernell, Jr. and Marcus Roach are being held without bond on charges of attempted murder and other related charges. Vernell is from Baton Rouge and Roach is from Prairieville and both are accused of witness intimidation related to the 2005 shooting of Baton Rouge area rapper Beelow. Beelow is the stage name of Bruce Moore who was shot twice in the face on July 4, 2005 outside of Shop Smart Music & Fashion, a retail outlet he owns on North Sherwood Forest Boulevard in Baton Rouge. The pair is being held without bond, pending the outcome of a bond hearing.



Agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Capital Area Gang Task Force have been involved with the investigation, as well as local authorities. New charges were filed by prosecutors against Vernell and Roach on May 8, 2009. Both were charged with one count each of attempted second degree murder, illegal use of weapons, aggravated battery, armed robbery, two counts of aggravated assault with a firearm, and three counts of possession of an illegal firearm by a convicted felon. They pleaded not guilty to those charges yesterday. Lewis Unglesby and James Manasseh, attorneys for Vernell and Roach respectively, are involved today in a bond hearing.

The coordinator of the FBI's Capital Area Gang Task Force testified on Thursday that the pair have been involved in a pattern of witness intimidation, including attempts to pay off witnesses or offering them jobs in exchange for refusing to testify. Witnesses interviewed by the FBI also contend that Trill ENT was established for the purpose of laundering drug proceeds. None of this has been substantiated, but the issue was raised during the course of the investigation.

Beelow is popular for his local hit, "It's Whateva". Trill ENT is the home to national recording artists, Lil Boosie, Webbie, Foxx, Big Head, and several others. Lil Boosie recently had legal trouble of his own when his house party turned into a melee, after which he was arrested. Lil Boosie is the stage name of popular rapper Torrence Hatch.

For more information on Trill ENT, visit www.trillent.com or en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trill_Entertainment.

More About: Trill ENT

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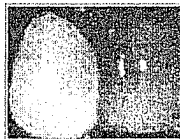
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immy today.
He's in New Jersey on an assignment for ExxonMobil and can't get home for a special event involving son Edward.
Paul hopes I'll tell Edward that he misses him and loves him, which I just did.

Happy returns

Eleanor Thornton-Landry thanks the person who found the purse she lost at the Cortana mall.

She also thanks the Wal-Mart clerks who were so helpful when she came back looking for the purse.

She says, "There are good people who are invisible angels walking this Earth!"

Johnny's Johnny!

Johnny Palazzotto, of Palazzotto Productions (BRHS '66), says rock legend Johnny Rivers is coming back to his alma mater to benefit Baton Rouge Magnet High's campus radio station and film and TV studio.

The concert is at 7 p.m. on April 17 in the school auditorium. Tickets are on sale through Manship Theatre at p://www.manshiptheatre.org.

Working for veterans

The Red Cross hosts a Veterans Health and Preparedness Fair on Saturday at the Capital Area Chapter office, 55 Sherwood Common

► See **SMILEY**, page 2B

clivity, Porter said.

Porter said the new facility would include paramedic training space, which EMS rented from Louisiana State Police last year for \$4,000 a month.

Advocate map by **JOHN GIPSON**

Porter said the building is still in the planning stage, with no

► See **EMS**, page 2B



Judge tosses some charges

BY **JOE GYAN JR.**
Advocate staff writer

A state judge dismissed the most serious charges against two local rap music executives Monday accused of trying to kill a Baton Rouge rapper in 2005.

District Judge Mike Erwin said prosecutors waited too long to try Melvin Vernell Jr. and Marcus Roach on charges of attempted second-degree murder, armed robbery and illegal use of weapons in the July 4, 2005, shooting of rapper Bruce "Beelow" Moore.

"The judge threw out the most serious charges. Attempted murder and armed robbery carry mandatory prison sentences," said attorney Lewis Unglesby, who represents Roach.

"When you don't have to face them, you're real happy," he said.

"It doesn't change our position that he didn't commit any crimes at all."

Prosecutor Charles Grey told Erwin he will ask the state 1st Circuit Court of Appeal to review his ruling.

"We disagree with the judge's

ruling. We expect a favorable decision from the court of appeal," District Attorney Hillar Moore III said after court.

Prosecutors filed the attempted murder, armed robbery and weapons charges against Trill Entertainment managers Vernell and Roach in September 2005.

They dropped them a year later at the request of witnesses.

Prosecutors again brought charges against the two men, charging them in May with not only attempted second-degree murder, armed robbery and illegal use of weapons but also aggravated battery, aggravated assault with a firearm and possession of an illegal firearm by a convicted felon.

Erwin quashed the original charges from September 2005, saying prosecutors had two years from that date to try Vernell and Roach.

"There was nothing that gave them (the prosecutors) a new time limit," the judge said.

Erwin's ruling means the remaining charges are aggravated battery, aggravated assault

with a firearm and possession of an illegal firearm by a convicted felon.

"Marcus and Melvin never possessed any firearms," Unglesby said after court in reference to those charges.

Vernell and Roach, both 36, are free on \$350,000 bond and scheduled to stand trial on those charges Aug. 2.

Vernell, of Baton Rouge, and Roach, of Prairieville, moved to Atlanta late last year.

Moore was shot in front of Shop Smart Music and Fashion, a store he owned on North Sherwood Forest Drive.

He survived the shooting.

In a related but separate case, Baton Rouge lawyer Peter Q. John was indicted in January on charges he interfered in the criminal investigation into Moore's shooting by conspiring to have the 2005 charges against Vernell and Roach dismissed.

John has pleaded innocent to three counts each of perjury, criminal conspiracy to commit perjury, obstruction of justice, conspiracy to obstruct justice, and felony theft.

State district

BY **JAMES MINNICK**
Baker-Zachary
CLINTON — Timson elected to district attorney found dead c



Shropshire

57, was elected attorney of the 2nd district of East Feliciana West Feliciana 1996 and served as

Maj. Bob J. Feliciano Pa... said on brothers four home shortly day.

Shropshire suffered a heart attack, he said. Another Michael Sh...

...in-law, Judy and Turner Decelle Vorhies noon until religious service at 2 Parker and husband Jeffrey, and ally wishes to thank her doc

BR music label managers accused of intimidation *** Pair held in connection with '05 shooting of rapper

Author: JOE GYAN JR.

Date: May 15, 2009

Publication: Advocate, The (Baton Rouge, LA)

Page: 01A

Two managers of rap music label Trill Entertainment in Baton Rouge used threats of violence to "further their business interests" and to intimidate witnesses to the shooting of a rival rapper in 2005, a federal agent testified Thursday.

FBI agent Antony Jung's testimony came during a bond hearing in state court for Melvin Vernell Jr. and Marcus Roach, who are being held without bond on attempted murder and other charges in the July 4,...

Judge to decide bail for rap executives

Author: JOE GYAN JR.

Date: May 16, 2009

Publication: Advocate, The (Baton Rouge, LA)

Page: 01B

Two local rap music executives accused of trying to kill rapper Bruce "Beelow" Moore in 2005 will stay behind bars until Monday when a judge will decide if they are entitled to a bond.

Melvin Vernell Jr., of Baton Rouge, and Marcus Roach, of Prairieville, managers of Baton Rouge-based Trill Entertainment, have been held without bond since their arrest May 8 - their second arrest in the case.

East Baton Rouge Parish prosecutors contend Vernell...

Judge sets bond, gives curfew to 2 suspects

Author: JOE GYAN JR.

Date: May 19, 2009

Publication: Advocate, The (Baton Rouge, LA)

Page: 01B

A judge set \$350,000 bonds and dusk-to-dawn curfews Monday for two local rap music executives charged for a second time with attempted murder of a Baton Rouge rapper in 2005.

State District Judge Mike Erwin also sternly ordered Melvin Vernell Jr. of Baton Rouge and Marcus Roach of Prairieville not to have any contact with the victims, witnesses or their family members.

"If you see any of these people in a grocery store, you better leave. If you see any of them on one..."

2 music executives ask cut in bonds * Shooting suspects cite polygraphs**

Author: JOE GYAN JR.

Date: November 12, 2009

Publication: Advocate, The (Baton Rouge, LA)

Page: 05B

Attorneys for two local rap music executives accused of trying to kill a Baton Rouge rapper in 2005 say their clients have passed polygraph tests.

Lewis Unglesby, who represents Marcus Roach, is asking a state judge to reduce Roach's \$350,000 bond and ease other restrictions placed on him.

James Manasseh, who is defending fellow Trill Entertainment manager Melvin Vernell Jr., said Wednesday he intends to file a similar motion on Vernell's behalf this...

Toys for needy families

Date: December 23, 2009

Publication: Advocate, The (Baton Rouge, LA)

Page: 01B

Eight-year-old Madison Clayton, left, the daughter of former LSU football star Michael Clayton, helps pass out a bag of toys Tuesday to Cheryl Pierson, in gray shirt, at the third annual Trill Entertainment 'Trill Days of Christmas' toy giveaway at Cortana Mall.

Color photo: Eight-year-old Madison Clayton, left, the daughter of former LSU football star Michael Clayton, helps pass out a bag of toys Tuesday to Cheryl Pierson, in gray shirt, at the third annual Trill...

Grand jury indicts 'Thugs Lawyer' in rapper shooting investigation

Author: JOE GYAN JR.

Date: January 15, 2010

Publication: Advocate, The (Baton Rouge, LA)

Page: 01B

Peter Q. "P'Ta Mon" John, who advertises himself as "The Thugs Lawyer," was indicted Thursday on charges that he conspired to have attempted murder charges against two local rap music executives dropped.

The initial charges against Trill Entertainment managers Melvin Vernell Jr. and Marcus Roach in the July 4, 2005, shooting of rapper Bruce "Beelow" Moore were...

'Thugs Lawyer:' No guilt by association

Author: JOE GYAN JR.

Date: January 21, 2010

Publication: Advocate, The (Baton Rouge, LA)

Page: 04B

Baton Rouge lawyer Peter Q. "P'Ta Mon" John pleaded innocent Wednesday to charges that he interfered in a criminal investigation by plotting to have attempted murder charges against two local rap music executives dismissed.

John, who bills himself as "The Thugs Lawyer," was indicted last week by an East Baton Rouge Parish grand jury on three counts each of criminal conspiracy to commit perjury,...

Judge tosses some charges

Author: JOE GYAN JR.

Date: March 9, 2010

Publication: Advocate, The (Baton Rouge, LA)

Page: 01B

A state judge dismissed the most serious charges against two local rap music executives Monday accused of trying to kill a Baton Rouge rapper in 2005.

District Judge Mike Erwin said prosecutors waited too long to try Melvin Vernell Jr. and Marcus Roach on charges of attempted second-degree murder, armed robbery and illegal use of weapons in the July 4, 2005, shooting of rapper Bruce "Beelow" Moore.

"The judge threw out the most...