



A street memorial is lit during a candlelight vigil for Elvis Presley in front of Graceland, Presley's Memphis home, in Memphis, Tennessee. — AP

## \$28.75 CHARGE TO VISIT ELVIS' GRAVE DURING VIGIL UPSETS FANS

For nearly four decades, fans of the late singer Elvis Presley have made a solemn procession past his grave at his Graceland mansion during the annual candlelight vigil commemorating his death, without paying a penny. This year, on the 40th anniversary of the rock 'n' roll icon's death, it cost them \$28.75. Many fans were not happy. Visitors attending the vigil that began Tuesday night and runs into Wednesday had to have an Elvis Week Property Pass wristband to walk up the long driveway and past the graves where Presley and relatives are buried, Graceland said in a written statement.

The \$28.75 wristband also provided access to a new \$45 million entertainment complex at the Memphis tourist attraction. Graceland, operated by Elvis Presley Enterprises, said it anticipated large crowds and it updated its security measures for Elvis Week, the annual celebration of Presley's life and career in music and movies. Presley died on Aug. 16, 1977, in Memphis. "In order to keep everyone safe and ensure an enjoyable and meaningful event for all, we have worked closely with local, state and federal security authorities to establish new procedures that have been widely used across the US," Graceland's statement said.

Thousands of mourning fans holding white candles burning a yellow-orange flame made a slow, silent walk through the graves Tuesday night. Before the procession began, Priscilla Presley, the performer's former wife, and Lisa Marie Presley, their daughter, thanked the crowd for their love and dedication. A crowd estimate was not immediately available. Officials had

prepared for about 30,000 to 50,000 people. A few Presley fans made a pilgrimage to Graceland the year he died, and they've continued coming ever since. Graceland says it averages 500,000 visitors per year from around the world.

### Elvis week

The announcement surprised fans who didn't know about the charge when they made plans to come to Elvis Week. Some reacted with angry messages on social media, saying they won't attend another vigil. Longtime fan Fred Schwarz of Springfield, Illinois, said Tuesday that he and his wife have been to several vigils and have enjoyed them. But not this year. He says fans should be insulted at the new charge. "I looked forward to going down there this year, and they come up with all this," Schwarz said.

"I don't want to even go to Memphis anymore. The people running that are not Elvis fans. They are in business. Corporations, they want the bottom line." Elvis Presley Enterprises was created by the Elvis Presley Trust to manage its assets, according to Graceland's website. It was wholly owned by the Elvis Presley Trust and Lisa Marie Presley until 2005. Elvis Presley Enterprises is now majority-owned by Graceland Holdings, led by managing partner Joel Weinschanker. Lisa Marie Presley retains 15 percent ownership in the company.

The new entertainment complex is part of a \$140 million expansion, which also includes a \$90 million, 450-room hotel that opened last year. The complex, featuring exhibits of

Presley's cars, clothing and other personal items, replaces the aging buildings that housed the exhibits for years. Access to restaurants, gift shops and an entertainment tent where people gathered before the vigil used to be free, though visitors still actually had to buy the food or memorabilia at the eateries and shops.

Now, access to them is included in the fee to enter the complex. Cheryl Skogen, of Los Angeles, was third in line waiting on Tuesday morning for the vigil later that evening. "I don't think Elvis would like it if he knew the fans were charged to go up and see," she said. Some fans didn't have a problem with the charge. Joe Makowski, who saw Presley more than 80 times in concert and came to Graceland after Presley died in 1977, said it's a good idea because of the cost of security. He also said these types of charges are seen at other tourist attractions.

"It goes along with the territory of the popularity of Elvis," said Makowski, of St. Petersburg, Florida. "There's a price for that as well, to accommodate all the people." News of the vigil charge also upset Anthony Stuchbury, of Bolton, England, who has been to Graceland more than two dozen times but did not come this year. "I understand they are a business, and there's absolutely nothing wrong with them making money," Stuchbury said. "But the current price-gouging situation has created so much friction, it's even dividing fans." — AP

## Kim Kardashian West sorry for defending makeup artist

Kim Kardashian West is apologizing after feeling the ire of the internet for defending a makeup artist who used racial slurs several times on camera. Kardashian West says in a Snapchat video Tuesday that she's sorry for "feeling like I had the right to say 'get over it' in a situation that involves racism." Kardashian West was trending on social media after defending makeup artist Jeffrey Star as an asset to her cosmetics empire despite his history of racist remarks and calling her fans "petty" for bringing up his past.

She characterized his slurs as "negative" but said he had apologized for them and she believes people can change. She reiterated that belief in her posts on Tuesday and says she wants to "move forward and be positive." A representative for Kardashian West confirmed the authenticity of the posts but had no additional comment Tuesday. — AP



In this file photo, Kim Kardashian West arrives at the US premiere of 'The Promise' at the TCL Chinese Theatre in Los Angeles. — AP

## Daniel Craig announces return as James Bond

Daniel Craig will return for a fifth go-around as James Bond. The actor confirmed reports he would reprise his role as the suave British spy for "Bond 25" during an appearance on "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert" on Tuesday night. The announcement is a reversal for Craig, who told Time Out London in 2015 he'd rather slash his wrists than do another Bond film. Craig chalks up that comment as "a stupid answer" and tells Colbert he "couldn't be happier" to return to the role. Craig breathed new life into the Bond franchise when he took over as 007 for 2006's "Casino Royale." "Bond 25" hits theaters in November 2019. — AP



This is file photo of actor Daniel Craig poses for the media as he arrives for the German premiere of the James Bond movie 'Spectre' in Berlin, Germany. — AP

## Louis CK to debut black-and-white movie at Toronto festival

Louis CK has quietly shot a black-and-white 35mm film that he will premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival. Festival organizers on Tuesday announced additions to Toronto's lineup. CK's film is called "I Love You, Daddy" and will be unveiled at the early September festival. It stars CK as a TV producer and writer whose daughter is played by Chloe Grace Moretz.

"I Love You, Daddy" is the comedian's first film since the 2001 release "Pootie Tang," which he wrote and directed. He has made a habit of making new works a surprise, like last year's web series "Horace and Pete." Brie Larson's directorial debut, "Unicorn Store," will also debut at Toronto. So will Aaron Sorkin's directorial debut, "Molly's Game," starring Jessica Chastain. — AP



In this file photo, Louis CK, co-creator/writer/executive producer, participates in the 'Better Things' panel during the FX Television Critics Association Summer Press Tour at the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, California. — AP

## Robert Yancy, only child of singer Natalie Cole, dies at 39

Robert Yancy, the only child of singer Natalie Cole and grandson of crooner Nat King Cole, has died. He was 39. Yancy was found dead Monday night at his home in the Sherman Oaks section of Los Angeles after authorities were contacted to make a welfare check. The Los Angeles County coroner's office said Tuesday that his death was reported as due to natural causes but the official cause must await an autopsy.

Yancy's aunt, Timolin Cole Augustus, told The Associated Press, "It appears to be a sudden heart attack." Natalie Cole was 65 when she died Dec. 31, 2015, of pulmonary arterial hypertension, which led to heart failure. Yancy, whose father was the first of Cole's three husbands, was a drummer who played in his mother's touring band and performed at her funeral in January 2016. "We are just numb," Cole Augustus said. "The only consolation is that he's with the person he loved the most." Yancy's father, Marvin, died of a heart attack at age 34 in 1985 when the younger Yancy was 7.

Cole Augustus said by phone from her Florida home that Yancy was "completely torn apart" upon his mother's death, but had since rebounded and was performing again. "He was in a happy place. He was feeling good," she

said. "We were looking forward to celebrating his 40th birthday." Yancy, who went by Robbie, and his mother shared a strong Baptist faith and were regular churchgoers. "What a woman," Yancy told mourners at Cole's funeral.

"She taught me how to love. She had my back every time when I needed it. The greatest gift she ever gave me was Jesus. I cannot wait until that day that I see you again." At the funeral, one of Cole's sisters read a condolence letter from then-President Barack Obama to Yancy. Cole Augustus recalled her nephew as "a man of great strength and faith in God. He had an indomitable spirit. Everybody loved him."

Born Robert Adam Yancy on Oct. 14, 1977, he never married. He is survived by Cole's twin sisters, Timolin and Casey Cole Hooker, and five cousins. Funeral arrangements were pending. Cole Augustus said Yancy would be laid to rest with his mother and grandfather at Forest Lawn in Glendale, California. "The dynasty is up in heaven," said Cole Augustus, who along with her sister runs the Nat King Cole Generation Hope organization that works to keep music in schools. — AP



## Marvel's battle-scarred 'The Defenders' find teamwork tough

Riding the slipstream of the Avengers, X-Men and Fantastic Four, "The Defenders" is promising to bring a more tortured and cerebral superhero vibe to Netflix's ever-growing repertoire of Marvel series. The show unites for the first time the titular characters from the streaming service's four standalone Marvel series—"Luke Cage," "Iron Fist," "Jessica Jones" and "Daredevil"—when it premieres on Friday. They join forces to battle a threat to their home town of New York in the shape of the malign Alexandra (Sigourney Weaver), who seems to be linked to the shady multinational conglomerate known as The Hand.

But the group starts out as a tenuous alliance between four very different characters, all of whom are used to going it alone and have little time for the concept of team spirit. The group's first meeting doesn't augur well for things to come, with Luke Cage and Danny Rand—alias the Iron Fist—even coming to blows. Actress Krysten Ritter says Jones, a young woman with a tortured past, a penchant for booze and a colorful vocabulary, is "very reluctant" in particular to be part of a team.

"Everybody's so used to working on their own, they all feel that their way is the best way," said Mike Colter, who plays Cage, at a roundtable with journalists in New York. "So sometimes each one of us gets really determined to force our way of doing things because it's the only way we know." What persuades the four heroes to band together, says Colter, has to be something really big—a danger to "a larger number of people than just the people of Harlem" that threatens the whole city.

### Character first, drama first

Filmed entirely in the Big Apple, "The Defenders" is steeped in the culture and custom of New York, a real-life backdrop that feels more organic than the fictional cities of Gotham or Metropolis. "Historically, some people shot other places for New York. To some degree it's effective when you deal with people that have never been to New York," said Colter, 40. "But if you've been to New York, you immediately can tell. New York is very important because I think it symbolizes a sort of freedom to the world."

"The Defenders" is distinguished from many superhero series and movies in the time it takes to explore the internal conflicts that haunt each of its heroes. Jessica Jones, in particular, is struggling to find her place in the world, scarred by "traumas and injustices" after losing her parents in a car accident, says Ritter, 35. When they are brought together, each of the four Defenders is in transition, without a superhero costume, in search of an identity.

"I built (Jones) from the ground up, based on her back story, on what she's been through in her life and how she views the world—with a little sense of humor on top of it to lighten things up," said Ritter. She added that she sees Jones as "a character who has super powers" rather than as a superhero. "For me, it's character first, drama first. I just approach it like I would any other acting part." — AFP