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Whitney, Britney and Shania lead nominees for 27th annual awards

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Whitney Houston, Britney Spears and Shania Twain led American Music Award nominations last week with three apiece, while rapper Jay-Z got a nod only four days after his arrest for allegedly stabbing a record executive.

Actor Norm Macdonald, actress Carmen Electra and producer Dick Clark announced nominees for the 27th annual awards. The three-hour show will be broadcast on ABC-TV from the Shrine Auditorium in

Los Angeles on Jan. 17.

The Dixie Chicks, Lauryn Hill, Jennifer Lopez and the all-female group TLC had two nominations each. Also getting multiple nominations were the Backstreet Boys, Garth Brooks, Kid Rock, Ricky Martin, Santana and George Strait.

Jay-Z, whose real name is Shawn Carter, was nominated for best rap or hip hop artist along with DMX and Juvenile.

The Grammy-winning rapper has been charged with assault for

allegedly stabbing a record executive in a New York nightclub brawl on Wednesday. He also is accused of bashing two people in the head with bottles in earlier incidents. His attorney has denied Jay-Z attacked anybody.

Winners of American Music Awards are selected by a national sampling of approximately 20,000 listeners. Names on the ballots are compiled from music industry publications and results are kept secret until envelopes are opened during the ceremony.

The nominees:

POP/ROCK

MALE ARTIST: Lenny Kravitz, Ricky Martin, Will Smith.

FEMALE ARTIST: Whitney Houston, Britney Spears, Shania Twain.

BAND, DUO OR GROUP: Backstreet Boys, 'NSync, Santana.

ALBUM: "Millennium," Backstreet Boys; "... Baby One More Time," Britney Spears; "Supernatural," Santana.

NEW ARTIST: Kid Rock, Jennifer Lopez, Britney Spears.

SOUL/RHYTHM & BLUES

MALE ARTIST: Busta Rhymes, Ginuwine, R. Kelly.

FEMALE ARTIST: Brandy, Lauryn Hill, Whitney Houston.

BAND, DUO OR GROUP: Dru Hill, K-Ci & JoJo, TLC.

ALBUM: "The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill," Lauryn Hill; "My Love Is Your Love," Whitney Houston; "FanMail," TLC.

NEW ARTIST: Eve, 702, Tyrese.

COUNTRY

MALE ARTIST: Garth Brooks, Tim McGraw, George Strait.

FEMALE ARTIST: Faith Hill, Martina McBride, Shania Twain.

BAND, DUO OR GROUP: Brooks & Dunn, Diamond Rio, Dixie Chicks.

ALBUM: "Double Live," Garth Brooks; "Fly," Dixie Chicks;

"Always Never the Same," George Strait.

NEW ARTIST: Sara Evans, Montgomery Gentry, SheDaisy.

ADULT CONTEMPORARY

ARTIST: Cher, Phil Collins, Shania Twain.

LATIN MUSIC

ARTIST: Enrique Iglesias, Jennifer Lopez, Ricky Martin.

RAP/HIP HOP

ARTIST: DMX, Jay-Z, Juvenile.

ALTERNATIVE MUSIC

ARTIST: Kid Rock, Limp Bizkit, Red Hot Chili Peppers.

SOUNDTRACK

"Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me," "Runaway Bride," "Wild West."

At millennium's end, it's the Pokemon who stole Christmas

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Like just about every other 10-year-old in Japan, Yasuyo Nakatani's son is addicted to Pikachu.

For an hour or two each day, the Pokemon character has him under its spell. So what's a mother at the epicenter of the Pokemon empire to do?

That's easy — stock up before Christmas.

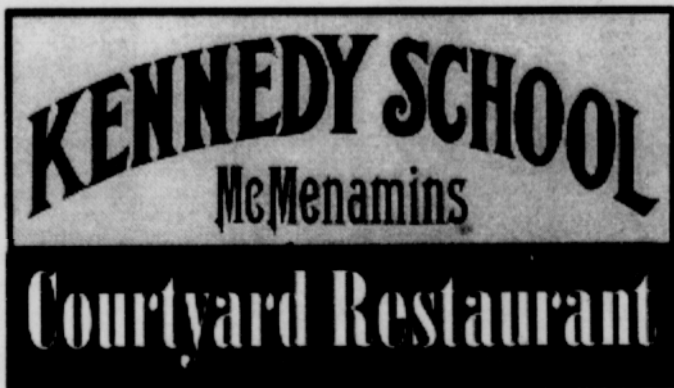
"If he plays too much, his eyes hurt and he doesn't study," Nakatani said, her arms loaded with presents from Tokyo's Pokemon Center. "But if he leaves home without his Pokemon Game Boy, he gets bored."

Since its debut in 1996 as a software game by Nintendo Co., the Pokemon phenomenon has swollen into a \$7 billion multimedia juggernaut that spans everything from television shows to trading cards, and is spreading across the globe.

For Japanese, Pokemon's success has become a source of national pride.

"Pokemon is the place to be," said Lisa Spicer, an analyst at West LB Securities Pacific, Ltd. "It's

(Please see 'Pokemon' page 2)



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