

Pitt, Aniston separate amid tabloid speculation

By JOHN ROGERS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston have finally made official what was rumored for months — Hollywood's A-List couple is splitting up.

"We would like to announce that after seven years together we have decided to formally separate," the couple said in a joint statement released Friday by Pitt's publicist, Cindy Guagenti. "For those who follow these sorts of things, we would like to explain that our separation is not the result of any speculation reported by the tabloid media. This decision is the result of much thoughtful consideration."

The couple didn't indicate if they planned to divorce, and Guagenti declined to comment beyond the statement, which also said, "We happily remain committed and caring friends with great love and admiration for one another."

The separation comes 4 1/2 years after the pair's storybook wedding and after months of tabloid speculation that their marriage was in trouble.

In their statement, they asked for the public's "sensitivity in the coming months."

Pitt, 41, and Aniston, 35, have been together since being set up on a blind date in 1998. They were married in a lavish wedding on July 29, 2000, on a Malibu estate overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Some 200 people attended the ceremony, which included four bands, a gospel choir, fireworks and tens of thousands of flowers.

Part of Pacific Coast Highway was shut down to accommodate the influx of guests, which included actress Cameron Diaz and most of Aniston's co-stars from NBC's "Friends." Media reports at the time pegged the event's cost at \$1 million. It was the first marriage for both.

Until rumors began swirling that they were about to split, there were near-constant tabloid rumors that Aniston was pregnant. The actress had told People in 2002 that she and Pitt eventually wanted to start a family.

"Absolutely it will happen but probably not for a while," she said at the time.

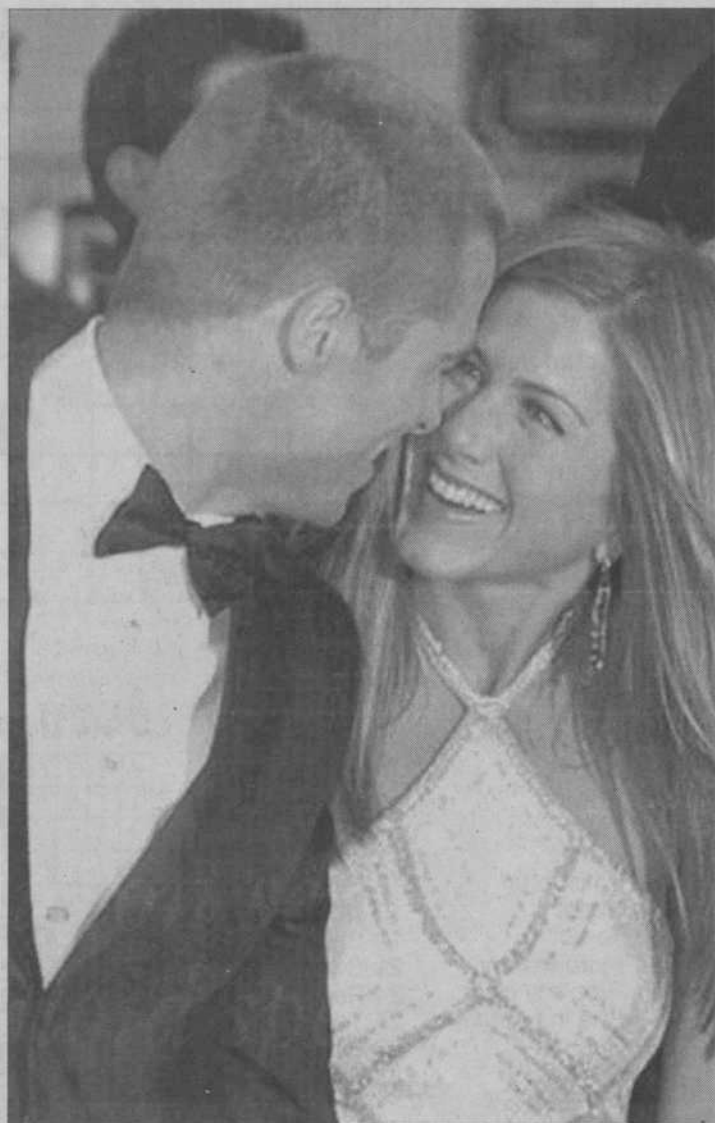


PHOTO COURTESY OF KRT CAMPUS

Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston married in July 2000 and are considered one of the most powerful couples in Hollywood.

Since their wedding, Pitt and Aniston have been touted not only as one of Hollywood's most glamorous couples but also one of the film industry's most powerful. They are co-owners of the Plan B production company with producer Brad Grey, who earlier this week was hired to replace Sherry Lansing as head of the Paramount studio.

Aniston is perhaps the most recognizable star of "Friends," the ensemble show that concluded a 10-year run last year as one of television's highest-

rated comedies. She also has starred in such films as "Along Came Polly," "Bruce Almighty" and "The Good Girl." Her father is veteran soap opera actor John Aniston.

Pitt, long one of Hollywood's most bankable film stars, is seen in "Ocean's Twelve." Other film credits include "Ocean's Eleven," "Fight Club," "Meet Joe Black," "Seven Years in Tibet," "Sleepers," "12 Monkeys," "Legends of the Fall," "A River Runs Through It" and "Thelma & Louise."

■ CITIZENS

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"We all have different personalities but mesh really well."

And their recent success would definitely mesh with Brown's conclusion.

Guitarist David Stringer said that for the last four months, the band has been working so hard writing songs and playing that its Battle of the Bands win "seems like its paying off."

"We were actually never sure we were going to all play in a band again," Brown said about the time after quitting The Farewell Note. "We just decided to get together and try and write some songs and see if it worked out."

The band members changed their name to All Good Citizens because of sound and lineup changes. Johnson said the new name is "representative of the band."

The "songwriting process for the band changed drastically from The Farewell Note ... we started involving everyone in the band, and not just one

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WHAT: All Good Citizens
WHERE: New Brookland Tavern, 122 State St.
WHEN: 7 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$7

person," he said.

The result is songs that mean something to the band members and to their fans.

Since the band is relatively new, the band members said most of their fans are close friends. However, they are working on developing a varied fan base with local performances and music on their Web sites.

All Good Citizens has big plans for the future.

"We all have a common goal for our music to reach as many lives as possible," Stringer said, "and we work hard everyday writing and practicing so we can reach that goal."

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecockfeatures@gwm.sc.edu

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