

BULKY DOCUMENTS

(exceeds 300 pages)

Proceeding/Serial No: 91162078

Filed: 03-27-2006

Title: Trial Brief; Notice of Filing; Depositions and Deposition Exhibits; and Index to Notice of Reliance Documents

Part 8 of 10

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Philadelphia Inquirer

May 6, 2005, Friday

SECTION: DOMESTIC NEWS

KR-ACC-NO: K7079

LENGTH: 798 words

HEADLINE: Names in the news

BYLINE: By Tirdad Derakhshani

BODY:

Beat writer Jack Kerouac has become the first writer to be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. Well, technically, it was a bobble-head doll of the "On the Road" author that got the honor. The doll is a promotional giveaway by the Lowell Spinners, the minor-league team from Kerouac's hometown of Lowell, Mass.

"The Hall of Fame's collections are rich and diverse, given baseball's history and role in helping to shape and define American culture," hall spokesman Jeff Idelson said. "He's an American icon who had a deep passion for the game, which he shared in his writing."

MONTEL SPEAKS UP

Montel Williams has called on Congress to allow him and others suffering from various illnesses to legalize the medical use of pot.

"This is really so simple it's ignorant," the talk-show host said at a Capitol Hill news conference. Williams was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1999 and says legal drugs don't help the pain.

"I'm hurting right now. I'm hurting. Why? Because I knew I had to come to Washington, D.C., and I can't carry anything because I know I'd get busted."

A bipartisan group of lawmakers said decisions about medical marijuana should be left to the states. But although 10 states have laws that allow the drug's medical use, the Supreme Court has said this does not protect distributors from federal antidrug charges.

Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., was in the entertainer's corner. "The notion that a state-sanctioned practice of medicine ought to be criminalized really makes no sense," he said.

CLUCKING MAD

John Bitove, chairman and chief executive officer of Kentucky Fried Chicken, has replied _ in a most punning, though not particularly cunning, way _ to Pamela Anderson's People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals-inspired call to boycott KFC products because of the company's allegedly cruel poultry-killing practices.

Bitove invited Anderson to lunch, saying "the facts are 'Stacked'" against her. He added he wanted her to be "kept fully abreast" of KFC's ethical practices. You see, we're to find the first pun funny because it plays on Anderson's new TV sitcom, "Stacked" _ itself a play on Anderson's bounteous bosom. The second pun has a more culinary flavor, we imagine.

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Anderson turned down the date: "Your attempt to spin your company's involvement in the crippling and drugging of millions of animals each year is a turnoff."

FLASH STORK REPORT

Jennifer Beals, 41, who shot to fame with 1983's "Flashdance," has taken her passion and made it happen: She's expecting her first child, People magazine says. The baby, due in November, was coauthored by her husband of seven years, Canadian businessman Ken Dixon, who has two kids from a previous marriage. This is a switcheroo for Beals and her TV persona on Showtime's "The L Word": She plays a lesbian whose partner (played by Laurel Holloman) is pregnant.

BROWN'S HEADACHE

Bobby Brown, 36, who was jailed for a day last year for failure to pay \$63,500 in child support for his two kids with ex-wife Kim Ward, was back in court this week. A Massachusetts family court judge has given the singer until Friday to prove he has the means to establish educational trusts for the kids. Although Brown has caught up on his support payments, he has failed to set up the trusts. Whitney Houston's husband said he has been so busy with his new reality show and a comeback CD that he didn't know the payments hadn't started. He must pay \$160,000 over the next six months to set up the trusts.

PITT OF DESPAIR

More dread news from Africa, where PCP _ the Prettiest Couple on the Planet _ is continuing an alleged romantic trarriance as part of a reputed dalliance. People magazine reports that Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie have circuitously lollygagged their way from Kenya to London and back to Morocco, where Pitt is shooting "Babel" with costar Cate Blanchett. Seems Jolie, 29, and Pitt, 41, embody the precept that discretion is the better part of valor, continuing to not display any public coquetry. People didn't bother mentioning whether the magazine solicited any denials or "no comments" from PCP's reps.

CORPULENCE RUMORS ...

What's worse: tabs accusing a celeb of being a heroin addict (romantic myths about suffering for art; stint in rehab; comeback movie/CD) or of being "tubby" (New York Post) and "pudgy" (New York Daily News)? That's the word on Spider-Man superhero Tobey Maguire, who has reportedly gained some pounds. The tabs say the "lardy leading man" (Post) was spotted in Vegas by always-trim Jessica Alba, who laughed about the "Seabiscuit" star's "huge" vastness.

(This column contains information from wire services.)

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May 6, 2005, Friday

SECTION: SPORTS**KR-ACC-NO: K7414****LENGTH: 969 words****HEADLINE: Afleet Alex a lottery ticket day after day****BYLINE: By Mike Jensen****BODY:**

LOUISVILLE, Ky. _ In the beginning, there was everything to learn. For the owners of Afleet Alex, the pride of Delaware Park and a hopeful in Saturday's 131st Kentucky Derby, this horse-owning business has been an education. Since they were paying the bills, trainer Tim Ritchey willingly provided it.

"Even just where to stand in the backstretch," said co-owner Bob Brittingham of the early days after they bought the horse. "He would tell us all where to stand in the paddock."

Nothing was too elemental. How to tip the grooms. When to bring doughnuts to the barn.

"He told us how to properly pet the horse, where the horse likes it, on the forehead between his eyes," said Brittingham, who grew up in Feasterville and lives in Collegeville. "Don't scratch him on the side, don't give him the opportunity to bite you."

The five owners of Afleet Alex and their families, all from Philadelphia or nearby, know that they are like the rest of us, assuming we have made smart decisions in business and have always read the Daily Racing Form.

Three of the owners had only gambled on horses, never owned one before. Sheiks and Kentucky bluebloods must just love this. These people's first horse could win the Kentucky Derby, and it cost them less than going in together on a Shore bungalow. The initial investment for the whole party of five: \$100,000. Afleet Alex's purchase price: \$75,000. His earnings to date: \$1,245,000.

Those earnings would approximately double if Afleet Alex, the morning-line 9-2 second choice, takes the winner's share of Saturday's \$2,399,600 purse, and that's not factoring in his potential future at stud.

"It's hitting the lottery, but you get to live it day after day," co-owner Joe Lerro said in February. "You're actually seeing it in motion."

Managing partner Chuck Zacney, who lives in Phoenixville, put the Cash Is King Stable group together in April 2004 and said he knew from handicapping races at Delaware Park for years that he wanted Ritchey, a five-time earnings leader at that track. Zacney knew each of the owners, but nobody else knew one another. For Afleet Alex's first couple of races, they didn't even sit together. Now, they're a traveling party _ sleep optional. Ritchey once told them: "I think you have your a.m.s and p.m.s reversed."

Lerro is the group's head cheerleader, the one pumping his fists and raising havoc in winner's circles, the guy who doesn't consider it a road trip if Vegas isn't a stop. Like Zacney, he grew up in Northeast Philadelphia, and now owns a beer distributorship there, plus a pizza place in North Wildwood, Joe Joe's Place, "catering to the late-night crowd." He definitely doesn't know a.m. from p.m.

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"We come together and that's it," said Lerro's wife, Colleen, of their trips to the races from their home in Langhorne. "We don't see each other after that. But I can't do anything; I can't take this from him. He's just having such a ball. The smile hasn't left his face, and home life is really amusing. Joe doesn't sleep. The kids call him the Vampire. He's up all through the night. He can't come down from this high. I've never seen anything like it. He's totally distracted. Nothing can get done or be focused on until all this is over with."

Talking about being at the racetrack, Lerro said he tried the "prim and proper" route early on, but that suit didn't fit. He also came to realize that acting like a live wire _ by being himself _ would bring attention to the horse, which couldn't be a bad thing. There is no question that Afleet Alex is this year's people's horse, with a lot of subplots. Like Saturday, there will be co-owner Jen Reeves and her dash to the race from her son Paul's First Communion in Northeast Philadelphia at 10 a.m. She has a scheduled 12:39 p.m. flight out of Philadelphia, due to arrive in Kentucky at 2:47 p.m. The post time for the Derby at Churchill Downs is 6:04. She has a limo ready to take them to the airport from the church, but said, "I need a police escort."

Reeves is the vice president of Zacney's medical-billing company, the Sirus Group. She's the one who knew how to read the Racing Form when she was 5[, and would go to Atlantic City Racetrack with her grandpop every other weekend. When he died, he was buried with a Kentucky Derby ticket and a copy of the Racing Form. And since her cousin Teddy was an exercise rider at Philadelphia Park, he used to take her on rides on the lead ponies there.

Joe and Barbara Judge, who lived in Delran and now have a place in Surf City, N.J., almost passed on being owners. Actually, Joe Judge did pass. He had been looking to save up for retirement from his job as director of patient services for a couple of South Jersey hospitals, and he was remodeling his house. But his wife surprised him by saying she was up for it, so they signed on.

The group had pushed its initial earnings back in, buying more horses, and Ritchey, who found Afleet Alex last May at the 2-year-olds-in-training sale in Timonium, Md., has shown them some of the ropes at the sales, giving a basic list of characteristics to look for, such as how angles line up, from head to chest to foot. Terese Brittingham, Bob's wife, mentioned how one horse looked beautiful. But Ritchey said the colt's front feet were pointed in the same direction. It was like he had two right feet.

Socially, it's also been a learning experience. At Afleet Alex's first race at Saratoga, Brittingham figured he was presentable wearing Dockers, a pair of loafers and a button-down shirt. That didn't quite cut it. Zacney accepted the winner's trophy by himself because he was the only one with a suit jacket on.

"We've come a long way," Brittingham said.

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May 6, 2005 Friday ADVANCE EDITION

SECTION: FEATURES WEEKEND; Pg. W16

LENGTH: 281 words

HEADLINE: Top Rentals

BODY:

1. ***Meet the Fockers** *1/2('04, PG-13) The Parents gang doubles up on the lewd and crude humor, dropping the film a notch or two.

2. **Ocean's Twelve** ***('04, PG-13) Forget Vegas; this time the hip Ocean cats heads to Europe for a series of high-profile burglaries.

3. **Spanglish** ***1/2('04, PG-13) A peculiar comedy about a Mexican woman's (Paz Vega) vida nuevain America. Adam Sandler and Tea Leoni also star.

4. **Sideways** ****('04, R) Two best buddies' road trip through California wine country yields a funny vintage, indeed.

5. **Hotel Rwanda** ***1/2('04, PG-13) A heartbreaking true story of the Rwandan genocide through the eyes of a hotelier (Don Cheadle) trying to save as many lives as he can.

6. **Elektra** **('04, PG-13) This Jennifer Garner offshoot of Ben Affleck's Daredevilis a film of equal caliber. Any questions?

7. **Finding Neverland** **('04, PG) James M. Barrie (Johnny Depp) finds inspiration for his fairy-tale masterpiece in four fatherless children.

8. **After the Sunset** *1/2('04, PG-13) The sun never does shine on this cat-burglar comedy. Pierce Brosnan and Salma Hayek do, however, flaunt their beautiful-people credentials.

9. **Ladder 49** **('04, PG-13) A little soggy in parts, this remains a hearty salute to all firefighters, past and present. Joaquin Phoenix and John Travolta star.

10. **The Incredibles** ****('04, PG) Pixar's animated superfamily drops the Acme anvil on the Shreks, Nemos and Lion Kings with amazing animation and stellar storytelling.

Rob Watson * New this week. Stars indicate Inquirer reviewers' ratings. From Billboard magazine 5/7/05 2005.

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Copyright 2005 Reno Gazette-Journal
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Reno Gazette-Journal (Nevada)

May 6, 2005 Friday Final Edition

SECTION: SPORTS; Pg. 1B

LENGTH: 714 words

HEADLINE: Can Vegas support an MLB team?

BYLINE: Joe Santoro, jsantoro@rgj.com

BODY:

OPINION

By Joe Santoro

Sports fodder for a Friday morning . . .

o The rumors of major league baseball going to Las Vegas aren't stopping. It seems the Florida Marlins are the latest to threaten a move out west. We're all for major league baseball coming to our state, but can Las Vegas support a big league team? They can't even support Triple-A ball. The Las Vegas 51s rank 25th out of the 30 Triple-A teams in attendance, averaging about 4,500 fans a night. Can a city go from an average crowd of 4,500 to 25,000 overnight? Las Vegas is just not a major sports town, no matter how many celebrities are sitting behind the dugout.

o Former major league pitcher Tom House came out this week and said there has been widespread steroid use in baseball since the 1960s. That means that major league baseball has been looking the other way for 40 years. But don't blame the players in this whole mess. They were just looking for a competitive edge. Hey, if everyone is doing it, it becomes an issue of job security. It's the managers, general managers, owners and the commissioner who should be ashamed.

o Give baseball commissioner Bud Selig credit for trying to pass a real steroid policy. Selig wants the first offense to come with a 50-game suspension. The second positive test means 100 games, and the third means you have to go sell insurance. That would be a step in the right direction. But it's all window dressing. Baseball wants its fans to believe that it is addressing the problem. Believe it if you want.

o Former Wolf Pack baseball player Lyle Overbay is becoming a cult hero in Milwaukee. Brewers fans are now wearing large bandages on their chins in honor of Overbay's recent injury. Funny, but we don't remember Kansas City Royals fans honoring George Brett and his hemorrhoids the same way.

o Will the Wolf Pack baseball team ever return to the regional tournament? Be patient, Pack fans. Rice is leaving the WAC after this year. The Pack will be in the hunt for a conference title and a regional berth most every year. Gary Powers will always have competitive teams that play hard. That's all you can ask for in Northern Nevada, where games can get snowed out in April. The Pack just needs to get lucky on a few recruits. They need guys to come out of nowhere to become great players and great leaders, guys like Corky Miller, Lyle Overbay, Joe Inglett, Justin Martin and Mark Lewis, to name a few.

o George Steinbrenner has a good chance to add a Kentucky Derby crown to his list of accomplishments with his horse, Bellamy Road, on Saturday. If I'm Joe Torre, I'm a little nervous. Owner Ted Turner once replaced his manager with himself. If Bellamy Road wins Saturday, well, don't be shocked to see a four-legged manager in the Yankees' dugout in the near future.

o It seems that Barry Bonds is in no rush to get back on the field. Why is that? You would think that a guy who is 53 home runs away from the greatest record in sports would do everything he can to play. And don't forget he will be 41 in

July. Bonds, though, doesn't seem to be recovering from injuries as quickly as he once did. Why is that?

o Get a tape of the Chicago Bulls-Washington Wizards game from Wednesday night. Stick it in your sports library and watch it once a year. Use it to teach your children about never giving up. If that was a college basketball game, ESPN would already be calling it a classic. Say what you want about the NBA in the regular season, but the NBA playoffs are a wild ride that shouldn't be missed.

o A Joey Gilbert-Jesse Brinkley fight would be the hottest ticket in Northern Nevada since Jeff Horton and Chris Ault coached against each other in the UNLV-Nevada football game in 1995. It's incredible that Brinkley and Gilbert haven't been on Jay Leno yet. Doesn't NBC know how to promote its own shows?

o Why are the White Sox the hottest team in baseball right now? Well, one reason is that John Garland has wiped away all those Judy Garland references. The other reason is that the White Sox win with pitching and defense. You know, the way baseball was meant to be played before the days of 70-home run seasons. The Minnesota Twins play the same way. The Los Angeles Dodgers, too. And there are others. Real baseball is making a comeback.

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Copyright 2005 Reno Gazette-Journal
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Reno Gazette-Journal (Nevada)

May 6, 2005 Friday Final Edition

SECTION: CALENDAR; Pg. 4H

LENGTH: 375 words

HEADLINE: Marianarchy benefit shifts to new person in need

BYLINE: Jason Kellner

BODY:

SCENE HERE

By Jason Kellner

It's been about a year since Reno lost one of its most ambitious supporters of music. Marianne Psota, who died at age 37 in May of 2004, worked at a number of Reno-area bars and at Sierra Sonics Recording Mansion, helping local musicians along the way.

Next week area musicians pay tribute to Psota in Marianarchy. In 2000, Marianarchy began as a benefit for Psota after she suffered a series of seizures caused by encephalitis, a swelling of the brain. This year there's a new person benefiting from the memory of Marianne. The show will raise money for an uninsured Reno woman, Chris Tenniers, who was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma in January. Every two weeks she flies to Arizona for treatment through a free medical program for American Indians. Her story appeared a few weeks ago in the Reno Gazette-Journal.

The show was put together by Reno musicians Jen Scaffidi and Nick Ramirez, who was married to Psota.

"We were just going to do the show as a celebration of the life of our friend, and then Nick read the (story of Tenniers) and suggested the donation," Scaffidi said.

More than a dozen acts will perform for the show, which has a suggested donation of \$10. It's expected to start around 4 p.m. May 13 at the Zephyr with the lineup, in no particular order, including locals Eric Stangeland, Chad Bowen Project, Jen Scaffidi, Candy and the Felon, Drone, Astronot, The Atomiks, The Sunjul, Steve Foht and Mister Vague. Visiting artists include Darren Flowers from Oklahoma City, Mike Dineen from San Francisco, Canadian Danielle French and Berkeley, Calif.'s Lucifer Meltdown.

Band switcheroos: Two of Reno's veteran rock bands have departing members. Delusions of Grandeur says goodbye to guitarist David Wells, who has been with the band for more than a year. The band will take a break before returning for some shows at the Sparks Farmers Market this summer. Its last show with Wells is tonight at Club Underground. And Darque Carnival is losing longtime singer Isaac Harris. The band hopes to find a new singer before shows in Vegas and Texas this summer.

Got news about Reno-area music? Send band gossip, venue tidbits, questions or hate mail to jkellner@rgj.com or call 327-6726.

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Copyright 2005 Rochester Democrat and Chronicle
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Rochester Democrat and Chronicle (New York)

May 6, 2005 Friday

SECTION: INSIDER; Pg. 101112131

LENGTH: 2241 words

HEADLINE: Short summer, endless options

BYLINE: Tim Karan

BODY:

Feel like you're ready to pack it in? Read on.

Tim Karan

Somehow we've managed to squeeze through winter's icy grip and now sit on the brink of summer.

If you're like me, you haven't even acknowledged that warm weather would return - let alone given thought to summer vacation plans.

But the time has come.

To inspire you, we enlisted the aid of Autumn Matteson, 33, travel center manager of AAA in Penfield, and Kelly Marrapese, manager of Liberty Travel in Eastview Mall, to assemble this guide to five types of vacations you can embark on.

We've broken down each type of vacation into three budgets:

So no matter how much you owe in student loans and back rent, you still have an option or five to experience summer in all its glory - fleeting as it may be.

Summer lovin'

Sherkston Shores,

Sherkston, ONTARIO

MTV can be depressing. All those kids running around a beach house without a care in the world. You don't have time or money to romp to the shore and live it up like Nick Carter. Or do you? If you can pretend Lake Erie between Point Abino and Lorraine is the ocean, then for hundreds less, at Sherkston Shores, on a clear day you'll swear you saw Carson Daly.

How to get there: drive

Travel time: about two hours

What to do: There are plenty of beaches, pools, water parks, music venues and nightspots. Enough that even your friend Roy with the back hair should be able to hook up. If you go before June 17, you and a friend can rent a travel trailer at the resort Sunday through Thursday or Thursday through Sunday for \$281.

What to take: standard beach attire and equipment

Information: Call (877) 482-3224 or go to:

www.sherkston.com

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Rochester Democrat and Chronicle (New York) May 6, 2005 Friday

Treasure Island Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas

Everyone knows the story about whatever happens in Vegas.

So what better place to ignore your superego and let loose?

If you're a romantic, you can even swing that one-night fling by any of hundreds of wedding chapels and take home a Britney-style souvenir. Besides the common perception is that half of all marriages end in divorce anyway, right?

How to get there: fly

Travel time: six to eight hours

What to do: See Cirque Du Soleil's exotic Mystere circus, the elegance of showgirls with Sirens of TI or a little burlesque at the speakeasy-styled Tangerine Lounge & Nightclub. Oh yeah, there's also Pai Gow Poker, Caribbean Stud and an endless sea of slot machines.

What to take: Money. Lots of it. AAA says that a two-day package with a few meals will run \$712, but that doesn't account for you wagering your mortgage at the craps table.

Information: Call Penfield AAA Travel Agency at 377-8500 or go to:

www.treasureisland.com

Hedonism II, Negril, Jamaica

If Caligula found his way to Eden, swung by Charlie Sheen's house and brought some tequila, it'd still be tamer than Hedonism II - a resort scientifically engineered to take care of any pent-up sexual tension you may be harboring.

How to get there: fly

Travel time: nine to 10 hours

What to do: Everyone. There are two private beaches (one nude), swim-up bars, Jacuzzis everywhere and regular NC-17-rated mixers.

What to take: Togas, sexy lingerie or no clothes at all. You can also bring golf clubs (as if you'll even consider golfing) and should invest in lots of sunscreen.

Information: Call Liberty Travel at 425-2640 or go to:

www.hedonismi.com/hedonismii

Romantic getaway

Niagara Falls, Niagara County

A place referred to as the "Honeymoon Capital of the World" has got to be at least a little romantic. After all, Superman took Lois Lane there. That's good enough for me.

How to get there: drive

Travel time: one and a half hours

What to do: Gamble the night (and your savings) away at the Seneca Niagara Casino, or stroll along the Niagara Wine Trail. We hear there's also a pretty big waterfall. You can get a room at one of the many hotels for around \$50 to \$60 per night - just call ahead.

What to take: Whatever floats your barrel.

Information: Call the Niagara Tourism and Convention Corporation at (800) 338-7890 or go to:

www.niagara-usa.com

California wine country

The real star of Sideways wasn't any actor. Not even that fat naked guy. The real star was the setting - lush, sprawling vineyards of northern California.

Rochester Democrat and Chronicle (New York) May 6, 2005 Friday

For those in search of a low-key jaunt, California's wine country could quench your thirst. Airfare, three nights at the Double Tree Hotel Sonoma County and a wine tour will run about \$622 per person through AAA.

How to get there: fly

Travel time: six hours

What to do: Take a wine tour of the Napa Valley.

What to take: Comfy shoes, clothes and a high tolerance for alcohol.

Information: Call Penfield AAA Travel Agency at 377-8500 or go to:

www.winecountry.com

Sandals Antigua Caribbean Village & Spa, Antigua

Set on Dickensen Bay, the most famous of 365 beaches on Antigua, this Sandals location boasts sparkling, clear water and miles of white sand. The resort Web site claims the place has been named the "World's Most Romantic Resort." We're not sure by whom, but who's gonna argue?

How to get there: fly

Travel time: 15 hours

What to do: If you feel lazy, just lounge at your seaside beach cottage, stroll through tropical gardens or get pampered like one of the Hilton sisters in the European spa. If you get antsy, there's always all-terrain vehicle tours, pirate cruises and swimming with dolphins.

What to take: Light clothes, a swimsuit and enough willpower to eventually pack up and head home.

Information: Call Liberty Travel at 425-2640 or go to:

www.sandals.com

Adventure

Allegheny State Park, Salamanca, Cattaraugus County

Who says you've gotta go to the ends of the Earth for some adventure? Allegheny State Park, upstate's back yard, has got 65,000 acres of public land and more than enough options to satisfy your danger jones.

How to get there: drive

Travel time: two hours

What to do: Rock-climb, raft, mountain bike, backpack or camp.

What to take: Plenty of water, bug repellent, activity-appropriate attire and equipment and a first-aid kit.

Information: Call (716) 354-9101 or go to:

<http://nysparks.state.ny.us>

Ridin Hy Ranch Resort, Warrensburg, Warren County

Deep in the Adirondacks, off Lake George, lies the Ridin Hy Ranch Resort. Manned by authentic cowboys and cowgirls, this destination offers everything a city slicker with a John Wayne complex could want.

How to get there: drive

Travel time: four to five hours

What to do: There's horseback riding, hayrides, hiking and even a mini rodeo. A weekend package, including six meals, can be lassoed for around \$235 per person.

What to take: Boots, a cowboy hat and possibly something to take care of saddle burn.

Information: Call Penfield AAA Travel Agency at 377-8500 or go to:

www.ridin-hy.com

Xcalak, Mexico

If you love Atlantic City, you'll hate Xcalak. It's isolated. Really isolated. It's in the middle of nowhere. There are no discos. No parties. And there are endless outdoor activities. But if you're looking for some space, there may be no place better.

How to get there: fly, then drive

Travel time: A flight to Cancun takes five to six hours; then there's a four-to five-hour drive into Xcalak.

What to do: Your best Indiana Jones impression. In addition to tons of untouched wilderness and scattered Mayan ruins to explore, the main attraction at Xcalak is diving and snorkeling. Explore the depths of a barrier reef 600 meters offshore or centuries of shipwrecks in the renowned Chinchorro Banks just an hour or two offshore.

What to take: Since this isn't your typical tourist destination, there isn't a burger joint or convenience store on every corner. Load up on essentials like food, bottled water, clothes, sunscreen and insect repellent before you arrive. Kangol hats, beard stubble and feisty sidekicks are optional. A three-day stay at the Tierra Maya Hotel will run you only \$60 to \$70 (keep in mind, this is no Four Seasons), but the travel will cost anywhere from \$750 to \$900.

Information: Call (866) 878-7477 or go to:

www.mayanriviera.com

Tunes

World Electronic Music Festival, Toronto

It's the Woodstock of electronic music. Every year thousands of electronica fans swarm to Toronto for it.

The three-day concert features around 200 DJs and performers in three hangar-like structures and hundreds more on independent stages scattered through the area. This year, the event will be Friday through Sunday, July 8 through 10, and ticket packages can be had for \$35 to \$75 Canadian. A hotel, like the Novotel North York, will run around \$95 per night.

How to get there: drive

Travel time: three to four hours

What to do: Dance. And dance some more. There also are usually visual arts displays and graffiti and break-dance competitions.

What to take: Neon clothes, glow sticks, whatever else you need to look like a hard-core fan. Just don't wear a Chemical Brothers shirt.

Information: Call (416) 631-8821 or go to:

www.wemf.com

Essence Music Festival, New Orleans

Just because the Jazz & Heritage Festival is over doesn't mean the Crescent City is short on music.

From Friday to Sunday, July 1 through 3, the Louisiana Superdome will host the 11th annual Essence Music Festival - the largest African-American musical event in the country.

This year, five stages will host Aretha Franklin, Alicia Keys, Kanye West, Destiny's Child, Black Eyed Peas (above), The Roots, Talib Kweli and more.

How to get there: fly

Travel time: five to six hours

What to do: Apart from the festival (tickets are \$35 to \$125 through Ticketmaster), you can take a swamp and bayou tour, walk around an authentic plantation, enroll in a class at a New Orleans cooking school and take a dinner jazz cruise. With airfare and a weekend stay at the Hotel Monteleone in the heart of the French Quarter, you'll squeeze in at \$739 per

person through AAA.

What to take: Beads. You may be able to convince gullible tourists that Mardi Gras is still going on.

Information: On New Orleans, call Penfield AAA Travel Agency at 377-8500 or go to:

www.neworleansonline.com

On Essence Music Festival, go to:

www.essencemusicfestival.com

Aruba Music Festival, Aruba

It won't really qualify as a "summer" vacation, but in Aruba, when is it not summer? The fourth annual Aruba Music Festival (Friday and Saturday, Oct. 7 and 8) will feature Crosby, Stills & Nash, Chicago, Jackson Browne, John Mayer, Pat Benatar and the Doobie Brothers.

How to get there: fly

Travel time: 11 to 12 hours

What to do: After the concert, you can take a safari or quad racer tour, golf at the world-renowned Tierra Del Sol and The Links courses or merengue the night away at Mambo Jambo or Cafe Bahia.

What to take: Sunglasses, a decent amount of cash and a camera (to prove to friends and co-workers that you were actually there). Your flight will cost between \$559 and \$1,144, concert tickets can be had for around \$35 to \$50 per night, and an executive suite at a hotel like Le Chateau runs about as cheap as you'll find at \$89 per night.

Information: Go to:

www.aruba.com

Rug rat heaven

Splash Lagoon Indoor Water Park and Resort, Erie, Pa.

If this summer is like the last one, sunny days may be at a minimum. That's where a trip to Pennsylvania's only indoor water park comes in.

How to get there: drive

Travel time: two and a half to three hours

What to do: There's a dizzying array of speed and tube slides, a lazy river, the five-story Million Dollar Treehouse with 12 levels of activities and more. If you're into keeping dry, stop by Treasure Island (a 6,500-square-foot arcade) or the 3,000-square-foot Laser Tag arena.

What to take? Swimsuits, towels and a tolerance for shrieking. A full-day pass costs \$39.95 per person, and hotels in the area offer packages, including lodging and park admission for four, beginning at around \$200 per night.

Information: Call (814) 217-1111 or go to:

www.splashlagoon.com

Hershey Park, Hershey, Pa.

Hate sweets? Then Hershey Park may be your own personal hell. To the rest of us junk food lovers, however, it's the closest thing to paradise this side of Switzerland.

How to get there: drive

Travel time: five to six hours

What to do: Overdose on chocolate, catch a thrill on a coaster and tour Hershey's Chocolate World. Check out Hershey Gardens, the Hershey Museum and Hershey's "Really Big 3D Show" while staying at the Hershey Lodge. Three nights along with admission to all the attractions will run a family of four \$239 per person through AAA.

Rochester Democrat and Chronicle (New York) May 6, 2005 Friday

What to take: Walking shoes, a swimsuit and maybe a vegetable or two, for cripes sake.

Information: Call Penfield AAA Travel Agency at 377-8500 or go to:

www.hersheypa.com

Beaches Resort, Sandy Bay, Negril, Jamaica

This all-inclusive resort is designed specifically for families.

How to get there: fly

Travel time: nine to 10 hours

What to do: The tykes will enjoy walking among life-sized Sesame Street characters, and you can even have them cook with "Cookie Monster" or dance with "Zoe." The older kids can revel in unlimited video game access at the Xbox Game Oasis. And, Mom and Dad, you can enjoy the service of "Ultra Nannies" and have some time alone.

What to take: Whatever you want. Just rest assured you won't be bringing any of the baggage you're used to during a regular work week.

Information: Call Liberty Travel at 425-2640 or go to:

www.beaches.com

GRAPHIC: Diana Perez, 19, of Rochester is all set to hit the road. Lisa Hughes; MAID OF THE MIST, NIAGARA FALLS; Associated Press file photo 2005 ridin hy ranch resort, warrensburg, warren county; ridin-hy.com; black eyed peas; blackeyedpeas.com; splash lagoon indoor water park and resort, erie, PA. splashlagoon.com

LOAD-DATE: May 7, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Salon.com, Inc.
Salon.com

May 6, 2005 Friday

SECTION: Movie Reviews**LENGTH:** 1002 words**HEADLINE:** "Kingdom of Heaven"**BYLINE:** By Stephanie Zacharek**HIGHLIGHT:**

A character boasts: "I once fought two days with an arrow through my testicle." After sitting through this would-be epic on the Crusades, I know just how he felt.

BODY:

Like "Troy," "Alexander" and "The Last Samurai," Ridley Scott's "Kingdom of Heaven" is another boy's-book adventure movie dressed up as a grown man's epic — it's far too little for its britches. Orlando Bloom plays 12th century crusader Balian of Ibelin. (When wise elder warrior Godfrey of Ibelin, played by Liam Neeson, knighted him with a slap on the face, I wanted to cry out, "Arise, Sir Loin of Beef!") In the beginning, Balian is just a humble blacksmith, plying his trade in his homeland of France. But his child has died, and his wife has committed suicide; what's more, a corrupt priest has just swung by the blacksmith shop to let him know that his wife, having taken her own life, is damned to hell. Balian loses his temper and kills him.

Fortunately, a great knight on his way back from fighting in the East (Neeson's Godfrey) has just stopped by Balian's town. Godfrey happens to be Balian's dad (he did a lot of tomcattin' around in his youth), and he has just the ticket to cheer Balian up: Why not join the religious wars raging in the far-off Holy Land? Normally, a quick trip to Vegas would do the trick, but bullying fellow humans into Christian conversion will do in a pinch.

So Balian sets out for Jerusalem, eventually meeting a leper king in a silver mask — that would be the enlightened Christian King Baldwin IV, played with great vocal authority by Edward Norton — as well as various European crusader types intent on destroying the fragile peace in the Holy Land, which is due largely to the restraint of the sensible and intelligent Muslim leader Saladin (played with charismatic dignity by Ghassan Massoud). Great clashes ensue: There are so many battles in "Kingdom of Heaven" that it's easy to lose track of them. What's more, it's so hard to follow what's going on in these battles (as well as exactly why they're happening in the first place) that they turn the movie into one long gray smudge of action with some talking in between. To break up the endless sword clanging and arrow slinging, characters utter jaunty lines like "The blacksmith is the man you seek!" "So — how find you Jerusalem?" and, my personal favorite, "I once fought two days with an arrow through my testicle."

"Kingdom of Heaven" is a similar test of fortitude. This is muddled and oppressive storytelling (the script is by William Monahan) dotted with elaborate but weightless battle sequences: The rallying cries of the various warring factions, their noble sacrifices, their sheer numbers — all of it seems carefully calculated by Scott to fool us into thinking we're not in the Middle East but in Middle Earth. But unlike the battles of the "Lord of the Rings" movies, these "historical" skirmishes have little gravity. Since we barely know what's at stake — we're too confused and bored to care — all this fighting means nothing to us, and yet Scott still hopes to rev us up with it. He pretends to ask the anguished question "Why must mankind fight?" even as he's really just rushing to the convenient answer "I dunno, but gosh, doesn't it look cool?"

Scott, of course, wants to have it both ways. He sincerely believes he's trawling history for important moral lessons that we can put to use today, and he thinks he's being profound by applying convoluted but ultimately simplistic storytelling to complicated modern problems. His thinking is muddled and murky. When Bloom encounters a group of Muslims giving praise to Allah, he remarks that their prayer "sounds like our prayers." Imagine — Muslims are people just like us! If Scott

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had his druthers, he'd whirl the world's religions in a giant blender and come up with a frothy milkshake we all could share. Religious conflicts, border disputes and anxieties about terrorism would be instantly dissolved with a handshake and a goat's milk ice-cream cone.

In Scott's view, religion isn't the root of the world's problems — people are. But if we need a movie to tell us that, "Kingdom of Heaven" sure isn't it. The picture doesn't have the brooding emotional power of Scott's "Gladiator" (largely provided by its star, Russell Crowe). It doesn't even have the cheerful ludicrousness of "Troy" and "Alexander." Scott never lets us forget he's a big-time filmmaker who's serious about his craft, which means he uses lots of fat close-ups that explode the frame for no good reason. (Cinematographer John Mathieson gives us lots of great, sweeping landscapes, if that's the sort of thing you're after.) A few of the actors manage to thrive even in the death ray of Scott's self-important vision, most notably David Thewlis as a Hospitaler (or knight-confessor) and Jeremy Irons as Tiberius, advisor to King Baldwin. And Eva Green, who made her debut in Bernardo Bertolucci's lovely political-pop-culture reverie "The Dreamers," plays Baldwin's sister, Princess Sibylla, with a measure of cool that defies her surroundings: She doesn't quite know what to do with her character's stilted dialogue, but she carries herself so regally that you barely notice.

Bloom doesn't fare so well. Balian and Sibylla go to bed together (although because this isn't a movie about romance and other ewky stuff, Scott barely gives them a single love scene), and you have to wonder what she sees in this supposedly brave and principled thinker-warrior (not to be confused with a tinker-tailor or soldier-spy). Bloom reportedly gained 20 pounds to play Balian, but he still looks in danger of blowing away any minute. When he opens his mouth, a painstakingly noble squeak comes out. That shouldn't matter so much if you ascribe to the thinking that wars are won with brains, not brawn. But epic heroes need to have at least a soupcon of presence, and Bloom, although good-looking in a "the dog ate my homework" kind of way, just doesn't have what it takes to hold down a picture as gargantuan as this one tries to be. "Kingdom of Heaven" is a big movie that asks the big question, "So — how find you Jerusalem?" The answer is, not so hot.

LOAD-DATE: May 8, 2005

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Copyright 2005 The San Diego Union-Tribune
The San Diego Union-Tribune

May 6, 2005 Friday

SECTION: LIFESTYLE; Pg. E-6**LENGTH:** 764 words**HEADLINE:** 'Elvis' captures the young King**BYLINE:** Robert P. Laurence**BODY:**

When Elvis Presley died in 1977, John Lennon delivered a cruelly accurate epitaph: "Elvis died when he went into the Army."

The same fate befalls "Elvis," the four-hour CBS miniseries that kicks off Sunday night.

Like the young, pre-Army Elvis himself, the film dances, jumps and sizzles in its first two hours. Portrayed with subtlety and passion by Irish actor Jonathan Rhys Meyers ("Bend It Like Beckham"), Elvis quickly evolves from shy, soft-spoken high school kid to swaggering, hip-swinging, gyrating teen idol.

Rhys Meyers gets his Elvis down pat, from the unique vocal intonations to the lip curl and that sinewy, snaking left leg. The performance scenes, with Rhys Davis miming to the sound of Elvis' original recordings and squealing crowds rushing the stage, impart a strong sense of what it must have been like to be there then.

Then, as the first half of the four-hour miniseries draws to a close, we're rudely reminded that in the 1950s a notice from the draft board could interrupt the best-laid plans of almost any young American male.

Elvis is called up, and from that moment on, the narrative sags like a leaky balloon, as did his life and career. The rags-to-riches biopic becomes an angst-ridden soap opera, and the anxious, bitter sounds of quarrels and anguish displace the sex-drenched rhythms of rock 'n' roll.

Somehow, the story of early Elvis never gets old. The scenes played out in previous movies are depicted yet again — his love for black rhythm 'n' blues recordings of the early 1950s, his first tentative steps into Sam Phillips' Sun Records storefront studio, those early recording sessions, the "Louisiana Hayride" appearances, even his first encounter with the hayseed Svengali, silver-tongued "Colonel" Tom Parker. They still hold an irresistible fascination.

If anything, Randy Quaid plays Parker as overly oleaginous, a phony so transparent it's hard to believe that even a young, naive lad like Elvis and his gullible hick parents didn't see right through the oil slick to the real grime lurking below.

Camryn Manheim, though, resists her usual tendency toward scenery-chomping, nicely and effectively underplaying the role of Gladys, the mother to whom Elvis was utterly devoted. "I think he'd sell the paint off his own mama's house," she says tellingly of the self-appointed "Colonel." "And he talks funny."

Yet she doesn't stop her son from signing on with the cheesy, small-time swindler and making the biggest mistake of his life.

Stationed in Germany during his Army hitch, Elvis meets 14-year-old Priscilla, is instantly smitten, and begins a courtship that can only be described as bizarre in its extended length and self-imposed chastity.

Elvis, whether consciously or unconsciously, seemingly subscribed to the Madonna-or-whore theory of womanhood, casting his beloved mother in the former role. Priscilla, it seems, immediately occupied a place in his heart only a small step below. Once she bore his child, he put her back on her pedestal, and again considered her an idol beyond touching.

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Life in the Army, then post-Army life, constrain Elvis' career. His natural talent for putting over a song may have been prodigious, but his will was weak, particularly when it came to bucking Parker.

He is offered the lead role in "West Side Story," but Parker turns it down. What his fans want, Parker explains, "is some paradise they can never afford to visit, lots of pretty girls, and Elvis Presley fighting and singing a half-dozen songs that we can stick on a soundtrack album. That's our bread and butter, Son. You stick with what sells!"

Elvis complains, but doesn't stand up. He walks miserably through "Girls! Girls! Girls!" "Girl Happy," "The Trouble With Girls," recording any song Parker can buy cheap.

Beginning backstage just before his memorable 1968 comeback TV special, then rewinding into flashback, "Elvis" mercifully ends with his performance in that concert.

It may have been his last great performance, but it was a mere prelude to his long, sad decline on the stages of Las Vegas. There, he lived on as a macabre, swollen, prematurely embalmed caricature of his former self, wrapped in layers of fat so thick and heavy that the young, vibrant, revolutionary Elvis could no longer be seen, either by the Vegas gamblers grabbing for his sweaty scarves or by himself.

TV REVIEW

"Elvis"

The future King steps into Sun Records one more time. 9 p.m. Sunday and 8 p.m. Wednesday on KFMB/Channel 8.

Robert P. Laurence: (619) 293-1892; bob.laurence@uniontrib.com. See past columns, and read the Remote Control weblog at www.sosd.com/tvradio.

GRAPHIC: 3 PICS; CAPTIONS: 1. The voice of Elvis Presley appears to come from Jonathan Rhys Meyers in the CBS miniseries "Elvis." **2.** The Presleys, Elvis and Priscilla (Antonia Bernath), enjoy the first days of parenthood while young Lisa Marie patiently awaits the time when she'll start her own music career. **3. 'AIN'T NO FRIEND OF MINE'** — There are people who say their lives were touched by celebrities. The common folk might be better off if they, like the stars, had some sort of wall of protection around themselves, preventing the famous from getting too close. If you don't like that concept, tune in to "Elvis" Sunday night. Robert P. Laurence takes a look at the show on Page E6. (E-1); **PHOTOBY: 1,2.** Monty Brinton / CBS photos

LOAD-DATE: May 8, 2005

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Copyright 2005 San Jose Mercury News
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San Jose Mercury News (California)

May 6, 2005 Friday

LENGTH: 573 words

HEADLINE: Springsteen plays Oakland;
SUBHEAD REVIEW OF THE BOSS IN CONCERT

BYLINE: By Brad Kava; Mercury News

BODY:

It's a rare rock 'n' roll artist who can play a solo acoustic set of more than two hours and make it feel almost as electric as when he is plugged in.

Bruce Springsteen did it at Oakland's Paramount Theater Thursday night, receiving thunderous ovations from a sold out audience.

Shuffling instruments and reworking songs, he ran through a sort of lesser-known greatest hits set, some of them set in such brilliant disguises it took an expert to decipher what he was playing.

After starting with "My Beautiful Reward," from 1992's less than stellar, "Lucky Town," he sang a song and accompanied himself only on harmonica, vocals and music through a distorted effects processor.

It sounded like an old Muddy Waters take on "Mannish Boy," but turned out to be "Reason to Believe," from 1982's first acoustic effort, "Nebraska."

Later in the show he used the same muddy technique for that album's "Johnny 99."

He played a 12-string guitar and made it sound like an entire band on "All the Way Home" and did a call and response on "The Rising" that sounded like two people were singing.

He reworked show closer "Promised Land" into something that could have been played by an ancient Mississippi Delta blues shouter, pounding on the guitar rather than strumming it.

Some highlights included emotional solo piano takes on "Racing in the Streets" and "The River."

There was a handful of new songs from "Devils & Dust" that worked perfectly in an acoustic context. And even better, songs from his last album, "The Rising," including "Further on (Up the Road)," lost no power with the power down.

How many other classic rock artists are putting out great work 35 years into their careers? Not many.

Everytime out Springsteen has distinguished himself with perfect sound systems that defy the constraints of the worst rooms. That wasn't a problem at the Paramount, but he still managed to make the sound full and rich and never too loud.

It makes you wonder why so few other artists can achieve the same satisfying results. Are they too cheap or too ignorant to spend the time and money to make live shows sound as good as recordings?

That said, Springsteen was not without his errors onstage. There were plenty of minor clunkers on the piano and harmonica, particularly odd since his three-hour-long arena shows with the large E Street Band were almost compulsively note perfect.

But Thursday was his night to be a folkie, ala Woody Guthrie, the blemishes adding to the nights down-home reality.

The artist who looks far younger than his 56 years, asked the audience not to clap along, fearing it would throw off his "tenuous" sense of rhythm. He also asked them to stop clapping at the beginning of songs.

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San Jose Mercury News (California) May 6, 2005 Friday

"You can eschew the clapping when you recognize a song," he said, perhaps the first rocker in history to use that S.A.T. word onstage. "I know it and you've heard it before. It's kind of a hack thing. It'd been done. I feel like I'm in Vegas when I hear that clapping."

He even asked them not to applaud his few political statements, such as his fear that a movie like "Inherit the Wind," about evolution, couldn't be made today in the country's conservative climate.

"No applause please," he said. "I don't want to feel like I'm preaching to the converted."

It was almost unavoidable though. On this night, even a Springsteen hater might have been blinded by the light.

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2005

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Copyright 2005 The Sporting News Publishing Company
The Sporting News

May 6, 2005

SECTION: NBA; insider; Pg. 58

LENGTH: 975 words

HEADLINE: King James must rule with a tighter fist

BYLINE: SEAN DEVENEY

BODY:

Write this down. Take it to Vegas, take it to some offshore Internet casino, take it to Knee-breaking Ned, your local bookie: The Cavaliers will make the playoffs next year. Barring some freakish injury, things cannot get any worse in Cleveland. After a 31-21 start this year, the Cavaliers spiraled out of control, finished 11-19, forked over their playoff spot and left just about everyone involved with the franchise wearing the scarlet "C" (as in choke). General manager Jim Paxson and coach Paul Silas got the tangible brunt of blame—both were fired. New owner Dan Gilbert already has alienated many fans with his knee-jerk reactions. Among the players, center Zydrunas Ilgauskas did nothing to warrant the big-time contract he will seek in the free-agent market this summer, and point guard Jeff McInnis' attitude and lax defense sent his free-agent stock plummeting. Oh, and whatever happened to Jiri Welsch, Lucious Harris and Sasha Pavlovic?

The only Cavaliers employee who has escaped the mudslinging is the savior of Cleveland basketball, the mahatma of the Midwest, LeBron James. That's because he is coming off a terrific season in which he averaged 27.2 points, 7.4 rebounds and 7.2 assists and because his triple double in the Cavs' finale nearly nudged Cleveland into the playoffs. It's also because folks in Cleveland do not want to offend James—he can become a free agent in two years, and no one wants to run the risk of upsetting him.

But someone should. As terrific as James was this season, he is the Cavaliers' franchise player, and when the franchise fails, the leader must accept some blame. Sure, he is 20 years old, and sure, he just finished only his second NBA season. But James bears some responsibility for what happens to his team, for better and worse. The triple double was nice, but how about the six turnovers he committed in a key loss to New Jersey? Or the crushing home loss to the Knicks, in which James shot 2-for-8 with three turnovers as the Cavs blew a 4-point lead in the fourth quarter?

Making the playoffs in the East is not a terribly difficult thing to do—James should have found a way to get it done. As one opposing East assistant coach points out, "LeBron seemed to not trust his teammates more as the year went on, and their offense kind of stopped. It became LeBron on an isolation, again and again, and that wasn't really enough."

Kevin Loughery, who coached the Bulls during Michael Jordan's rookie year, sees a major difference between the young Jordan and the young James. "LeBron James is a great player," Loughery says. "But I don't think Michael Jordan would let his team lose the games that the Cavaliers lost late in the year the way LeBron has. I think, obviously, there are some problems in that locker room, and it could be jealousy around LeBron."

"We had that when Michael was a rookie. He was not easy on his teammates, even in his first year. He would practice hard, he would go all-out all the time, and some guys did not like that. Not all of his teammates liked Michael, but he did not care. They respected him. He would not allow his team to lose games if he could control it. I don't see that in LeBron yet."

Someone in Cleveland needs to say that to James, whether it's the new owner, the new coach, the new general manager or one of the many new players the Cavaliers will add this summer. Don't let James escape blame. Appeal to his competitive instincts. Let the pain of what happened at the end of this season drive him over the summer. Let him stop caring about what his teammates think, the way Jordan did.

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Too many people in Cleveland seem to operate in fear of offending James, but the team can't make its decisions based on paranoia over whether James wants to stay with the Cavaliers. James has said he does not want to leave. Besides, the way James' contract is structured, he will be a free agent after 2007, but he will be restricted, meaning the Cavaliers will be able to match any offer and keep him.

James is good enough to lead the Cavaliers to the postseason single-handedly. He will do that next year. But only if someone in Cleveland has the guts to point the finger at him. TSN

The biggest losers LeBron James is not the only star player at home this postseason. Kobe Bryant, Lakers. No matter how the Lakers spin it, Bryant ensured Shaquille O'Neal and Phil Jackson were run out of Lakerland, making L.A. indisputably his team. The result: a paltry 34 wins.

Carlos Boozer, Jazz. After drawing comparisons to Karl Malone early this season, Boozer developed a taste for bad shots and lax defense. Utah committed nearly \$70 million to him and regrets it.

Kevin Garnett, Timberwolves. Latrell Sprewell and Sam Cassell, mired in contract disputes with the team, are the key figures in Minnesota's flop. But Garnett should make sure his teammates give their all. Garnett showed he can get tough with Rick Rickert last summer—why not get tough with Sprewell and Cassell?

SPEED READS

The Cavaliers and Nets finished tied for the eighth seed in the East, and the Nets won the playoff spot on the head-to-head tiebreaker. But the league should employ the same tiebreaker baseball does—a winner-goes-on game. Cavs vs. Nets would have been a nice playoff appetizer.

The NBA has generous counting methods when it comes to attendance, but the fact the league managed to break the single-season attendance mark is an impressive accomplishment considering big markets New York and Los Angeles are home to lottery-bound teams.

Isiah Thomas has not done much to distinguish his tenure as Knicks head honcho, but he is right when he says he should get at least another year. Thomas just completed his first full season. When he is finished adding big contracts and minimal talent next season, though, he should be fired.

LOAD-DATE: April 26, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Springfield News-Leader (Springfield, MO)
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Springfield News-Leader (Missouri)

May 6, 2005 Friday

SECTION: WEEKEND; Pg. 9G**LENGTH:** 558 words**HEADLINE:** MUSIC: Over 20 years, Valen keeps connecting**BYLINE:** Michael A. Brothers, News-Leader**BODY:**

Singer brings a batch of catchy tunes to CD release show tonight.

Michael A. Brothers, News-Leader

When his lead singer took ill just before a big New Year's Eve gig, drummer and vocalist Eddie Valen was forced to get out from behind his kit and front the band.

That was more than 20 years ago, and Valen has been a frontman and entertainer since.

Today, with years of experience in Las Vegas and Branson under his belt, nerves are no longer a factor for Valen, who marks the release of a new self-produced solo CD with a show tonight at the Lucky 7 Bar in Springfield.

"He's very, very personable," says Bill Lowery, who has played guitar in Valen's band for nearly six years. "His approach is very much a one-on-one thing, like (the way) you'd talk to someone you saw on the street."

Connecting with the audience and gauging reactions to various songs is one of his strong suits, Valen says, a talent he has honed through countless performances.

Valen grew up in California and got his start playing the ski circuit there. After becoming a frontman, he moved to Las Vegas, where he spent four years performing. His last gig was a stint at the Oasis Lounge inside the Dunes Hotel, a landmark of the old Vegas strip before it was imploded in 1993.

At about that time Valen began to long for a quieter life in the country. But acreage around Las Vegas was pricey.

"My brother was in the Midwest and he said, 'Come to Aurora. We're only an hour from Branson,' " he says. "And I said, 'What's Branson?'"

Valen made the trip to find out and ended up bumping into the Platters, whom he had worked with before. The doo-wop group had just landed a contract in the burgeoning music capital, and was looking for an emcee and opening act.

Valen (whose real surname is Valente) bought some land near Aurora, commuted to his daily gig, got married and even opened an antique store. But after five years, the grind of daily shows began to wear on him, and he quit to form his own band. It currently includes Lowery, drummer B.J. Rossi and bassist Dave Wilson.

Valen and Lowery both possess a rich mental library of hundreds if not thousands of songs, and the band plays everything from Jerry Lee Lewis to Lynyrd Skynyrd to matchbox twenty, depending on which way the crowd is leaning.

"We play the room," Valen says. "(Our versatility) gives us this chameleon thing. I really missed that freedom, and I couldn't get that in Branson."

Valen's new album, "The Best Things Are Free," falls more into the pop vein. Using digital equipment, Valen wrote, performed and recorded nearly every sound on the album at his home. The songs range from the country-flavored "I'll Do the Talkin'" to the smooth chorus of the title cut.

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PC-01255

True to his passion for entertaining, Valen says he likes to write catchy hooks rather than deep narratives: "Something that gets you tapping the dashboard within a few minutes."

Whether it's originals or covers, Lowery says variety will continue to be the band's hallmark.

"We get to play so many different kinds of music," he says. "We've never been limited to country, rock 'n' roll or blues. We play 12 notes to an infinite possibility."

Want to go?

What: Eddie Valen CD release show

When: 9 p.m. today

Where: Lucky 7 Bar inside Hotel 7, 3050 N. Kentwood Ave.

Cover charge: \$3

Information: 833-4835

GRAPHIC: With a passion for entertaining, Eddie Valen has made his mark from Las Vegas to Branson. He prefers tunes with catchy hooks — "Something that gets you tapping the dashboard within a few minutes." Eddie Valen; Copyright 2005 Springfield News-Leader

LOAD-DATE: May 11, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Times Publishing Company
St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

May 6, 2005 Friday 0 South Pinellas Edition

SECTION: SPORTS; Pg. 1C**LENGTH:** 795 words**HEADLINE:** Here's one Rays can't lose**BYLINE:** JOHN ROMANO**DATELINE:** ST. PETERSBURG**BODY:**

We have been taught not to wish ill upon others, and so we generally keep thoughts such as these to ourselves.

Not that they're dastardly, or even unseemly, thoughts. They are just, well, a little selfish. Maybe a bit inconsiderate. Certainly unneighborly.

We are referring to how we should view the struggles of baseball-loving folk in South Florida. The ones who are trying, for the umpteenth time, to build a stadium around the flagpole that holds their World Series banners.

Again, they have come close to putting a stadium deal together. Once again, it appears they may fall a tad short. With state lawmakers scheduled to wrap up work today in Tallahassee, a \$60-million bill to complete financing for a stadium for the Marlins seems a few hits shy of a rally.

And in our hearts, we know this is not the worst thing that could happen to the Devil Rays. That, perhaps, it could actually be the best thing.

This, of course, is the selfish part. The gee-I-wish-I-hadn't-thought-of-that part. The shameful part that may have you cheering for moving vans instead of earth movers in Miami's Little Havana neighborhood.

You see, the Marlins are threatening to flee if they don't get a stadium built. They have, already, had talks with the mayor of Las Vegas.

Now, maybe it's merely a bluff. Maybe Vegas can't handle a major-league franchise. And maybe baseball's leaders don't want a team in Sin City.

But, at the minimum, a move from South Florida is a possibility. And with the Expos having jumped to Washington, a precedent has been set after more than 30 years of resistance to franchise relocation.

So how, you may ask, would a move benefit the Rays? It's not that fans from Miami are going to be trudging north to Tropicana Field for games. Heck, most of them won't even go a few miles north of downtown Miami for Marlins games.

No, the immediate advantage will be in broadcast fees. With the Marlins out of the picture, the Rays could sell their television rights across the state. That means millions in additional revenues. Every single season.

That, alone, would make a Marlins move a boon for the Rays. But there is another implication. Less tangible, but conceivably more important.

No one in baseball or Rays ownership has yet to suggest this team might be a candidate for relocation, but don't you suppose it's been pondered?

When you continually finish near the bottom of the league in attendance, and spend less on payroll than any other team, the idea of a fresh start has to have shown up on someone's radar.

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That's where the defection of the Marlins could save the Rays. Should the Marlins bolt for Las Vegas or Portland or Mexico City, the Rays would be left as the only team in the nation's fourth-most populous state.

And that means the big shots - in baseball and government - should bend over backward to make sure the franchise succeeds.

Tax breaks? You got it. Realignment? We'll consider it. A new stadium? Okay, that's a tougher sell, but the Rays would have all the leverage.

In the current climate, a new stadium for the Rays is a laughable notion. Vince Naimoli has a better chance of being named Mr. Congeniality.

But imagine the landscape five years from now. Stuart Sternberg has taken over and made the club more competitive. Made the image more palatable.

Given the right set of circumstances, a push for a new stadium might have a chance of succeeding. Particularly if the Marlins left a trail of dust, blame and accusations in the wake of their departure from Miami-Dade County.

So maybe you think this is a bad idea. I don't blame you. Nor do I disagree. Subsidizing millionaires is never a popular notion.

But it does happen.

And, eventually, it will again be an issue here.

The beauty of this situation is the Rays really can't lose. There are just varying degrees of success.

For the sake of argument, let's say the Legislature breaks down today and gives the Marlins the \$60-million they're seeking.

How does that help Tampa Bay?

Oh, I would guess the Rays would be inclined to see that bit of legislation as a precedent. An indication that, somewhere down the line, they would also be entitled to a share of the state's funds.

In the end, it's an intriguing notion. The idea that South Florida - the market that broke Tampa Bay's heart in the expansion race of 1991 - is now in a position to help. That, this time, South Florida's pain could be our gain.

The Rays, for now, are acting as if this is none of their business. That what happens to the Marlins has no impact on Tampa Bay's future.

Politically speaking, that's the way to go. Realistically, it's not close to the truth. The Rays have a huge stake in whether the Marlins stay or go.

So, what do you say, neighbor?

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St. Petersburg Times (Florida)

May 6, 2005 Friday 0 South Pinellas Edition

SECTION: NATIONAL; Pg. 1A

LENGTH: 1147 words

HEADLINE: Bilirakis: You judge free trips to Vegas

BYLINE: ANITA KUMAR

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

If a special interest group wants Rep. Mike Bilirakis to attend an event, the Tarpon Springs Republican says there's one way to get his attention:

Hold it in Las Vegas.

Bilirakis has taken eight trips there since 1997, all paid for by private organizations looking to influence him on issues pending before Congress. The most recent trip was in April.

During the eight years since the House modified the way it keeps travel records, Bilirakis accepted 13 trips for himself and family members at a cost of almost \$40,000, including one to the Yucca Mountain federal nuclear waste repository in Nevada - 90 miles northwest of Las Vegas.

"There's no magic to it. I enjoy being at a particular location," Bilirakis said. "I like organized casino gambling. I like going through the looking glass into fantasy world."

Bilirakis, who has been put up at the Bellagio Hotel & Casino and Paris Las Vegas, said he likes blackjack and dice games.

The trips are legal, but Bilirakis said he understands why his constituents might criticize him for going. He said he might be critical himself if he were not a public official.

"It's an argument people could certainly make," he said. "As long as there is complete disclosure, let them judge. It's in the eye of the beholder."

Lawmakers are invited on trips to attend conferences, give speeches or accept awards; often the travel is considered a "fact-finding" excursion. Lawmakers used to be paid hundreds of dollars to give a speech, but that practice was banned in 1989.

"These trips to some extent are suck-up contests to show members a really good time," said Gary Ruskin, director of the Congressional Accountability Project, a nonpartisan, anticorruption group. "Bilirakis knows that he can sponge off his special interest groups to get his gambling fix."

Bilirakis said he chooses trips based on which group invites him, the purpose of the event, his professional calendar and personal schedule with his family. The trips are usually three or four days, long weekends, built around congressional votes.

"I'm a homebody," he said. "I like to be home."

The 74-year-old congressman, who says he hopes his son will succeed him when he retires next year, has taken more trips paid for by special interest groups in the past five years than other west-central Florida House members.

Lawmakers take two kinds of trips - those approved by Congress and paid with taxpayer dollars, such as the recent

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one to Rome for Pope John Paul II's funeral, which Bilirakis did not attend, and those paid for by special interest groups. House Majority Leader Tom DeLay has come under fire recently for taking trips financed by private lobbyists, which is not allowed, instead of groups like the ones that paid Bilirakis' bill, which are allowed.

Most of Bilirakis' trips were paid for by the Consumer Electronics Association and the National Association of Broadcasters, which hold national conventions in Las Vegas each year, records show. Others were courtesy of the Pinellas County Osteopathic Medical Society and the Non-Commissioned Officers Association of United States of America.

Jeff Joseph, spokesman for the Consumer Electronics Association, said that he understands some guests like to gamble or shop in Las Vegas but that the group offers a rigorous schedule of panels, speeches and tours. "It's not like a golfing trip to Florida," he said. "There's a distinct difference. There is work to be done."

But Joseph did allow that the casinos of Las Vegas are a draw. "I'm sure it helps," he said.

Bilirakis, whose district encompasses much of north Pinellas and Hillsborough counties and the coastal areas of Pasco County, acknowledges most trips include time that has nothing to do with the stated purpose, especially if he is participating in a panel discussion that lasts only two to three hours.

"The rest of the time, how much value is there?" he said. "Most would include time when there isn't value. I'm the first one to admit it. You have to be honest about that."

Bilirakis said he doesn't go to the events just to get a free trip to Las Vegas. He said he can – and does – pay for his trips to Las Vegas about once every two years.

He said he became interested in gambling in the mid 1970s, betting small amounts on blackjack and dice. He said he doesn't like betting on sports or playing cards, but Rep. Joe Barton, R-Texas, once showed him how to play Texas hold 'em poker on a trip to Las Vegas.

Bilirakis said he doesn't smoke, drink much or play poker and describes himself as a conservative person. And yet he likes to gamble.

"It kind of belies my nature," he said.

Las Vegas ranks as the third-most-popular U.S. destination for lawmakers since 2000, with 165 members traveling to the city, which has one of the largest convention centers in the nation, according to the Political Moneyline Web site.

"It's no secret that part of the allure is that their holding events at nice locales," said Steven Weiss of the Center for Responsive Politics, a nonpartisan group that tracks money in politics.

A member of Congress since 1982, Bilirakis has traveled less frequently in recent years, cutting back on trips – though not the ones to Las Vegas.

He has taken at least 11 trips to Vegas since 1990, according to his financial and travel records. He has also gone to New Orleans, Atlanta and Los Angeles, as well as Canada, Bermuda, South Africa and Greece, where his parents were raised.

Bilirakis went to the Kentucky Derby in 1990 and 1991, paid for by the American Horse Council and the Lincoln National Insurance Co. and the Brown and Williamson tobacco company.

His wife, Evelyn, 70, almost always accompanies him. At least once, one of his sons, Emmanuel, a doctor in Palm Harbor, went with him.

The trips include transportation, hotels and meals. Together with his wife, trips to Las Vegas cost \$2,500 to \$6,000, with airfare the bulk of the cost. Tickets from Washington or Tampa to Las Vegas usually cost more than \$1,000. Once, it cost \$3,773.

Bilirakis said he doesn't remember the last time he flew first-class on one of these trips. He said the tickets are usually higher priced because he books them at the last minute to accommodate his duties at the Capitol or returns to a city different from the departing city.

He said most invitations come because he is vice chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee – whose members often get attention from groups offering campaign money and free trips – and he was chairman of one its

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subcommittees.

"You have human beings up here," Bilirakis said. "Some will do it. Some will not. I don't know that those who don't are more honest or more fair."

Times staff writer Bill Adair and researcher Kitty Bennett contributed to this report. Anita Kumar can be reached at kumar@sptimes.com or (202) 463-0576.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO; Rep. Mike Bilirakis

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The State (Columbia, SC)

May 6, 2005 Friday

SECTION: E; Pg. 0

LENGTH: 1053 words

HEADLINE: Bars and clubs

BODY:

Tonight

BAJA BROILER, Toyz. 1345 Old Chapin Road, Lexington; (803) 356-0040. BILL'S MUSIC SHOP AND PICKIN' PARLOR, 7:30 p.m., Open Stage and Bluegrass Jam. 710 Meeting St., West Columbia; (803) 796-6477.

THE BLUE MARTINI, 10 p.m.-1 a.m., Robert Gardner jazz jam session. 808 Lady St.; (803) 256-2442.

CLARION TOWN HOUSE HOTEL, 5:30-9 p.m., Drake Riley on piano. 1615 Gervais St.; (803) 771-8711.

THE CENTENNIAL CLUB, deejay music. U.S. 321, Gaston; (803) 794-9333.

THE CORNER POCKET, Jumpstart, 9:30 p.m. 489 Piney Grove Road; (803) 731-0403.

DOC'S GUMBO GRILLE, Uncle Dooby's Restless Spirit. 1115 Assembly St.; (803) 256-4440.

JEZEBELLE'S COFFEEHOUSE, 8 p.m., Friday-night jam with Munson Summer and friends, Tammy Crane and Foster Busby. 1202 Caldwell St., Newberry; (803) 405-1306.

MANGIA! MANGIA! ITALIAN RESTAURANT, Jim LeBlanc. 100 State St., West Columbia; (803) 791-3443.

MINGLEWOOD, Capital Funk. 800 Harden St.; (803) 254-9999.

MOUSE TRAP, 7:45 p.m. until ..., "Sweet Thang" Eddie Brown and Marion Brown. 2711 Middleburg Drive; (803) 799-2120.

NEW BROOKLAND TAVERN, 9 p.m., Fluffgirl Burlesque, Something About Vampires and Sluts, Hellblink Sextet. 122 State St., West Columbia; (803) 791-4413.

RAMADA INN WEST, 9 p.m.-midnight, Michael James. 114 McSwain Drive, West Columbia; (803) 796-2700.

SHOOTERS BAR AND GRILL, 8 p.m.-midnight, karaoke and dance party with Ken and Pam Martin. 3030 Charleston Highway, Cayce; (803) 791-8568.

SKYLINE CLUB, Steele Justice. 100 Lee St., West Columbia; (803) 822-8608.

TINA'S PLACE, 9 p.m.-1 a.m., karaoke with Carol. 10961 Two Notch Road, Elgin; (803) 699-0608.

Saturday

ART BAR, The Spoozes, Elevator Action. 1211 Park St.; (803) 929-0198.

BILL'S MUSIC SHOP AND PICKIN' PARLOR, 6 p.m., SCBTMA benefit with six bluegrass and bluegrass gospel bands. 710 Meeting St., West Columbia; (803) 796-6477.

BLUE MARTINI, Rod Franco and the Supersonic Burritos. 808 Lady St.; (803) 256-2442.

CENTENNIAL CLUB, House Band. U.S. 321, Gaston; (803) 794-9333.

CLARION TOWN HOUSE HOTEL, 5:30-9 p.m., Drake Riley on piano. 1615 Gervais St.; (803) 771-8711.

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DOC'S GUMBO GRILLE, Red Sky. 1115 Assembly St.; (803)256-4440.

JAMMIN' JAVA, 9 p.m., Jeff O'Kelley. 1530 Main St., Suite D; (803)254-5282.

MINGLEWOOD, Folkstone Acoustic. 800 Harden St.; (803) 254-9999.

NEW BROOKLAND TAVERN, 5 p.m., Maladroit Mafia, The Bloom, For a Good Cause, Aslan, Ham and Cheese Experience; 10 p.m., Battle of the MCs Finals, Dan Johns, Cajwell. 122 State St., West Columbia; (803)791-4413.

RAMADA INN WEST, 9 p.m.-midnight, Johnny D. 114 McSwain Drive, West Columbia; (803)796-2700.

SHOOTERS BAR AND GRILL, karaoke with Bobby and Brenda Whittle. 3030 Charleston Highway, Cayce; (803)791-8568.

SKYLINE CLUB, Steele Justice. 100 Lee St., West Columbia; (803)822-8608.

TINA'S PLACE, 9 p.m.-1 a.m., karaoke featuring Amanda and Justin. 10961 Two Notch Road, Elgin; (803)699-0608.

TIPSY TOAD TAVERN, Chris Richards. 103 Beaufort St., Chapin; (803)932-4470.

TOMBO GRILLE, 7:30-10 p.m., Billy Sloan. 4517 Forest Drive, Forest Acres; (803) 782-9665.

Sunday

BAJA BROILER, karaoke with Tootie. 1345 Old Chapin Road, Lexington; (803) 356-0040.

THE CENTENNIAL CLUB, 5-8 p.m., line-dance lessons with Patti. U.S. 321, Gaston; (803) 794-9333.

THE CORNER POCKET, karaoke with Rockin' Robbie. 489 Piney Grove Road; (803)731-0403.

FOXHOLE LOUNGE, 8 p.m.-midnight, karaoke with John Ringo Jackson. 1119 Percival Road; (803) 782-6010.

JILLIAN'S, 8 p.m.-midnight, live music and karaoke with DJ Gilligan. Free. Bands start at 6 p.m. 800 Gervais St. in the Vista; (803) 779-7789.

NEW BROOKLAND TAVERN, 7 p.m., Bullet Train to Vegas, The Letters Organize, Cypress Knees. 122 State St., West Columbia; (803)791-4413.

RUSTY ANCHOR QUARTERDECK, 5-8 p.m., Jim LeBlanc. 1925 Johnsons Marina Road, Chapin; (803) 749-1555.

SHOOTERS BAR AND GRILL, J. Edwards acoustic open mic. 3030 Charleston Highway, Cayce; (803)791-8568.

Monday

THE CORNER POCKET, 8:30 p.m., open mic with Chris Richards. 489 Piney Grove Road; (803)731-0403.

CAROLINA WINGS, 6-9 p.m., Wayne Capps. 2000-18 Clemson Road; (803)419-0022.

D's, 6:30 p.m., Jim LeBlanc. 806 St. Andrews Road; (803) 798-0788.

NEW BROOKLAND TAVERN, 9 p.m., American Gun, Bang Bang, Ninja Gun. 122 State St., West Columbia; (803)791-4413.

Tuesday

ART BAR, Abstract DJs. 1211 Park St.; (803) 929-0198.

THE CORNER POCKET, 8:30 p.m., karaoke with Rockin' Robbie. 489 Piney Grove Road; (803)731-0403.

D'S, 6:30 p.m., Jim LeBlanc. D's Northeast on Clemson Road; (803)462-1895.

FRONT-ROW SPORTS, beach boogie, blues and shag night with DJ. 1315 Longcreek Drive; (803) 798-7227.

NEW BROOKLAND TAVERN, 6 p.m., Haste the Day, Extol, Dead to Fall, Embrace Today, Twelve Tribes. 122 State St., West Columbia; (803)791-4413.

Wednesday

ART BAR, Mr. B's Goodtime Karaoke Explosion. 1211 Park St.; (803) 929-0198.

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BAJA BROILER, Shaggin' With Dave and Caesar. 1345 Old Chapin Road, Lexington; (803) 356-0040.

CAROLINA WINGS, 7-10 p.m., Wayne Capps. In the Vista; (803) 256-8844. THE CORNER POCKET, Rick's Kickin' Karaoke. 489 Piney Grove Road; (803) 731-0403.

D's, Jim LeBlanc, 6:30 p.m. D's on Beltline; (803) 787-2595.

DIANNE'S ON DEVINE, 8-11 p.m., The Ross Holmes Band. 2400 Devine St.; (803) 254-3535.

DOG HOUSE, Richard Gantt. 101 Haygood Ave., Lexington; (803) 957-5408.

NEW BROOKLAND TAVERN, 7 p.m., All Good Citizens, Senseless, Daze. 122 State St., West Columbia; (803) 791-4413.

SHOOTERS BAR AND GRILL, Greg Austin. 3030 Charleston Highway, Cayce; (803) 791-8568.

Thursday

B&T SPORTS, karaoke and dance party with Ken and Pam Martin. 1668 Old Two Notch Road, Lexington; (803) 356-8443.

CENTENNIAL CLUB, 4:30 p.m., DJ music. U.S. 321, Gaston; (803) 794-9333.

CLARION TOWN HOUSE HOTEL, 6:30 p.m., Helms-Boyd Orchestra, 1615 Gervais St.; (803) 771-8711.

DELANEY'S, Wayne Capps. 741 Saluda Ave.; (803) 779-2345.

DOC'S GUMBO GRILLE, Little Cat Z. 1115 Assembly St.; (803) 256-4440.

DUGAN'S SPORTS BAR, karaoke with John Ringo Jackson. 1807 Bush River Road; (803) 772-0666.

MINGLEWOOD, Woodwork Roadshow. 800 Harden St.; (803) 254-9999.

NEW BROOKLAND TAVERN, 5 p.m., Love Drug, Chase Pagen, Evoka; 9:30 p.m., The South Holes, The Talk, Fashion Brigade. 122 State St., West Columbia; (803) 791-4413.

TINA'S PLACE, 9 p.m.-1 a.m., Bo Peep Karaoke featuring Pooh Bear. 10961 Two Notch Road, Elgin; (803) 699-0608.

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WWD

May 6, 2005

SECTION: Pg. 12 ; ISSN: 0149-5380

IAC-ACC-NO: 132244345

LENGTH: 802 words

HEADLINE: NEW CARTIER GLISTENS ON RODEO DRIVE.

BODY:

Byline: Rose Apodaca

BEVERLY HILLS — If Stanislas de Quercize's use of "spectacular" to describe the new and enhanced Cartier flagship here is exuberant, the jewelry house's president and chief executive officer for North America can be forgiven.

The "mansion," as Cartier's latest retail model is called, lives up to the adjective — from the two-story glass windows framed in Portoro marble to the 800-pound Venetian chandelier of hand-blown Murano glass suspended center stage.

Most striking is the modern sensibility: the windows, including the glass wall facing Rodeo Drive, allow natural light to pour in; the soothing putty-colored leather banquettes and plush rugs; the generous use of blond oak presented in graphic ways that are arresting, and the glass display cases framed in thin burnished metal.

The full range of Cartier product is on display, from a \$3.7 million pink diamond ring to pens starting at \$200, handbags for \$1,000, and increased offerings of estate pieces and bridal rings.

"It's spectacular by size and dimension, but also welcoming," de Quercize said. "It is unusually large for a diamond store, but you have that 'wow' effect — just like when you get a Cartier box."

The store, an imposing box of Cuenca Jerusalem stone, is double Cartier's original space across the street. The Cartier site at 370 Rodeo Drive added a second floor and was built out to 5,350 square feet. And it has an expansive roof terrace for special events.

The terrace's use as a party space, as well as the store's two floors, will be put to the test at Monday night's grand opening. Among the invited guests are Cartier devotees Elizabeth Taylor, Debra Messing, Andy Garcia, Brad Grey and Rene Russo.

Longtime Cartier client, chef Nobu Matsuhisa, will be there, too. But he'll be overseeing the endless sushi served for the 500 or so VIPs. And a surprise Grammy-winning artist is set to entertain, along with London DJ Max Chipchase and jazz vocalist Leata Galloway.

But, of course, it's really about the new mansion, a year in construction, which is a retail template for Cartier doors opening in Paris in October and Tokyo in December. The Rodeo store opened this week, even as construction crews were still at work on the second floor and terrace, which didn't stop Elton John from swooping in Monday to get a gift for his assistant.

"The design is spectacular," de Quercize said of Paris-based architect Bruno Moinard's work, executed by Barteluce Architects & Associates. "And this is part of the biggest renovation for us."

De Quercize was chatting from Las Vegas, where he has been since last week's opening of the Wynn Las Vegas resort, the newest address of yet another Cartier door. Response to the latest Vegas store, de Quercize said, "in terms of presence, in terms of impact, is fabulous."

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Cartier has been overhauling its stores. Recent renovations at existing stores in Honolulu; Costa Mesa, Calif.; Bal Harbour, Fla., and Manhasset, N.Y., led to a 20 percent sales spike. "The more spectacular effect, the more sales," de Quercize said, adding Vegas and Beverly Hills should match those increases.

Of the more than 300 Cartier doors worldwide, 27 are in the U.S. — accounting for \$600 million in sales for the brand, which is owned by Compagnie Financiere Richemont and is considered the cash cow of the Swiss luxury group.

Launching the mansion template in Beverly Hills has everything to do with Cartier's history in Hollywood, de Quercize said. Taylor's 25-year relationship with the Rodeo Drive store and the name-dropping in films such as 1953's "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" have made Cartier part of pop culture's lexicon.

The star power expected at Monday night's opening is partly because of the beneficiary, the A.L.S. Project, the nonprofit fund-raising group for the neuromuscular illness known as Lou Gehrig's Disease and an important cause for the entertainment industry.

Cartier's personal connection to Hollywood has also been nurtured by Maryam Saghatelian, regional director for Cartier U.S.A., whom de Quercize calls "the Queen of Cartier."

"We needed to refresh our look and show the more contemporary side of Cartier," she acknowledged, noting that aside from a facelift at the Rodeo shop in 1993, this is the first major redo since her arrival there in 1980.

"We have many clients who've been friends of Cartier for many, many years. But young Hollywood — the producers, directors, actors — you should see these young kids coming in, dressed in their jeans and torn T-shirts who just made a big movie," she said, clearly loving the contrast. "At the Rodeo store, you never know who will drop in."

Caption(s): Interior of Cartier. / Display cases and the 800-pound Venetian chandelier in Cartier.

IAC-CREATE-DATE: May 16, 2005

LOAD-DATE: May 17, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Cheyenne Newspapers, Inc.
Wyoming Tribune-Eagle (Cheyenne, WY)

May 6, 2005 Friday

SECTION: Local; Pg. 14

LENGTH: 932 words

HEADLINE: STAMP ART WINNERS ON DISPLAY THROUGH MAY

BYLINE: Karen Cottonfeat2@wyomingnews.com

BODY:

Artists from across the North American continent competed to have their painting transformed into a 1-inch-by-1-inch conservation stamp issued by the State of Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

It would be seen by thousands of sportsmen this year.

The paintings that were entered are on display at the Wyoming State Museum through May 28.

This year's theme's species was the Yellowstone cutthroat trout.

Scott Greenig of Lander was this year's first place winner. He was a combat artist in the U.S. Marine Corps during his second tour in Vietnam.

Greenig would get information from the Danang Press Center where the intelligence center as well as press outlets and news stations were located.

"There were no restrictions on what I painted, although some things were a little too political and I wouldn't show them," Greenig said. "I would paint scenes of U.S. Marines going up the mountains in a creek. I would paint snipers or a helicopter crash, or things like that. Sometimes it was emotionally tough to do."

There were times when Greenig would find himself in the middle of a night firefight.

"There was a time when one squad was killed by snipers in a firefight and ambush," he said. "I didn't paint that."

Some of Greenig's oil paintings are in the U.S. Marine Corps Combat Historical Museum in Washington, D.C.

Before being sent to Vietnam, Greenig was given advice by his father.

"My father said, 'Keep your head down and your butt up and you won't get killed.' He was in World War I," Greenig said. "You have this feeling and know you'll come back alright."

He continued to paint even after he left the Marine Corps.

"My stuff had a political and environmental bend to it," he said. "I beat somebody over the head to make a point. I had to temper things a bit, so I wasn't in your face. Today I paint landscapes, a little wildlife occasionally, sometimes still life."

Greenig does environmental painting on the side and a piece of his artwork is at the Denver Art Museum.

His paintings were about acid rain and clear cut forests.

Greenig also worked for the Disney Company.

"Some of it was cartooning, and I did an 18th and 19th century East Coast fishing village for Disney Tokyo," Greenig said. "They were mural paintings for the outside of the buildings."

He also painted astronaut and cow scenes at California Adventure and artwork for casinos in Las Vegas with a friend, Mark Oatis, who is a lettering expert. In Vegas he worked on murals for Jimmy Buffet's Margaritaville.

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"I taught myself how to paint and the freelance work just happened," Greenig said. "I was in national juried shows, someone saw my work and it mushroomed from there."

Greenig said he's very happy that he won the stamp show.

"People knew about it a day before I did and they were stopping me in the street," he said. "I knew it was fish this year and I knew I had a chance to place because I paint pretty good fish."

Greenig said he has been fishing for as long as he can remember.

"I grew up in family with seven kids, and we were kind of poor," he said. "We ate fish, ducks, pheasants and venison."

Now he does kayak fishing and guiding in Lander.

The 22nd annual contest draws in professional artists who submit a painting of the species that has been selected as the theme.

"They need to be in Wyoming habitat," said Beth Edwards, conservation stamp coordinator.

The first year of the stamp contest was a photography competition. But now it is limited to original artwork.

"Anybody can enter as long as they are a professional artist," Edwards said.

The contest has used all kinds of game species as its theme, from the bald eagle to the grizzly bear. This year's theme was the Cutthroat trout.

Greenig's painting is in acrylic. "Cutthroat and Redside Shiners" is not for sale but will be on the stamp.

Next year's subject will be the blue grouse based on a decision made by Game and Fish Department staff.

Edwards said, with few exceptions, hunters or fisherman are required by law to have a conservation stamp. The money from the sale of stamps goes into the Wildlife Trust Account with the interest used for habitat acquisition and improvement, non-consumptive use of wildlife and non-game projects.

This year's contest had 63 artists that represented 23 states.

Second place this year went to James Ruis from Monrovia, Calif.

Third place honors went to Eleazar Saenz from Monterrey, Mexico.

"He enters almost every year and always places, but he has never gotten the top one, but he's very good," Edwards said.

Fourth place went to Mark Oehlart, from San Antonio, Texas.

Fifth place went to Ron Jenkins, from Charlo, Mont.

First place is given \$2,500, second gets \$1,500, third place gets \$1,000, fourth gets \$500 and fifth is \$250.

More than 300,000 conservation stamps will be printed and fine art prints will be made of the stamp, Edwards said.

Renee Piskorski of Cheyenne is one of the honorable mention winners.

"She did win the contest a few years ago with the mountain bluebird," Edwards said.

Judges rate the entries without knowing who painted the artwork. The work must be able to be transferred to the stamp shape and size.

What?

The 22nd Annual Wyoming Conservation Stamp Art Show and Sale is sponsored by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

When?

Through May 28: Mondays through Saturdays, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Where?

Wyoming State Museum, Barrett Building, 2301 Central Ave.

More information?

Free admission.

Call 777-7022.

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2005

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Copyright 2005 The Austin American Statesman
Austin American-Statesman (Texas)

May 5, 2005 Thursday

SECTION: LIFESTYLE; Pg. E1**LENGTH:** 1172 words**HEADLINE:** HIGH STAKES at HIGH POINT;

At the nation's premier home furnishings market, a local buyer places bets on what Austin will like

BYLINE: Katy Barron, AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF**BODY:**

HIGH POINT, N.C. — Insider tips, long shots and speculation are the stuff of Wall Street, but they also are important elements of a different sort of market.

Just look at Austinite Sandy Sieracki's schedule on the opening day of the biannual High Point International Home Furnishings Market, which draws 60,000 to 80,000 people in the furniture industry to this normally small North Carolina town. Sieracki's first browsing priority isn't the hutches or chaise longues, but handbags and jewelry.

She likes to shop at Just the Thing, an Atlanta-based boutique that opens a satellite store in High Point just twice a year during market, to ensure she gets the first pick among the trendy costume jewelry pieces and chic handbags. The trip serves two purposes: Sieracki picks up gifts for the women who work at her Austin showroom while she tunes in to the latest trends in jewelry, which will help inform her home accessories buying. Furniture trends originate on fashion runways, after all, and any clue as to what's hot now is welcomed.

This is Sieracki's 10th trip to the High Point market, and she's exuding the confidence of an old-timer. It wasn't always so. Learning to navigate the more than 11 million square feet of showroom space in High Point takes time. "I followed Mom around like a puppy dog for at least four markets," she remembers.

Mom is Judith Harris, president of Objets Ltd., a Denver-based wholesale showroom now in its 14th year. The mother and daughter have been in business together since 2003, when Sieracki became vice president and opened Objets' second showroom, in Austin. The 3,000-square-foot space is in a former drug store behind Tuesday Morning on Burnet Road. It is one of five showrooms at Back Door to the Trade, Austin's only wholesale design center and the product of exasperated local designers tired of having to drive to Dallas and Houston to make wholesale purchases.

Sieracki makes the pilgrimage to High Point twice a year to load up on upholstered furniture, case goods and home accessories for her showroom, where local designers will purchase her selections for the well-dressed homes of Austin. Or so she hopes.

Every trip to market is a gamble on the whims of the Austin furniture buyer, who does not fit a neat and trim profile. Sieracki struggles to describe her customers' furniture preferences, which are neither too formal nor too casual.

"When we first opened here we bought what Denver sold and you know what . . . my church just got a really nice donation of stuff that sells great in the Denver market. Austin has a look on its own."

With no formula for what sells well, she's learned to simply trust her instincts and buy things she personally likes. It may seem like an enthusiastic shopper's dream job, but market isn't all fun.

First, there's the getting there, which isn't easy from Austin. Most buyers fly into nearby cities, then rent a car at prices marked up exorbitantly for the market, the largest single event in the state and the economic lifeblood of tiny High Point. Then there's the staying there, also not cheap. Those in the know use a housing reservation system to rent local homes for a minimum of seven days while the locals hightail it out of town to avoid the invasion of the tens of thousands of market attendees. Sieracki and her mom are paying \$350 a night for a private residence close to downtown.

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Considering all the hustle and hassle High Point requires, Sieracki still wouldn't settle for the much-easier-to-get-to Dallas market. "It's so minuscule compared to this, and I can see all the same things here," she says. But she will be trying out a new furniture market this summer, the one in Las Vegas.

In High Point, conversations about Las Vegas are held in hushed tones and whispers. To High Point market organizers, the Vegas market is akin to an evil empire bent on crushing the historical home of the U.S. furniture industry. Organizers of the Vegas market, debuting July 25, have announced plans to be bigger than High Point by 2015, promising to build 12 million square feet of permanent and temporary showroom space to trump High Point's roughly 11.5 million square feet. It's all conjecture at this point, but the fear is that Vegas' big airport, abundant hotel rooms and unmatched night life will lure away High Point regulars. Sieracki says she's going to Vegas out of curiosity and to seek out smaller vendors who do unique things. She's not interested in the gambling.

Besides, there are plenty of bets to place in High Point. Discovering hidden gems among small vendors is a hit-or-miss pursuit that, more often than not, involves stumbling across a cool product while searching for something else. "You fall on it. And then you hope that nobody around you already found it," she says. On the plane ride from Austin, Sieracki got a jump start by swapping notes with other designers sitting near her.

Their tips paid off. She bought a new line at a recommended lighting showroom, where she instantly fell for classic fixtures and at least one trendy chandelier featuring the same wooden details she spied on her jewelry-buying spree. Harris, meanwhile, was dismayed to learn the products she liked were already carried by another showroom in her Denver design center.

Most design centers have unwritten agreements about not carrying the same lines of furniture or home accessories. Sieracki carries more than 40 lines in her showroom at any given time and can't keep up with what other showrooms at Back Door to the Trade have. Luckily, she doesn't have to. Most vendors protect their relationships by refusing to sell to their clients' direct competitors or interior designers. The vendors almost always greet Sieracki and Harris by name and recall their prior market orders better than they do. Maintaining these crucial relationships is as important a part of attending market as checking out new trends. "It's very political," Sieracki says.

As she walks around pointing out items she wants to order, a sales rep follows on her heels, scanning the items with a specialized Palm Pilot device. There is a minimum order, which Sieracki easily meets. She doesn't carry a calculator or have a set-in-stone budget. Every purchase is a gamble to be tallied on the way home. "I sit on the airplane, add up my purchase orders and get a big ol' pit on my stomach," she says.

One of the biggest risks is that a certain look will lose its trendiness in the six months to a year it takes for market orders to actually reach showroom floors. Sieracki invested in a woven water hyacinth look at this market, one she loves, but one she worries won't be as hot a year from now, when it finally lands in Austin. She also took a risk on a more contemporary furniture line, against her own practice of buying only things that suit her personal taste.

"It's going to be stepping out, but I've passed it up so many markets and wondered how many sales I'm losing because it's not my personal look," she says.

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GRAPHIC: David Villanueva scans selections while Sandy Sieracki, who opened the Austin decorating showroom Objets Ltd., shops in High Point, N.C.

Dianne Cantrell, left, a sales representative with Ferguson Copeland Ltd., helps Sandy Sieracki coordinate upholstery samples with a sofa made from woven water hyacinth. Even though the sofa is ordered now, it won't arrive in Austin for a year.

Sieracki, right, and her mother, Judith Harris, president of Denver-based wholesale showroom Objets Ltd., enjoy their time together at the High Point International Home Furnishings Market.

LOAD-DATE: June 5, 2005

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backstage.com

May 5, 2005

SECTION: NEWS; Las vegas**LENGTH:** 884 words**HEADLINE:** Feel the Burn**SOURCE:** Online**BODY:**

Actors are often told they must open themselves up to new kinds of experience, and there may be fewer "new kinds" than the Burning Man Festival.

Cockroach Theatre's Jason Defreitas is looking for some hearty souls who are willing to pay \$250 to spend a week (Aug. 29-Sept. 5) in the desert living in a tent, bartering for life's essentials, and performing in a play in which the audience is free to argue back, chat amongst themselves, or roam about.

The reason?

"I like to be challenged," Defreitas explains.

The festival, according to Brian Doherty's book, "This Is Burning Man," is an annual gathering of artists and art lovers who schlep one hundred miles northeast of Reno to "the widest stretch of utter desolation in the continental United States, nearly four hundred square miles of desiccated lake bed ... no water, no plumbing, no shade, no life."

Visitors (whose numbers some say will surpass 40,000 this year) create a fully functional city—called Black Rock—and then tear it down as soon as the festivities are over (at which time a forty-foot statue basked in neon gets burned). There's nothing to be purchased (except ice and coffee, and the \$250 admission ticket which goes to the fest organizers). Artists must be self-sufficient and barter their wares. This year, Las Vegas' Cockroach Theatre's barter will be a play.

"I'd been working on a show for about five months," the 31-year-old artistic director says, "when I started reading about Burning Man. The theme this year is 'Psyche (the Conscious, the Subconscious and the Unconscious),' and that fit in with the work I was already doing on Richard Foreman's "Permanent Brian Damage" (an absurd comedy about a man trying to figure out how his brain works).

"It's an unusual play in that I think kids will get a kick out of it for its physical comedy and goofiness. And for the adults, it deals with philosophical questions like, who am I? why am I here? — you know, stuff kids have no time for."

"Plus Foreman allows a lot of [leeway] with the way his productions are done. At Burning Man, the actors will not be separated from the audience. The actors will speak directly to them, without the audience riveted to their chairs, without them necessarily being silent. The audience has the option of walking around, talking amongst themselves, because the actors have mics and can be heard wherever they go. But there's no expectation on how the audience should behave. They are free to participate or hang back as much as they want. It's going to be an onslaught of images and sounds. It's up to the audiences what interests them, what they choose to pay attention to."

Cockroach cofounder Will Adamson points out that the actors will also have to work hard to hold an audience's interest.

"There are people who go there just to enjoy the festival," the 24-year-old University of Nevada, Las Vegas theatre grad says. "They are not necessarily theater lovers. They haven't come just to see us. Of course, this gives us a chance to give some people a new experience with plays."

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"It's a counterculture event," Defreitas adds, "but counterculture comes from a wide spectrum. There are many people who enjoy the positive energy of creating your own society."

Defreitas is aware it takes a special kind of performer to be able to work well under these conditions.

"I'm not as interested in an actor's experience as I am in attitude," he says. "I want to meet actors who are eager to learn, who are not afraid to experiment. I'd like to work with performers who are not 'stified in their craft.' Maybe that's easier when you don't have a lot of experience."

Adamson says the Foreman script "is a play that pushes an actor's boundaries. I think it's important for an actor to work at keeping his mind open so that he doesn't get locked inside his own choices. I think that's what people mean when they say an actor has to be free."

Following the festival, Defreitas hopes to tour throughout Vegas with the production.

"I hope to show it in all kinds of environments, even parking lots. I want each show to be a different kind of experience, depending on where's it's at and what kind of audience is there that night."

Adamson says Cockroach Theatre's goal is to "infest the West" with interesting plays. But he admits "anything is possible" when it comes to script selection.

"We like experimental works, but there's no reason we can't do, for example, 'Death of a Salesman.' We would just have to have fresh reasons for wanting to do it. We would want to bring something new to the table. We also solicit new scripts about anything. We have a weekly script-reading session. We're constantly challenging ourselves to go beyond our own box."

Defreitas is encouraging actors interested in performing with Cockroach at the Burning Man Festival to send him an e-mail to schedule an audition. No material need be prepared. Actors will simply read from the script, and improvise.

"It's important how well you relate to the other actors, and to the environment," he says. "If you're the type of person who can jump right in and have a good time, then maybe this is for you."

(Defreitas can be reached at vegasmaliboots@netzero.com. Additional information: www.cockroachtheatre.com).

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2005

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backstage.com

May 5, 2005

SECTION: LAS VEGAS; Stage**LENGTH:** 855 words**HEADLINE:** Las Vegas Theatre Roundup**SOURCE:** Online**BODY:**

A loony 1930s family; an angry, murderous Chicago ghetto dweller; a small town lesbian truckdriver, and a man on a Candide-like quest to find out when it's okay to eat a stolen steak make up the major characters of the local plays winding up Vegas runs this week.

The Nevada Conservatory Theatre's mounting of Moss Hart and George Kaufman's "You Can't Take It with You" is as funny and human a version as one would have a right to ask for. Equity actor Robin Gammell as income-tax hating Grandpa heads director Deanna Duplechain's expert cast. Gammell's quietly eccentric manner sets the tone for the production, which grounds its humor in a solid reality base.

Sherri Brewer is a genuine madcap as daughter-in-law Penny, a woefully inadequate playwright who discovered her profession when someone mistakenly delivered a typewriter to the residence eight years ago. Taylor Haines is the son who likes to blow things up in the basement. The charming Melanie Ash is the hopeful young ballerina granddaughter who still can't do basic steps after eight years of private lessons. Steven Fehr bellows expertly as her Russian dance teacher. Lisa Louise Wilson, as the "sane" granddaughter who works in a Wall Street office and is in love with her boss' son is grounded enough and yet flighty enough to convince us she belongs in the family and yet needs to break away. And John Slocum and Joan Mullaney as the boss and wife are beautifully elegant and distant, so that when they stumble onto the scene unexpectedly, we know trouble lies ahead.

Guest designer John Iacovelli (from the University of California Davis) gives us a living room set that looks to be the result of decades of imaginative living. You feel as if every corner of the room, every knickknack, has a story to tell.

Expertly paced and wonderfully thought-out, this NCT season closer should be on your must-see list.

("You Can't Take It With You" plays 8 p.m. May 5-6 and 2 p.m. May 7 at the Judy Bayley Theatre on the UNLV campus, 4505 S Maryland Parkway. Tickets: \$20-\$25. Info: 702-895-2787)

You often find yourself shaking your head in disbelief at Las Vegas Academy productions, trying to convince yourself that you're watching students at a magnet high school. The plays there rank among Vegas' finest community shows, and the current Paul Green/ Richard Wright "Native Sun" is no exception.

Director Robert Connor elicits some hard-hitting performances from his cast by having them concentrate on attitudes rather than age impersonations. Leland Smith (who alternates with CJ Smith) is the infamous Bigger Thomas, an angry, murderous black Chicago thug befriended, with disastrous results, by a rich, white, patronizing family. Smith's performance is richly complicated, part child, part man, a monster who doesn't understand why he reacts the way he does to the "kindness" being extended him. Also fascinating is Molly Bernard as the spoiled rich kid who means well but has a nasty habit of seeing the underclass as statistics instead of three-dimensional people, and Shayla Washington as Bigger's eternally-confused but always caring mother.

("Native Son" plays 7 p.m. May 5-6 and May 11-14 at the Las Vegas Academy Black Box Theatre, 10th Ave. and Lewis St. Tickets: \$10. Info: 702-799-7874)

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Utah playwright Julie Jensen (the former head of the University of Nevada Las Vegas playwriting program) has penned some interesting works, but "Wait!" isn't one of them.

The Asylum production, under the direction of Sarah O'Connell, is an overly narrated journey of self-discovery by a small-town young, overweight lesbian truckdriver (Brook McGinnis) who stumbles onto a local community theatre where the off-the-wall players teach her a lesson or two about life. There's a hard-boiled vulnerability to Jensen's writing that is always entertaining, but the characters here feel too familiar. McGinnis is talented, but she's all comic delivery and not enough human being.

("Wait!" plays 7:30 p.m. May 5-6 at the Winchester Cultural Center, 3130 S.

McLeod. Tickets: \$12.50. Info: 702-604-3417)

Seattle playwright Larry Coffin is 73-years-old but he writes with the angry energy of a young man. His "Croquet Is Okay: A Picaresque Tale of Villainy," currently on view at Test Market, is a Voltaire-like quest for a definition of justice. A man (Ernest Hemmings) travels the country to in an attempt to learn when it would be right to eat a stolen beefsteak he has hidden in his cooler. Accompanying him is a Harpo Marx lookalike (Eugene Kirk) and a middle-aged woman who, uh, has an unusually youthful libido (Susan Lowe). Needless to say, they meet up with a stage full of zany characters who offer sometimes puzzling advice.

The broad humor frequently fall flat, and the play's themes — the Americans' stealing of Indian land—are simplistic. But the production goes in and out of moments of inspired lunacy.

("Croquet Is Okay" plays 8 p.m. May 5, and 8 and 10 p.m. May 6 at the Social, Experimentation and Absurd Theatre, 103 E. Charleston. Tickets: \$10-\$15. Info: 702-736-4313)

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Copyright 2005 Charleston Newspapers
Charleston Daily Mail (West Virginia)

May 5, 2005, Thursday

SECTION: Editorial; Pg. P4A

LENGTH: 552 words

HEADLINE: 14 bridesmaids? What a load of chiffon But normal is running off to Vegas

BYLINE: Don Surber

BODY:

THE mystery of the Great Chiffon Shortage of Aught Five was solved when it was revealed that the Runaway Bride of Duluth, Ga., had 14 groomsmen and 14 bridesmaids for her wedding.

Christopher Davidson disclosed to the New York Times that the bridesmaids' gowns are black chiffon and strapless, with fitted bodices and tiered skirts. They can always be cut to make fine cocktail dresses later.

Sensible. But 14 bridesmaids?

An informal office survey revealed that most of us had between zero and one bridesmaids. That same survey showed the average marriage to be about 27 years and counting.

Any attempt at correlating the two would be unscientific, of course.

But marriage is not science. It is luck - and the man remembering to say those three little words every woman wants to hear every day:

"You were right."

The Runaway Bride knows better than us married fuddy-duddies, so she went with 14 bridesmaids. And eight bridal showers. And 600 invited guests.

How many toasters can anyone need?

There I go thinking this was about a marriage. This was about a wedding. The dream wedding. The wedding that would be the envy of Duluth, Ga.

Toasters are for married people. She listed 155 items on her registry at Macy's, including Lenox platters and Waterford ice buckets.

What we have here is a middle-aged woman - she is 32 - acting like a debutante. Heck, even Michael Jackson had lost his virginity by 32. Ah, the things one learns when a criminal trial is reported on the E! channel.

Four days before the wedding, the Runaway Bride realized just what a dreadful corner she had painted herself into.

Rather than just grab the groom and run off to Vegas, she went alone.

Rather than have a good time in Vegas, she went on to Albuquerque.

Rather than call the folks and ask for money to come home, she called 911.

Rather than tell the truth, she made up some story about being abducted.

Police listened to her tale, threw a blanket on her head and shipped her back to Georgia on the next flight. My respect for the men and women in law enforcement seldom has been higher.

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Charleston Daily Mail, May 05, 2005, Thursday

Back in Georgia, the family brought in a therapist and tried to bring her back to normal.

I don't see 14 bridesmaids as normal in the 21st century. Maybe in the 1950s, this sort of thing was just fine, but not in my adulthood.

The first thing the groom did was put the engagement ring back on her finger. He made that clear in his interview on national TV with Sean Hannity.

Love is blind, of course, but surely it is not this clueless.

In any halfway decent romantic comedy, the groom would have laughed, told her he pawned the ring, and given her half the money.

Then they would have looked into one another's eyes and driven off in a convertible to Vegas.

Instead, this guy hands her over to a therapist and calls Fox News.

This is the anti-Jerry Springer show. These are two Christian people out to prove that one does not have to be promiscuous to make a fool of oneself on national TV.

Far be it from me to offer advice to the lovelorn.

Maybe they will work it out, be wed and live happily ever after in Duluth, Ga.

But if they wish to improve their odds, they should lose 13 or 14 of those bridesmaids.

Don Surber may be reached at donsurber@dailymail.com.

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Copyright 2005 The Charlotte Observer
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 Charlotte Observer (North Carolina)

May 5, 2005 Thursday ONE-THREE EDITION

SECTION: GARDEN; Pg. 5E**LENGTH:** 768 words

HEADLINE: LIFTING THE VEIL OF LAS VEGAS;
 JUST BECAUSE TALES HERE SOUND TOO STRANGE TO BE TRUE, DOESN'T MEAN THEY AREN'T

BYLINE: BILL ORDINE, KNIGHT RIDDER**BODY:**

Las Vegas lore is rife with myths and legends, which shouldn't come as a surprise since the place is built on fantasy along with, some would argue, false promise.

Perhaps chief among erroneously held beliefs about Vegas is that gangster Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel was the progenitor of the modern-day Strip when he built the Flamingo, which opened Dec. 26, 1946.

In truth, the Flamingo was the third casino on what's now known as the Strip - it followed the trailblazing El Rancho Las Vegas, destroyed in a 1960 fire, and the Last Frontier, site of the current-day New Frontier hotel-casino.

Still, there are plenty of curious tales about Vegas that sound like the stuff of urban legend - but are absolutely true. Try these factual tidbits of Sin City history and trivia.

Mandalay Bay. The towering statue of Vladimir Lenin standing in front of Red Square, the casino's tony vodka-and-caviar lounge-restaurant, is missing a head that was lost, then found in a thrift-shop warehouse. The head now sits in the restaurant's vodka freezer in an acrylic block that serves as a table. The head of the statue - a replica of one in the real Red Square - was removed shortly after it was erected because of complaints that it lionized the father of international communism - and to mimic the fate of so many Lenin statues throughout Eastern Europe after the fall of communism. The head had been accidentally packed up with other items the casino was donating to the thrift shop; warehouse workers discovered it.

Main Street Station. Another Cold War-connected curiosity can be found at the other end of the casino action. To the north in downtown Las Vegas, Main Street Station - a budget-priced casino-hotel - has something in common with CIA headquarters in Langley, Va., and the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum in Southern California: a chunk of the Berlin Wall. The casino has its piece of history in the men's restroom, where it anchors a line of urinals.

Caesars Palace. Outside in the new Roman Plaza at this casino's south entrance is a seated four-headed figure surrounded by images of elephants.

The Brahma Shrine, a revered icon of Thai Buddhism, is similar to one built for Bangkok's Erawan Hotel, which had been plagued by construction delays until the shrine was installed. At Caesars Palace, some visitors kneel in prayer and light incense at the good-luck shrine before taking on Dame Fortune.

MGM Grand. Debuting 12 years ago with an ill-conceived Wizard of Oz theme, the MGM Grand had statues of Judy Garland and the rest of the Yellow Brick Road coterie at the main entrance. It wasn't long before Toto was kidnapped - with the hotel even receiving ransom notes. In time, the whole Oz crew was dumped.

Also early on, the MGM Grand's entrance was noteworthy for a massive lion reclining on its paws that visitors passed beneath upon entering the building. The leonine entranceway turned out to be another bad idea and was replaced with a gleaming bronze lion that now stands sentinel outside the front door. Among the reasons the original got the heave-ho was that some Asian gamblers felt that by passing under the lion, they were being symbolically devoured by the beast -

very bad luck.

The Palms. Also in deference to some of its Asian visitors, the trendy hotel-casino on Flamingo Road has eliminated the numeral four from its floors; the number has the same connotation as No. 13 in other cultures.

No. 4 is also absent among floors in the new Wynn Las Vegas resort.

Monte Carlo. With 3,002 rooms, the hotel-casino in Las Vegas has more guest rooms than the entirety of the real Monte Carlo in the principality of Monaco.

Bellagio. While the Tuscan-inspired grand hotel is a familiar Vegas landmark these days, it was conceived as a much different place: as a blue glass tower on an island surrounded by a lake two to three times larger than the existing one. Visitors were to cross a bridge to get to the building.

After the Bellagio opened in 1998, children under 18 were barred from the building unless they were guests of the hotel and accompanied by someone over 18, and strollers were banned outright. The prohibitions no longer exist.

Flamingo. The Flamingo holds the distinction of being the longest continuously operated casino on the famous stretch of Las Vegas Boulevard. However, not one bit of Bugsy Siegel's original casino - christened after the nickname of his actress-girlfriend Virginia Hill - remains.

*

More on Vegas

Contact the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority: (877) 847-4858, toll-free; www.visitlasvegas.com.

GRAPHIC: Photo;
NEW YORK TIMES FILE PHOTO. The Las Vegas Strip - seen here from atop Mandalay Bay in 2004 - is built on fantasy and folklore.

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Chicago Sun-Times, Inc.
Chicago Sun-Times

May 5, 2005 Thursday

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 5

LENGTH: 274 words

HEADLINE: What comes after five? Another five, and another;
For Plainfield woman, all of them add up in a special way

BYLINE: RUMMANA HUSSAIN

BODY:

The "cinco" in Cinco de Mayo has always made Dorothy "Dotti" Lynne Dentino smile.

Sure, having a birthday fall on the holiday gives the Plainfield woman an excuse to celebrate with lots of Mexican food.

But for Dentino, it's all about the number five.

Dentino is turning the big 5-0 today — the fifth day of the fifth month of the year. She was born in 1955 on a Thursday, the fifth day of the week.

"It's her lucky number," said Dentino's aunt Dorothy Brautigam, who surprised the younger woman on her fifth birthday with a mention in the Sun-Times in 1960.

Dentino says the number has been a constant through her life. The West Side native's late uncle, Ery, was born on the same day in 1925. Dentino's younger brother, Bobby Anderson, was born a year after her on Sept. 5.

"I use the number five in everything from my voice mail account to my log-ins on my computer," said Dentino, an accounts payable manager at a tooling and machinery manufacturing company in Downers Grove.

What it all means

Will she use its magic to win big in Vegas?

Don't bet on it. Dentino is a born-again Christian who refrains from gambling.

But doctors have said the odds of her beating liver disease will increase if she enters her fifth year of remission next year.

Of course, not everything Dentino holds close to her heart deals with the number five.

She goes to church four times a week and shares eight cats with husband Sam.

"I really do feel five is a special number because in the Bible, five signifies God's grace and mercy," she said, referring to a conversation she had with her pastor. "And it's through His grace and mercy that I have my health."

GRAPHIC: Happy 50th birthday, Dorothy Lynne Dentino, born May 5, 1955 — a Thursday, the fifth day of the week. At right is Dorothy in the Sun-Times in 1960 — when she was five, of course. Jon Sall

LOAD-DATE: May 12, 2005

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Copyright 2005 The Commercial Appeal, Inc.
The Commercial Appeal (Memphis, TN)

May 5, 2005 Thursday Final Edition

SECTION: METRO; Pg. B1

LENGTH: 506 words

HEADLINE: Compassion for runaway bride? Let's check it out

BYLINE: Wendi C. Thomas

BODY:

Runaway bride Jennifer Wilbanks is taking a lot of heat these days, and she deserves it.

How selfish must you be to bolt days before you are to be betrothed? Didn't she know that her sudden departure would make her parents fear the worst?

If the Georgia woman had the presence of mind to buy a bus ticket a week earlier for destinations westward, why couldn't she sit her fiance John Mason down and share her concerns?

Too chicken to do it face-to-face? Send him an e-mail, a postcard, wrap a note around a rock and throw it through his window, just do something.

Surely she could foresee that her disappearance might cause authorities to look askance at her fiance. The poor man took a polygraph test to try to prove his innocence. (And God love him, Mason still wants to marry his spooked bride.)

You must be pretty clueless to wait days to issue a public apology, and then via your attorney. Still hiding under that ugly striped blanket?

I hope the police charge Wilbanks for making a false report by claiming she'd been kidnapped. And the Duluth, Ga., police department, which spent time and an estimated \$60,000 of taxpayer dollars searching for this woman, should be reimbursed. (I suppose a wishing-well wedding could help with this.)

But for a moment, let's try to empathize with Wilbanks.

Despite all her issues (somebody get Dr. Phil on the line), Wilbanks obviously takes marriage very seriously.

Otherwise she could have just swallowed her doubts, walked down the aisle to join a wedding party the size of a marching band, and sorted out her feelings later, perhaps with talks of annulment, perhaps in divorce court.

Marriage, we've heard pastors intone at wedding ceremonies, is not to be entered into lightly.

Ideally it's a lifetime union. And maybe it was that fear of making such a final decision that scared her.

Depending on whose figures you believe, as many as 50 percent of first marriages end in divorce. Not exactly cheery news for a bride-to-be.

Plus, studies show that couples who live together before marriage don't stay married long. If Wilbanks, 32, knew this, perhaps she worried that her marriage to Mason, with whom she shared an apartment, was jinxed.

Divorce rates for Christians are as high as those for nonbelievers. Mason's time as a Sunday school teacher at a Baptist church wouldn't guarantee a marriage that would last. And, oddly, Baptists have the highest divorce rate of any Christian denomination.

Put these depressing facts together and just maybe you can find it in your heart to understand why Wilbanks fled.

Maybe now it makes sense that she filed a false police report, and scared the bejesus out of her family and friends by

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her impromptu trip to Vegas.

I'm sure now you see why it never occurred to her, even in her spare moments between her eight wedding showers, to get counseling or ask for prayer.

Still don't feel sorry for Wilbanks?

Yeah, I don't either.

To contact Wendi C. Thomas, call (901) 529-5896 or e-mail thomasw@commercialappeal.com.

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Copley News Service
Copley News Service

May 5, 2005 Thursday

SECTION: ILLINOIS SPOTLIGHT

LENGTH: 833 words

HEADLINE: 92

(To download, visit www.copleynews.com)

LLOYD GROVE

Writing like a Hawke

By Lloyd Grove

BYLINE: Copley News Service

DATELINE: NEW YORK

BODY:

There's hope for actor-writer Ethan Hawke - currently beavering away on his third novel.

"John Steinbeck's first book wasn't that good, you know?" mused the 34-year-old author of the coolly received non-best-sellers "The Hottest State" and "Ash Wednesday." "I don't think it's up to us to decide if our things are of quality or not," he added. "I know that sounds a little pretentious. ... I don't remember any day in any age when people were talking about how supportive critics are."

Uma Thurman's ex had phoned to chat up the New York Public Library Young Lions Fiction Award, an annual prize of \$10,000 given to a writer younger than 35 for a novel or short-story collection.

"A lot of times, young writers aren't gonna sell a lot of books. It's hard for them to get support," Hawke said. "It just seemed like the library should be doing something."

Suddenly Hawke's 6-year-old daughter, Maya, piped up in the background: "Are you a young writer or an old writer?"

Hawke answered his daughter: "I still qualify for the award, Maya."

But the honor went to someone else: novelist Andrew Sean Greer for "The Confessions of Max Tivoli."

FILM CRITIC GETS DIRECTOR'S CUT

For scorpions in a bottle, look no farther than indie director James Toback and New York Postie Lou Lumenick. The 60-year-old Toback despises the 50-ish Lumenick - and the critic returns the favor by viciously panning his movies. Their hatred goes back to the early '70s, when Toback was a film-criticism professor at City College and Lumenick "was just a dreadful, unimpressive, lazy student," Toback raged to a Lowdown spy at the Tribeca Film Festival premiere of "The Outsider," a documentary about Toback and his work. "Every one of his papers was terrible. So I gave him a D, as in dog," the director said. "Now, to get revenge, since then he goes after me with a horrible review every time one of my movies comes out."

Toback added: "I should have given him an F and advised him right then and there to just become a kosher hot-sauce vendor."

In a typical review - of Toback's 2004 film "When Will I Be Loved" - Lumenick wrote that "the story seems like yet another flimsy excuse for the aging auteur to show us how hip and sexually liberated he is."

Lumenick told me: "The statute of limitations of him claiming that I have a conflict of interest expired 20 years ago. I did not review any of his movies for the first 10 years after college."

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But Lumenick acknowledged that he was a lousy student: "When I was going to college, I rarely went to any classes. If he gave me a D, it was for not showing up."

TAKE MY FIRST LADY, PLEASE!

The Friars Club has offered stand-up comedian Laura Bush an honorary membership - which permits her to enjoy the middling cuisine at the East Side clubhouse "or just hang out at the bar, trading quips with what would become her 'fellow comics,'" said Friars President Freddie Roman. Susan Whitson, press secretary to the First Lady - who did some surprise shtick at last weekend's White House Correspondents' Dinner - told me: "I doubt there will be an encore performance, and we will take their invitation under advisement."

SMOKIN' OLSEN

Priceless artwork? New York City law? At Monday night's Costume Institute Gala, nothing was going to stop Mary-Kate Olsen from chain-smoking Marlboro Reds in the ladies' room of the Metropolitan Museum.

"Mary-Kate and Ashley get up in the middle of dinner and walk in, and MK is saying she wants a cigarette. She then proceeds to chain-smoke in the bathroom of the Metropolitan Museum!" a Lowdown spy reports. "Amanda Peet walked in while MK was smoking and was clearly repulsed."

Later a Met spokeswoman said: "We don't allow smoking. It's unfortunate that we didn't spot it. There was no security in the bathrooms. I think that's something the museum will have to consider next year."

WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS GOES HERE

Jessica Alba and Jessica Simpson were both spotted at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino the other night. A Lowdown spy says Alba was hanging out at the Coldplay concert when a pudgy Tobey Maguire - no longer in "Spider-Man" form - approached to say hey. When Maguire left, Alba allegedly laughed to a girlfriend: "He's f-ing huge!"

Simpson, meanwhile, stands accused of dissing everyone at the nightclub Body English. Hard Rock exec Harry Morton, the 24-year-old son of owner Peter Morton, sent over six bottles of champagne, the spy says, and when Simpson couldn't be bothered to acknowledge his kind gesture, Harry departed dejected. After giving an autograph-seeker the finger, Simpson "started dancing like a maniac, at one point grinding with some unknown pretty boy," claims the spy.

"Nick (Lachey) didn't even appear to be an afterthought."

Celebrity flack Brad Cafarelli, who reps both Alba and Simpson, told me: "I don't know what's worse, the people who make this stuff up or the fact that people believe it."

Visit Copley News Service at www.copleynews.com.

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2005

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The Courier-Journal (Louisville, Kentucky)

May 5, 2005 Thursday Metro Edition

SECTION: SPORTS; Pg. 1C

LENGTH: 1080 words

HEADLINE: COUNTDOWN TO THE KENTUCKY DERBY; A real-life party of five;
Afleet Alex's success 'Cinderella story' for newbie owners

BYLINE: DEMLING JODY, jdmeling@courier-journal.com

BODY:

Byline: Jody Demling

Source: The Courier-Journal

Jen Reeves learned to read a racing form 29 years ago - at age 5. She never has attended a Kentucky Derby, but her family's interest in racing practically stretches from the cradle to the grave: Her grandfather was buried two years ago with a Kentucky Derby mutuel ticket and a Daily Racing Form.

Joe Lerro owns a pizza place and beer distributorship and is an avid gambler who acknowledges he never has seen a bet he didn't want to make. He has attended the Derby several times - but only to "pound a few Budweiser" beers in the infield.

Joe Judge is a grandfather who stopped remodeling his house and took money out of his retirement savings just to get into the horse racing game.

None of the three ever had owned a horse before joining a partnership with managing partner Chuck Zacney and his friend Bob Brittingham last May.

But less than one year later - and with the first horse it purchased - the group that goes by Cash Is King Stables has one of the favorites for Saturday's Derby in Afleet Alex.

"This is better than winning the Super Bowl," Reeves said. "It's like watching something on TV and you think 'Wow,' and now we're living it.

"It's a Cinderella story. None of us comes from money, and none of us have been in the horse business our whole lives. We're just common people who live paycheck to paycheck. "

In a sport that is filled with broken hearts and owners who most often don't break even, several members of the group admitted they're spoiled.

Zacney got the partnership together, and each member put up \$20,000. Trainer Tim Ritchey purchased two horses for the group. The initial purchase was Afleet Alex for \$75,000. He has six wins in nine career starts and has earned \$1.3 million.

"Never in my wildest dreams did I expect anything like this," Zacney said, " but I guess dreams do come true."

And the self-proclaimed "fun group" is living it up during its time in the spotlight. That was evident after Afleet Alex won the Arkansas Derby. The group spent hours celebrating at a restaurant, and Zacney and Lerro bet \$10,000 on who would go to sleep first.

"We have come so far for the little guy and been able to share it with so many people," Lerro said. "Heck, they might put us in the infield. We might be better suited for being there anyway."

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Two years ago it was a school bus that carried a syndicate of owners to Churchill Downs to watch Funny Cide win the Run for the Roses. Last year it was ailing owner Roy Chapman of Philadelphia rooting on Smarty Jones.

Both horses – and their connections – mesmerized even casual fans.

The Cash Is King members, also from the Philadelphia area, aren't making any predictions about the Derby, but you can be sure the owners and about 100 friends will enjoy it.

"I don't know where we're heading, but so far it's been a heck of a ride," Lerro said. "We're just a bunch of knuckleheads getting together and having a good time."

Zacney and Brittingham went in with several others in the late 1990s to own some horses, but, Zacney said, "They were \$25,000 claimers and nowhere near the luck."

Zacney, the owner and president of The Sirrus Group, a medical billing company, wanted to get back in the game and started putting together the partnership.

Reeves, the vice president of Zacney's company, Brittingham and Lerro were in from the start. Lerro, a confessed "bad handicapper and bad sports bettor," had known Zacney for years and was having a bad year betting when he joined.

"I just love to gamble," he said. "I like Vegas. I like the Eagles. I'm just very adventurous. I had a bad year and needed some action, so when Chuck asked me I said, 'How much?' Boy, did I get some action."

Judge wanted to join but "was saving money to retire in a few years."

Judge's wife, Barbara, told him to go ahead, and the group gave Ritchey orders to purchase two horses. He bought Afleet Alex, son of Northern Afleet, at the Timonium sale in Maryland last May, several days after Smarty Jones won the Preakness. The horse's name included Alex because three of the partners (Zacney, Lerro and Brittingham) have children named Alex.

As a 2-year-old Afleet Alex earned \$680,000, which included a win in the Hopeful and Sanford Stakes at Saratoga and a runner-up finish in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile.

"After his second race we went to dinner with Tim and he's talking about Saratoga and the Breeders' Cup," Lerro said. "Then he mentions the Kentucky Derby. I really thought he was a fruitcake."

But the ride has continued.

The owners turned down one offer to buy the horse for a reported \$2.5million and several other offers before they stopped listening. Afleet Alex is 2for3 this year and the Derby's second choice at 9-2 odds.

"We didn't get in this for money," Brittingham said. "We wanted to have some fun with our families. It's been so much fun that nobody has had the chance to get cocky or stuffy."

Only Lerro had been to Churchill Downs before this week, and the other members are enjoying their first trips. They've even brought their own limousine driver, Lenny Tarantino, whom Lerro met last year at Saratoga.

Zacney, Lerro, Judge and Brittingham were on the backside Tuesday – with cameras in hand – when Afleet Alex worked out.

Reeves came in yesterday for the post-position draw but has to leave today. Her son, Paul, will make his first Holy Communion at 10a.m. Saturday. Her plane will leave Philadelphia at 12:39p.m. to return to Louisville for the race.

And with the luck this crew has had, there's no doubt she'll be at the Downs before the 6:04 post time.

Reeves said she attributes a lot of her luck to her grandfather Danny Buckley, who took her to the track every other weekend when she was growing up.

Buckley died during Derby Week two years ago, but Zacney placed a \$4 across-the-board bet on Funny Cide for Reeves. They put it in the casket along with a copy of the Daily Racing Form.

"I know he would be proud of me," Reeves said. "I wish he were here with me to see this. It's really been amazing. We never dreamed about this."

And nobody can dream about what will happen if Afleet Alex wins the race.

"Keep the camera on them; it could get interesting," jockey Jeremy Rose said.

Added Zacney: "I can promise you we'll be calling the liquor stores."

INFORMATIONAL GRAPHIC; BIOGRAPHIES OF CASH IS KING'S

OWNERS (SEE LIBRARY MICROFILM OR LIBRARY KIOSK PDF(PAGES))

GRAPHIC: CHUCK ZACNEYJEN REEVESJOE LERROBOB BRITTINGHAMJOE JUDGEPhotos by Bill Luster, The Courier-Journal; From left, Bob and Terese Brittingham, Joe Lerro and Barbara and Joe Judge watched Afleet Alex work out at Churchill Downs on Tuesday. The three men are members of the five-person Cash Is King Stables that owns Afleet Alex, the 9-2 second choice for Saturday's Kentucky Derby. Trainer Tim Ritchey gave Afleet Alex a treat Tuesday morning at Churchill Downs. The Arkansas Derby winner has won six of nine career starts and earned \$1.3 million.

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Copyright 2005 Daily News, L.P.
Daily News (New York)

May 5, 2005 Thursday
SPORTS FINAL EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 4

LENGTH: 199 words

HEADLINE: MOM SCRATCHES \$1,000

BODY:

JOHANNA MENDOZA of Ridgewood, Queens, couldn't be happier these days. Three months ago, she gave birth to James, her first son.

Then in March, Mendoza won \$25 playing Scratch n' Match, and last week she won \$1,000.

Mendoza, 21, has been reading the Daily News and playing Scratch n' Match in between diaper changes and feeding time.

"I'm really happy about this. My husband and I are moving into a house, so this money will help us out tremendously."

Like Mendoza, Philip Abate and his son Benny are from Ridgewood. They scored \$500 with their Week 8 game card.

"My dad buys the paper, and I scratch off the numbers," said Benny. "The day we won I had to quadruple-check the numbers. I have such blurry eyes. I was sure I messed up." But he didn't. They won, and it couldn't have come at a better time.

"We're going to Vegas in July. This'll help with plane fare," laughed Philip. "We're staying at the Riviera, and I'm heading straight to the tables."

Ronald Gilbert of Woodmere, L.I., Tunde Kibedi, also of Ridgewood, and Robin Douglass of Flatbush, Brooklyn, each recently won \$100.

So get your hands on The News for the latest Scratch n' Match numbers. Who knows? You could be our next big winner!

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Daily News, L.P.
Daily News (New York)

May 5, 2005 Thursday
SPORTS FINAL EDITION

SECTION: GOSSIP; Pg. 28

LENGTH: 981 words

HEADLINE: JOLIE MAKES A PITT STOP IN MOROCCO

BYLINE: BY GEORGE RUSH AND JOANNA MOLLOY With Jo Piazza and Chris Rovzar

BODY:

Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie are still trying to keep their romance under wraps – but they're not doing it very well.

A week after their romantic interlude in Kenya, the pair hooked up in Morocco.

Saturday, the cast and crew celebrated the start of Pitt's next movie, "Babel," with a party in the North African kingdom.

Pitt made sure to stop by, but he left after just one drink.

He had a good reason for turning in early: Jolie was waiting back at his suite.

People magazine reports that, after wrapping up humanitarian visits to Ethiopia and South Africa, Pitt flew to London. There, he and Jolie boarded a private jet to Morocco. Befitting their status as the most-hunted game in Africa, the couple was transported to Pitt's hotel in a three-vehicle convoy.

Their reunion was brief. Replenished with love, Jolie left the next morning.

The Oscar-winner turned up yesterday in Pakistan, where she began a four-day mission to focus attention on the plight of Afghan refugees. The gorgeous UN goodwill ambassador met with Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz.

Seeking an old flame

Colin Farrell loves women ... of all vintages.

Venerable British actress Eileen Atkins says that the sexaholic actor spent 2 1/2 hours begging her for a tumble.

Dame Atkins, who created "Upstairs, Downstairs," says she was three weeks away from her 70th birthday last year when "a simply stunningly gorgeous big film star, aged 28 years old, came into my hotel room for sex without strings."

Atkins told the U.K. talk show "Loose Women" that she turned him down, but "it was pure bliss and it made me sail through my 70th birthday without a care in the world."

Though Atkins didn't mention Farrell's name, her rep confirmed her foiled seducer was the leprechaun who co-stars with her in the upcoming "Ask the Dust."

Dance fever

Cameron Diaz may be the fantasy woman for a lot of men, but prolonged exposure to her can wear you down.

Her boyfriend, Justin Timberlake, is said to have looked less than thrilled the other night at Butter when the "Charlie's Angels" star used him as her human dance pole.

"She was, like, literally humping him," a witness tells us. "Justin looked like he wanted to die."

It may have been the hour. Or was it Timberlake's throat? According to one report, the singer is due to undergo surgery

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for nodules.

His rep would say only, "Is the surgery supposed to be on the same day that he's getting married in the South of France?"

Diaz's rep says flatly that they never had any wedding plans.

Bo heckles the audience

Bo Dietl doesn't take lip from nobody. The private eye celebrated his new book, "Business Lunchatations," at Elaine's Tuesday with Roger Ailes, Victoria Gotti, Jonathan Tisch, Judge Edwin Torres, John Myers, Joel Hollander, Steve Witkoff and other pals. But as he tried to make a toast, Dietl kept hearing the voice of Kenneth Langone, the billionaire investor who's looking to take over the New York Stock Exchange. "Pipe down, Kenny," bellowed Dietl. "If you didn't invest in Home Depot, you might be driving my car."

P.S. Court TV's Henry Schleiff and MSNBC's Rick Kaplan obviously like the sound of Dietl's voice. Both have offered him his own show.

Side dish

MEN'S JOURNAL editor Michael Caruso has the perfect antidote to the testosterone that rages at his magazine: his new daughter, Asia. Mom Andrea Sheehan brought the 1-month-old beauty by yesterday to inspect next month's issue ...

MEANWHILE, WE always knew "Electroboy" author Andy Behrman was a survivor, but his baby daughter, Kate Elizabeth, has it in her genes. Her mom, Julia Eisenman, is great-great-granddaughter of evolutionist Charles Darwin. Eisenman is also turning Behrman's story of his struggle with artist Mark Kostabi into a movie. The couple will have to miss Saturday's opening of the Berlin Holocaust monument, designed by architect Peter Eisenman, Kate's grandfather - but he understands.

Surveillance

LINDSAY LOHAN jumped onstage at L.A.'s Roxy with "Desperate Housewives" hunk Jesse Metcalfe to sing "Jesse's Girl." Meanwhile, Tara Reid, who's been said to have a thing for Metcalfe, seems to have moved on. She and Tommy Lee were all over each other last weekend in Vegas ...

"60 MINUTES" man Ed Bradley and "Spinal Tap" mock-rocker Harry Shearer were among those who made the pilgrimage to the 36th New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. Giving up the fonk for them were the original members of the Meters and the Dirty Dozen Brass Band. Also coming under the fest's broad definition of jazz were Dave Matthews and Phish's Trey Anastasio (who hung at the International House hotel), as well as still-kicking Clarence (Gatemouth) Brown, the Neville Brothers, Elvis Costello and Randy Newman ...

GRETCHEN MOL, Stephanie March and Jaid Barrymore turned out for Tuesday's Grand Classic screening of "Murmur of the Heart," Louis Malle's 1971 coming-of-age story about a boy's incestuous relationship with his mother. Asked if she could see herself teaching a son about sex, host Famke Janssen said with a wink, "I'm European, so I'm very liberal. I can envision such a situation, but I'm not making any plans." Hugo Boss and The Week sponsored the Soho House evening ...

JOHNNY DYNELL virtually invented the Meatpacking District scene with the "Jackie 60" nights at his club Mother - that is, until the area got so recherché their landlord tripled their rent. But the master turntablist is still in the mix. Besides producing Saturday nights at Crobar, he and Alba Clemente provided Pink Martini with their dance hit "Una Notta a Napoli," and tomorrow night, Dynell and Chi Chi Valenti will hold their 15th annual "Night of 1,000 Stevie Nicks" at Tribeca's Knitting Factory. Dress like Stevie - at any of her weights ...

NY GIANT Jack Brewer and MTV veejay Quddus are among the celebrity bachelors who'll be auctioned off for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Spring Fling tonight at LQ.

E-mail: rushmolloy@nydailynews.com

GRAPHIC: REUTERS T. MUGHAL EPA GLOBETROTTER: Yesterday, Angelina Jolie appeared in Pakistan with Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz in her role as UN goodwill ambassador. Over the weekend, she holed up in Morocco in her role as the not-so-secret love of Brad Pitt (l.) ALBERTO PIZZOLI AFP/GETTY IMAGES (LEFT) COLD SHOWER

FOR COLIN: There's one woman Colin Farrell can't conquer. Dame Eileen Atkins (seen in "Vanity Fair"), 70, rejected his persistent pleas. JUERGEN TELLER W MAGAZINE LEAPIN' LIZARD: Gisele Bundchen's alligator purse is still alive and kicking! The sultry supermodel is sporting a dress and shoes by Emanuel Ungaro and an Hermes cuff in this shot for the June issue of W magazine.

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Daily News, L.P.
Daily News (New York)

May 5, 2005 Thursday
SPORTS FINAL EDITION

SECTION: THERSDAY; Pg. 52

LENGTH: 697 words

HEADLINE: IN THE KNOW

BYLINE: by BY BREANNE L. HELDMAN, AMY DILUNA, FELISSA BENJAMIN & BRITTANY SCHAEFFER

BODY:

BRIDAL BLISS

New York brides and 'maids have been clamoring for L.A.-based designer Saeyoung Vu. Now, she's finally expanded her bridal business and opened a New York boutique last month in Nolita.

The shop caters to wedding parties with a "hip, fashion-forward, downtown sensibility," Vu says. Her bridesmaids' dresses have the rare reputation for being beautiful and re-wearable, with simple silhouettes, modern designs and luxurious fabrics. The brand

already has freestanding shops in Los Angeles, Atlanta, Chicago and Washington, D.C. Open Tues.-Sat., 11 a.m.-7 p.m. 214 Mulberry St., near Spring St. (212) 925-6505. - Breanne L. Heldman

KITSCHY COOL

You may not know you love Liberace. But you do - or at least you will, once you check out I Love Liberace, a collection of accessories devoted to the flamboyant pianist and performer. Maybe we've been spending too much time in Vegas, but we love the idea of toting a Liberace beach bag and plunking down on our Liberace towel (above) this summer. The line aims to introduce young people to the entertainer, says Karan Feder, the line's founder (and a costume designer). We say it's about time. Find it at www.iloveliberace.com. - Amy DiLuna

BAWDY BOOKS

Every day we're told to exercise our minds and bodies. And now, our sex lives. This spring, a slew of new books swears that the key can be found in learning the correct techniques for unlocking and increasing our natural energy. Take "The Multi-

Orgasmic Woman" (Rodale, \$24.95): This how-to guide, complete with yoga-like positioning, teaches Eastern techniques, combined with Western medical research (think Viagra meets feng shui), plus a personality quiz and tips (for those who still have something to learn) on breathing techniques and exercises that increase pleasure. Another book, "The Secrets of the Sexually Satisfied Woman" (Hyperion, \$24.95), aims to advise women on sexual hangups, with examples from real life, taken from Drs. Laura and Jennifer Berman's National Women's Sexual Satisfaction Survey. We can't help but wonder if the reason you're not having great sex is because you're spending too much time reading. But that's just us. - Felissa Benjamin

STAIN SAVER

What could be worse than putting on that cute black top, checking yourself in the mirror and discovering your shirt is riddled with deodorant marks? Enter Gal Pal: The company has created Garment Deodorant Removers that look like pink sponge hockey pucks. But in action, they are miracle workers. After a gentle rub in the direction of the grain of

the fabric, the nasty white stuff disappears. If it doesn't work, the second sponge in the back can be dampened and likely will do the trick. The sponges - two per pack - are reusable. \$10 at The Container Store, 629 Sixth Ave., between

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18th and 19th Sts. (212) 366-4200. - B.L. H.

HAIR REPAIR

What fine-haired girl hasn't suffered a hairdo flop because of loose bobby pins and slipping rubber bands? Thin-locked ladies, consider wayward strands a thing of the past. This month, a wave of new barrettes, clips and headbands popped up on shelves. Best of all, the products claim to lock down 'dos without damaging hair or causing headaches. We tested Scunci's "No-Slip Grip" accessories, including jaw clips and ponytail holders that use strips of tacky rubber to anchor hair in place. The clips stayed in place and didn't leave an unsightly crimp afterward. And at less than \$10, we'd call them a hit (available at drugstores). Ponytail giant Goody's "Stay Put," a line of slip-free hair ties that use a rubbery strip intertwined with elastic to keep locks in place, come out this month (\$4.99 and up, depending on size, for a 20-pack). At Claire's locations and drugstores. Brittany Schaeffer

CLARIFICATION

In an April 28 article headlined "Love Hurts," the Daily News stated that Elizabeth Landers and Vicky Mainzer, authors of the book "The Script," "say both their ex-husbands cheated on them." Although the statement has been attributed elsewhere to both authors, Landers did not herself make it directly to the Daily News. She has informed us that she "did not say her 'husband cheated on her'" and that she did not base the book on her own experience.

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Copyright 2005 THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS
THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS

May 5, 2005 Thursday
SECOND EDITION

SECTION: SPORTS DAY; Pg. 2C

LENGTH: 904 words

HEADLINE: WEEKEND PLANNER

BYLINE: Todd Davis, DallasNews.com

BODY:

THINGS TO DO

MLB: Cleveland Indians

at Rangers

7:05 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 1:05 p.m.

Sunday, Amerquest Field, Arlington

The Rangers don't want to give away any games in the three-game series with Cleveland, but that doesn't mean fans walk away without a giveaway. In Friday night's lid-lifter, 25,000 fans can lift a lid, getting a free cap to cap off their evening. Another 20,000 fans on Saturday night won't feel shorted, either, receiving a short statue of shortstop Michael Young. Sunday's prize for 7,500 women has a Rangers link, but it's a shirt that's pink. That's for Mother's Day, I think.

Kentucky Derby day at Lone Star Park

Gates open at 10:30 a.m. Saturday,

races at 1:35 p.m.

If you want to take in the first test of the Triple Crown but don't have the giddyup to go out, check out the race coverage on Ch. 5 (4 p.m., with the race at 5:04 p.m.). But if you do go somewhere that stirs when top jockeys get in the stirrups, Lone Star Park is the place I'd propose for the Run for the Roses. The track has plenty of TV sets, will gladly take your bets and will have races during the day to whet the appetite. It's a win for a place with the show. WATCH LPGA: Michelob Ultra Open at Kingsmill

2 p.m. Friday, 1 p.m. Saturday,

2 p.m. Sunday (ESPN2)

Won a tournament? That's one thing. Two or three? You're impressing me. But if you've got five in the bag and are shooting for six, you are the best among the chicks with the sticks. Annika Sorenstam has won her last five LPGA tournaments and enters the Michelob Ultra Open with the ultimate women's winning streak awaiting her. Can she do it? It was supposed to be a mismatch when this miss was matched with men in Fort Worth, but she didn't miss by much. So don't miss this.

Arena football: Desperados at Las Vegas Gladiators

9 p.m. Saturday (FSNSW)

Hey, when your luck runs out at home, why not take a trip to Vegas? Sure, the house is always against you, but the Desperados' house hasn't exactly been a winner. After a 65-57 loss to the New York Dragons, Dallas' home winless streak has dragged on for four games now. Fortunately for the Desperados, they've won four of their last five on the road. So is a

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win in Sin City a cinch? I doubt it. I hear players in Vegas don't mind hitting. SCAN Golf scores

for Central Regional

www.golfstat.com,

texastech.collegesports.com

The club scene in Lubbock this weekend should be something special. And if you're like me, you hope to get as many numbers as you can from the women out there from TCU, SMU, Tech, Baylor, Texas and A&M. Before you get teed off at me, I'm talking about golf and the NCAA Division I Women's Golf Central Regional in the Hub City through Saturday. These are good links to the scores of links teams hoping to finish in the top eight and make a date for the nationals.

Houston's Rocket Fuel

www.nba.com/step_up

It's hard for the Mavs to keep track of T-Mac, but NBA.com gives us a clue of what he might do. Simply look into the league's official site. (Notice I didn't say look into the league officials' sight. I'll leave that to Jeff Van Gundy.) In the "Features" area, you can find a page that shows how a Rocket finds separation stage by stage. On your screen at work, you can see the Rockets' screen at work. Maybe the Mavericks' hard work on this can prevent a Game 7 on Saturday. READ

'How I Played the Game'

By Byron Nelson

Before the PGA Tour makes its annual swing through North Texas, opening with next week's EDS Byron Nelson Championship, you should have enough time to wedge in a little reading about the event's namesake, for goodness sake. Sixty years ago, Nelson had a year to remember, and he remembered that and much more for this book from 1993. In the 1945 season, he hit the ball so straight, he won a tour-record 11 straight. Add the author's straight talk, and this book makes the cut.

'Parenting, SportsMom Style: Real-Life Solutions for Surviving the Youth Sports Scene'

By Laurel Phillips and Barbara Stahl

Sunday is Mother's Day, and I for one am in awe of Ma. How can she keep the house looking neat, make sure we have food to eat and still seem so sweet without missing a beat? Well, some aren't quite that good, but let's still tip a cap to motherhood with a book of sports tips that can be easily understood. The hook for this book is what two moms took from their experiences raising children with sports. Flowers only last a few hours. Easing their lives is more pleasing. SKIP Dallas Rage

Women's professional football team

Before everybody gets all mad at me, allow me to temper this a bit. I'm not on a rampage against the Rage, our local ladies' lineup in the National Women's Football Association. The Rage is on a bye, so if you want to give the team a try, you're left high and dry. The league told Rage officials, or "anger management" as I like to call them, that moms shouldn't play on Mother's Day. Good for them, I say. But for a home game, we wait until the 28th of May.

The Pitching Edge

By Tom House

Anybody catch that curveball from former Rangers pitching coach Tom House? House told the San Francisco Chronicle he culled all sorts of steroids for his chronically slow fastball in his playing days. He said that was decades ago in a decidedly more decadent time and that once the destructive effects were discovered, he wound up throwing them away. I don't know if that's the "pitching edge" in his old book, but you'd have to say his revelations take something off his stuff.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO(S): 1. (FILE 1996/Associated Press) Saturday's Kentucky Derby will draw quite a crowd at Churchill Downs (above), but there will also be plenty of action to see at Lone Star Park. 2. Annika Sorenstam 3. Tracy McGrady 4. (FILE 1989) Ex-Rangers pitching coach Tom House said he used steroid when he was a player 5. How I Played the Game book jacket ; **LOCATION NOTE:** Photo #5 was not available for archiving.

LOAD-DATE: May 12, 2005

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Copyright 2005 THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS
THE DALLAS MORNING NEWSMay 5, 2005 Thursday
Correction Appended
SECOND EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 6A

LENGTH: 585 words

HEADLINE: CHAMBER MUSIC Notes from the Legislature

BYLINE: Karen Brooks

BODY:**THE MIX**

Perfect pair

Gutsy freshman Rep. Melissa Noriega, D-Houston, took on an up-and-coming veteran by trying to kill his bill in a most audacious manner. The "point of order" is a favorite bomb-throwing tactic of her husband, former Rep. Rick Noriega, and his Democrat buddies on the House floor. When he was sent to Afghanistan for military duty, Ms. Noriega took his place. Aware that her stint may be temporary, she declined to play the part of seen-and-not-heard Demure Frosh. When leadership favorite Dan Gattis, R-Georgetown, tried Wednesday to pass a bill to keep prisoners from filing frivolous writs - in which they can assert their innocence - she stopped the floor show with two points of order. Both were denied, and the bill passed. Some members take such a tactic personally, particularly coming from a freshman, but Mr. Gattis gave her props. "That's the game," he said. And Ms. Noriega, whether or not she got special-ops training from her husband before he left, clearly isn't afraid to play it.

Both barrels

It should come as no surprise that Rep. George "Buddy" West, a boot-wearin' Odessa Republican and chairman of the House Energy Committee, would love a new over-and-under shotgun. So TXU Energy is going to buy him one. A letter distributed to financial supporters by TXU lobbyist Paul Blanton praises Mr. West for a job well done and suggests that contributors write a \$50 check payable to McBride's, where the weapon awaits purchase. The energy company has already come under fire for using its customer list for direct-mail lobbying, not to mention facilitating a trip to the Masters golf tournament for key lawmakers this year. So they're sticking with the big guns.

We love bad credit

Grocers and other wine-and-beer retailers hate that they can't get the same 25-day credit line on beer that they can for wine, instead of having to pay the distributor within a day. The beer boys, of course, love that law and don't want to change it. H-E-B is one of the biggest proponents of beer credit. Maybe this is why: The stores in that chain routinely put off payment for wine until well past the deadline, going onto the "delinquent" list at the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission. Technically, no more wine can be delivered to the delinquent store until the debt is paid - and just before the wine runs out, the H-E-B store coughs up the cash. Last month, H-E-B had 263 delinquent accounts listed with the TABC - roughly 20 percent of all TABC delinquent accounts at the time. And it wants more credit? That kind of track record wouldn't fly with Visa.

Vegas rule

One of the great things about the House is that it'll pass all kinds of stuff - knowing full well that those bills may go nowhere in the Senate - just to make a point. Cheerleading restrictions and a ban on gay foster parents are just a few examples. This week, Rep. Mary Denny fought hard for her bill requiring IDs at voting booth, and the House passed

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it. During day two of discussion, Senate Democrats signed a pledge against the bill, killing it in the "more deliberative chamber." That didn't stop folks on the House side from slamming it for the next 45 minutes and then passing it anyway, proving two things: The reps love making statements, and what happens in the House stays in the House.

HIGH FIDELITY

"There's no difference between this and playing Old Maid or Go Fish."

-Rep. Jose Menendez, D-San Antonio, defending a bill about poker and winning no friends among the green-visor crowd

E-mail kmbrooks@dallasnews.com

CORRECTION-DATE: May 19 2005

CORRECTION:

In the May 5 Texas section, a column on the Legislature reported that the H-E-B grocery chain was listed as having 263 delinquent accounts with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission because of failure to pay wine vendors on time. H-E-B says that it paid all its vendors by the deadline and that one of those vendors acknowledged failing to inform a distribution outlet that a payment had been made, causing the state to list all H-E-B stores as delinquent.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO(S): (1-2 ERICH SCHLEGEL/Staff Photographer) 1. Melissa Noriega, D-Houston, isn't content to play the shy freshman in the House. 2. Rep. George "Buddy" West is getting a new shotgun, courtesy of TXU Energy.

LOAD-DATE: May 23, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Dallas Observer LP
Dallas Observer (Texas)

May 5, 2005 Thursday

SECTION: Dining/Reviews**LENGTH:** 1259 words**HEADLINE:** Sweet Nothings

With no guiding principle, the food wanders at Dolce Oliva

BYLINE: By Mark Stuertz**BODY:**

The olive dominates. It's a persistent cartoon, a huge green oval impaled by a skewer, slipping through the orifice in the red "O" in Dolce Oliva's name as if it were a martini glass rim. You can see it above the faux granite bar, where plaques flaunting the words juicy, plump, firm, meaty and soft are interspersed with olive images. Not far from this visual stream is a string of Warholish renderings of beauties in 1950s bathing regalia. Is this an ode to a Sputnik-era three-martini lunch? Hard to tell. Dolce Oliva, or sweet olive in the language of the boot, has been the project of chef Los Akins (formerly of The Moonshine Cafe and PoPoLos) for a little more than a year. It was Roberto's for two years prior and Rodolpho's for about 20 years before that. "We wanted to call it Olive," Akins says. "Todd English has a restaurant called Olives [New York, Boston, Aspen, Tokyo, D.C., Vegas], and he makes it difficult."

So stir in a little Italian nomenclature. But careful, not too much; it brings in undesirables. "We're just trying to get away from a lot of that traditional Italian food, because it was just bringing in the wrong people," Akins says. "They want to pay \$4.95 for spaghetti and meatballs and drink iced tea, and we weren't making money."

So rather than drown in a sea of iced tea and meatballs, Akins decided to make his Oliva menu have more of a PoPoLos semblance: light Mediterranean and such.

And while the moniker winks supper club, the demeanor is rustic. It's flanked with patios of stone, wood and iron, foliage weaving through the metal in some places. There are fireplaces and white tablecloths covered in butcher paper. The staff is attentive. The food wanders.

Olives invade the antipasto plate, which can best be described as a bunch of cans disgorged, their contents strewn without a guiding principle. Artichoke hearts rest naked, unseasoned and unadorned, in their own juices. Hearts of palm slump and glisten nearby. Chickpeas huddle in a loose cluster near a corner of the plate without any culinary supervision. Cucumbers, asparagus, kalamatas and tomatoes stuffed with bread crumbs round out the slovenly assemblage. Unifying principle? Not evident. Imagination? None, not even in the form of a simple visual statement.

This is in contrast to the smoked salmon carpaccio, which had a simple unifying principle, namely thickish sheets of pink fish tied off in the center by a rumpled salad of capers, red onion slivers and Parmesan cheese. Lemon is in there, too. Olive oil is not, not even to lend the pinkish folds a gentle shimmer. Yet the slices are delicate and tender, rich even. The elements are crudely tuned into balance, with acids and brine scrubbing the palate after mounting salmon richness and smoke fog the tongue.

It works well, in its own crass way, which points to a conundrum. Why does the rest of the menu seem so frumpy, dumpty and bland? Is it execution? Cost cutting? Ennui?

If any of these maladies are infecting the kitchen, they haven't yet spread their fevers to the servers. Example: On our first visit, our server recited the specials and his recommendations with the fervor and certitude of an apostle. Building bits of swordfish and saffron into an oratory crescendo, he lifted his eyes leftward and pressed his palms together prayer-like as he trilled the "r" in risotto and very nearly severed shrimp into two syllables. This guy would take a medal in a def menu poetry jam.

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And those shrimp in the seafood risotto were little—microscopic, really. If they weren't so yellow from all the saffron, you could squint and easily see them posing by the hundreds in a plastic bag lodged in a freezer corner, yearning for a stint in an all-you-can-eat popcorn special. There were little scallops in there, too, along with waxy chunks of swordfish. Instead of smooth and creamy, the risotto is coarse and firm—and as yellow as fool's gold.

The wine list is brief, and for a venue with an Italian moniker, Italian juice barely soaks through. When we asked if there were some good Italian bottlings, our server said breathlessly, "Oh, yes," and pointed to a single Banfi Chianti, virtually the only Italian red in a deep puddle mostly from California. Bottles predominantly hugged the \$30 to \$40 range and beyond. Maybe this is why Oliva sells so much iced tea.

Does the food move? Some of it has wings. Roasted rosemary chicken resting in a bath of pan drippings shot with sherry has a well-charred skin, and the meat is moist. But the flavors are exhausted, possibly from age, or more likely from an improper freezing and thawing sequence somewhere in the chicken's life span. And despite the menu heading, it was nearly impossible to pull any rosemary out of the flesh. Charred quail on roasted onion polenta and shaved pecorino cheese fared better. The meat is moist and chewy, the polenta crusted and dewy.

Roasted duck breast on risotto sown with arugula and bits of pancetta read with promise, but that evaporated. First, the dish wasn't duck breast at all but was a pair of leg and thigh assemblies. Second, the meat was dry and tasted old, like the roasted chicken.

This is tragically odd, because the food doesn't measure up to the ambience, which is Spartan urban country quaint. Patio dining is pleasant, though the view of Royal Lane and GF Prime steak house across the street, along with the concomitant din, roughens the edges. Service out here is as diligent as it is on the inside. One of the waiters even got locked out on the patio, as the space is separated from the inner dining room by a self-locking door. After serving our table, he enthusiastically knuckled the door glass until someone heard his distress and pushed it open. Then the two waiters feverishly tied a tourniquet around the door latch, anchoring it on the knobs to keep the mechanism from engaging in the jamb. What, no keys?

This is not to suggest that everything at the sweet olive is wounded. Blue crab claws, marinated in lemon and served in lemony garlic butter sluiced with crab juices, are crowned by deliciously thin onion rings. Crab is firm, tender and smooth instead of tough, rough and grainy. Tasty, too.

But this was a detour. Pepperoni pizza is a thick, shiny sheet of mozzarella—with pepperoni discs and slight oil pools spotting the surface—mounted on a thin crust. The edges are slightly singed in areas. Yet it's doughy, pliable stuff, like cheap prefab.

Broccoli cream soup arrives with a wrinkled skin surface that had to be pierced to plumb the thickened stock. It has a fuzzy grip and precious little seasoning, like nuked flour water speckled with herbs.

Pork chop looks compelling: a simple, bold chop with a thick bone curving out of the end of the slab. A rusty red demi-glace cut with port and speckled with pancetta puddles the surface and streams down the thick edges, pooling at the base. The meat is gray, dull, grainy and dry, growing pink and gelatinous as the center is broached. Time for dessert.

Tiramisu would seem a perfect cap for a restaurant with the word dolce in the title. It held promise: The cake is firm and moist, not soggy, though a little shy on flavor. It was crowned with four strawberries, one of which was conspicuously moldy. Perhaps this restaurant looks much better when viewed through a skewered olive, soaking in gin. 5956 Royal Lane, 214-368-5039. Open for lunch 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Monday-Saturday. Open for dinner 5-10 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 5-11 p.m. Friday & Saturday. \$\$-\$\$\$

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2005

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FD (Fair Disclosure) Wire

May 5, 2005 Thursday

TRANSCRIPT: 050505ah.736

LENGTH: 10615 words

HEADLINE: Q1 2005 Mpower Holding Corporation Earnings Conference Call - Final

BODY:

OPERATOR: Good morning and welcome to your Mpower Communications First Quarter Earnings Conference Call. (operator instructions) It is now my pleasure to turn the floor over to your host, Michele Sadwick, Vice President with Mpower Communications. Ma'am, you may begin.

MICHELE SADWICK, VICE PRESIDENT, MPOWER HOLDING CORP: Thank you and good morning everyone. Welcome again to Mpower's conference call and webcast where we're reviewing our first quarter 2005 results. Joining us today are Mpower's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Rolla Huff and our Chief Financial Officer, Gregg Clevenger.

Before we begin, please be advised that during the call we will be making forward-looking statements under the Safe Harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Please review the forward looking statement section of our press release and our Securities and Exchange Commission filing, which discuss the risks and uncertainties relating to forward looking statements.

Please also note that the SEC has adopted Regulation G rules regulating the use of non-GAAP financial measures. Mpower uses two non-GAAP financial measures, adjusted EBITDA and adjusted gross margins to supplement our consolidated financial statements presented on a GAAP basis as well as in the guidance we have provided. Regulation G requires that we include the corresponding GAAP measures in our press release. With respect to adjusted EBITDA this measure is net income or loss and for adjusted gross margin it is gross margin. Our press release includes reconciliation express of these measures. We have also presented the reconciliation in a Powerpoint presentation posted on our website at www.mpowercom.com.

With that it's my pleasure to introduce Mpower's CEO, Rolla Huff. Rolla?

ROLLA HUFF, CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, MPOWER HOLDING CORP: Thanks Michele and thanks to everyone for joining us this morning. Well, today we released our first quarter results and we believe the first quarter was another quarter of solid execution by the Mpower team. We saw solid results really across the business and I think it shows in our quarterly results.

Let me begin by pointing out that Q1 is the first quarter that we have fully consolidated the ICG acquisition into our financial results. We are well on the way to fully integrating ICG and I'll give you a bit more detailed status report on that point in a few minutes but it's important to note that fully integrating their network with ours, integrating their back office with ours, and of course, selling our products and their products across both the wholesale and the retail channels will make it virtually impossible to report on old ICG or old Mpower in future quarters. But because we're midway through the integration, we'll be able to give you some insight into how our pre-ICG business model performed in Q1, but after this quarter we simply will report on our integrated business.

So, let me begin by reiterating that we were extremely pleased with our progress in the quarter. While Gregg will go into a more detailed analysis of our financial results, let me highlight some of the key areas of progress as I saw them.

With the ICG integration, total revenue increased over 28% from the year ago quarter and customer revenue increased

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over 34%. But importantly, we saw Mpower's pre ICG revenue increase almost 11% over the year ago quarter. Our commitment to growing the top line in a controlled and profitable way is showing results. I'll remind you that in Q1 of last year we reported year-over-year customer revenue growth of 2%. In Q2 our growth rate increased to 4.5%. That with the 5.1% in Q3 and in Q4 that growth rate accelerated to 7%. And now in Q1 we're reporting 10.8% growth in customer revenue. Again, this is double-digit growth in the Mpower business before the impact of the ICG acquisition and we feel pretty great about that.

It's important to note that our quota carrying retail heads increased by only 3 people in the quarter and 2 people over the same quarter last year. So we're not doing these results with just more people. We've seen substantial increases in sales and installs from our agent and telemarketing channels. In addition, we are clearly moving up market in our sales effort.

And just to give you a perspective on that. We track the top 20 deals every quarter. The average size of our top 20 deals in Q1 of this year was 87% higher than in the year ago quarter. Our business continues to quickly evolve with a bias towards alternate channels of distribution and sales into much larger accounts. And again I'm talking about the pre-ICG organic Mpower.

We can also see the evolution to larger accounts in the products that we're selling. The organic Mpower saw 7.5% decrease in POTS lines, ending POTS lines, but experienced a 47% increase, again excluding the impact of ICG, in ending T1 loops. Put another way, we saw a 7.5% decline in a product that yields 40 to 50% incremental cash margins, still very good, but a 47% increase in products that yield 60 to 70% incremental cash margins. It's that evolution that has taken this company from the large adjusted EBITDA losses we had 3 years ago to our 7th consecutive quarter of positive adjusted EBITDA results.

One final comment on the products. We're seeing substantial interest in our IP Centrex or Voice Over IP product. Our IP Centrex recurring revenue stream in the first quarter was just over \$300,000. We expect the growth in this product to continue to accelerate in the future.

Needless to say, we're very pleased with our reported adjusted EBITDA of \$4.2 million for the quarter, which was again a record for our company. I'd also just like to point out to you that our adjusted EBITDA less CapEx from our operations, less interest on our fiber leases was nearly \$1 million.

Beyond our top line and bottom line performance we made significant progress in other aspects of our business. We were extraordinarily pleased to have satisfactorily resolved all of our disputes with both SBC and Verizon, essentially eliminating outstanding conflicts and litigation between us. In addition, we've put in place acceptable terms and rates for the minutes that we bill to each other.

And I've got to tell you, I can't ever remember a time over the last 5-1/2 years that I've been here that I could tell you that we were essentially dispute free with these 2 companies. We're hopeful that this signals a new and improved working relationships between us and the 2 incumbents. But we're also very hopeful that this will dramatically reduce the quarter-to-quarter volatility we've seen in our results over the last several quarters as disputes get filed and then later resolved.

And finally, before we get to Gregg, let me quickly review where we stand on the ICG integration. We've made excellent progress. Let me highlight the key areas of progress. We've received consents to transfer existing customer contracts from ICG to Mpower, covering 94% of the revenue. We expect to get consents for the remaining 6% shortly but continue to bill and collect through ICG for that revenue in the interim. I might also point out that the ICG revenue at the end of Q1 was 90.5% of the revenue that was there when we closed the transaction on January 1st. Now of course that's a combination of churn and new revenue that we've installed, but we think that's pretty solid execution in a period of transition like we're in right now.

We've added 39 former ICG employees to the Mpower team and we feel great about that. They're excellent people. We've spent extensive time cleaning up and synchronizing ICG's circuit billing and inventory records before integrating them into our systems. Those records have now been integrated into Mpower's metasolvesystem and we think it's very important that this step be done correctly to avoid confusion in the customer base and wasted time in our company trying to fix issues with customer bills that would have occurred due to the billing records and the circuit records not being synchronized.

We've loaded the ICG products and associated rating and billing information into our back office systems. We've completed integrating associated network operating center systems into Mpower and now we monitor all network elements and trouble tickets for DS3s and above. We've completed the SS7 network conversion. We will take over customer billing

effective with a 6/1 billing cycle, actually its effective here in the next few days, but the first bills will hit the streets with the 6/1 billing cycle.

Given all of the above we expect to cut over to Mpower switches in 5 markets by the end of next month and cut over the final 4 markets during Q3. At that point the integration will be complete. As we told you when we closed this deal early this year, it's vitally important that we do this integration with quality and I believe we're doing that.

And finally, we've created a separate wholesale division that's now actively working with our newly acquired customers. Revenue retention as I said is running above planned levels.

I know that was a long-winded opening but we've had a very busy and very productive quarter. We believe solid blocking and tackling continues to drive the fundamentals of our business. Now I'll ask Gregg to step you through the detailed financial results in the quarter. Gregg?

GREGG CLEVINGER, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, MPOWER HOLDING CORP: Thanks Rolla. Hopefully everyone has the ability to access the power point presentation via the webcast. Just so you know its also posted on our website so you can pull it down after the call if you haven't already done so. And before starting I want to point out again, that unless specifically noted, everything I talk about today will be for the combined operations of Mpower and the ICG communications business. However, for this quarter and this quarter only I'll also discuss the revenue contributed by each business so that you can get a view of the top line performance of the pre-ICG Mpower business along with a view of the overall contribution of ICG to our total revenue for the quarter.

However, due to the ongoing integration of our businesses, it will be impossible to allocate our cost of service and SG&A in any meaningful way in this quarter or in the future. And as we continue to integrate the back offices of the two companies, the segregation of revenue will be come more and more difficult in future quarters. In fact, impossible to do so in any meaningful way, so this will be the last peek that we'll give you of anything other than a completely integrated business with integrated financial results.

So onto our results from continuing operations of both Mpower and the acquired operations of ICG. Please refer to slide 3, which shows our core customer revenue for the first quarter of \$44.1 million, more than 26% higher than last quarter and 34% higher than the first quarter of 2004. Our switched access revenue for the quarter was \$3.7 million, more than 29% higher than last quarter and about 16% lower than the first quarter of '04. Switched access revenue was 7.7% of total revenue in this quarter versus 7.5% last quarter and 11.8% in the first quarter of 2004.

You may recall that over the past several quarters we've taken hits to the switched access component of our revenue stream due to an ongoing dispute with one of the LECs with whom we compete. And I'm pleased to inform you that we have satisfactorily resolved this dispute along with a variety of other miscellaneous disputes that have arisen in the normal course of our business. And based upon this resolution, we now believe that we will have a much better ability to forecast this component of our revenue stream in the future.

Combining our core customer and switched access revenue streams, our total revenue from continuing operations for this quarter was \$47.7 million, which is more than 26% higher than last quarter and 28% higher than the first quarter of 2004.

Now for some detail on the revenue contribution from Mpower and ICG on slide 4. Mpower's core customer revenue contribution for the quarter was \$36.3 million, which is 4% higher than last quarter and nearly 11% higher than the first quarter of 2004. Mpower's switched access revenue contribution was \$3 million for the quarter, 7.2% higher than last quarter and more than 30% lower than the first quarter of last year. In total, the contributed revenue of the Mpower business was \$39.4 million for the quarter, more than 4% higher than last quarter and 6% higher than the first quarter of last year. This should give you a good feel for the continuing and building momentum in our organic growth plan as we begin 2005.

You see that the acquired ICG business contributed a total of \$8.4 million of revenue in this quarter, 7.7 million of core customer revenue and a little more than 600,000 of switched access revenue.

On slide 5 you can see that we ended the quarter with about 313,000 access lines in service, up by more than 46,000, or more than 17% from the end of the year and up nearly 21% from the end of the first quarter of 2004. In addition, we had about 2,500 private line circuits in service at the end of the quarter, all contributed by the ICG business. And in terms of business access lines, we ended the quarter with about 43,000 business access lines contributed by ICG — again, this

does not include the private line circuits — and nearly 252,000 lines in the core Mpower business, which is about 1.5% higher than the end of last year and more than 6% higher than the same quarter last year.

Business line churn increased a bit this quarter to an average of 1.9% per month versus 1.7% last quarter, while average monthly residential line churn improved to 3.3% this quarter versus 3.7% last quarter. The increase in business line churn was due to relatively higher churn rates in the ICG customer base, which we had expected to happen and we expect to continue to happen for the next couple of quarters as we integrate the businesses. Significantly, Mpower's business line churn for the quarter, and I'm talking Mpower alone without the ICG impact, averaged 1.4% a month versus 1.6% a month in each of the last quarter and the same quarter last year. So that's great progress. All in all, we believe these are great customer retention results for any operator, notwithstanding the business integration that we're currently undergoing.

So now on to our operating costs on slide 6. We reported cost of operating revenues for the first quarter of \$21.8 million, about 27% higher than last quarter and 33% higher than the first quarter of last year. This resulted in a gross margin of 54.2% in this quarter versus 54% — 54.6% last quarter and almost 60% in the first quarter — I'm sorry, 56% in the first quarter of last year. It's important to note that the ICG business had an ongoing gross margin that was lower than Mpower's, which explains the decrease in cost — in the gross margin of the combined business. And as we continue to integrate the two businesses and remove redundant costs, we expect to see a steady improvement in our gross margins going forward on a consolidated basis.

You'll recall that I mentioned a few minutes ago about the satisfactory resolution that we've reached with one of the LECs with whom we compete with regard to the InterLATA Toll disputes and some of the other miscellaneous items and while the resolution had no impact on our revenue in this quarter it did have a \$300,000 positive impact on our costs of operating revenue in this quarter which is a one-time decrease in our operating costs.

Now in addition, we reached a satisfactory resolution with another one of the major LECs with whom we compete with regard to all of those outstanding disputes including the \$2.7 million that we were required to pay as a result of a decision last year by the California Public Utility Commission that allowed this particular LEC to make some loop rate increases for DS0s retroactive back to April 2002. I talked about this in some detail in our third quarter conference call last year and I said at that time that in the worst case scenario we may be required to pay up to \$2.7 million for this retroactive loop rate increase.

I noted that given all the various disputes and issues on the table with this LEC that we felt that we were adequately reserved for the overall outcome of all these disputes including this potential \$2.7 million and I'm very pleased to report that the resolution of all of our outstanding disputes has resulted in a one-time positive impact of about \$180,000 on our costs of operating revenue in this quarter. Again, a one-time decrease in our operating costs and we now have like with the other major LEC a clean slate in terms of outstanding disputes.

I can't emphasize enough how significant it is that we don't have any outstanding disputes with a LEC who operate in the territories that cover about 90% of our business. We believe this is very unique in this industry and lastly we recognized a \$300,000 credit from the third less significant LEC that we compete with for a billing error they made in the second quarter of last year. So in total with the other two our costs of service was positively impacted by about \$800,000 in this quarter.

In terms of our overhead, shown in slide seven, our SG&A expenses for the quarter were \$21.7 million an increase of nearly 14% versus last quarter and nearly 24% versus the first quarter of last year. Now note that this excludes about \$900,000 of incremental transition expenses that we incurred in connection with the integration of the ICG assets and about \$100,000 of agent selling expense warrants both of which are reconciled to net income in slide eight.

Our adjusted EBITDA for the quarter was \$4.2 million, almost triple last quarter and 30% higher than the first quarter of 2004 which is a record quarter for the company. Again, please refer to slide eight for a reconciliation of our adjusted EBITDA to our net income.

Our net income for the quarter was \$3.8 million versus a net loss of \$2.4 million last quarter and a loss of \$260,000 in the first quarter of last year. It's important to note that our net income was positively impacted by other income of \$7.3 million; \$7.2 million of which was related to a one-time payment that we received from a casino operator in Las Vegas in exchange for our agreement to vacate our switch site so that they can build a new casino on the site and over the next four to five quarters we will be building a new switch at a new location and will seamlessly transition all of our customers in

Las Vegas over to that switch by the middle of next year and I'll discuss the impact of these expenditures on our CapEx guidance later on in this call.

Also note again that our net income for the quarter was impacted by approximately \$900,000 of incremental transition expenses related to our ICG integration.

And finally on slide nine you'll see our capital expenditures for the quarter totaled \$3 million of which \$900,000 was incremental capital incurred in connection with the integration of the ICG assets. Therefore, we incurred about \$2.1 million of normal CapEx in this quarter.

In terms of the balance sheet shown on slide ten, you can see that we ended the quarter with a total of \$37.8 million of unrestricted cash and cash equivalents in both short and long-term investments available for sale versus \$37.4 million at the end of last quarter. These items are noted in gray on your slide.

Our current assets plus long-term investments available for sale less our current liabilities increased by \$5.7 million which is largely due to the cash payment we received from the casino operator that I discussed earlier.

In the yellow shaded areas, you can see how the ICG purchase is being reflected on our balance sheet. On the asset side PP&E has increased by about \$28 to 29 million and intangibles have increased by about \$7 million and on the liabilities side the long-term fiber leases are now carried on our balance sheet at about \$19 million. The difference in these assets and liabilities shows up on our stockholders equity which increased by about \$21 million. Some from the ICG purchase accounting and some from the positive net income that we reported in this quarter.

I'll note that certain components of our purchase accounting for ICG are preliminary and represent management's best estimate of current values which is subject to revision due to changes and estimates of fair value.

Now before discussing our guidance, I want to take a minute to respond to a specific question that many of you have asked regarding the high growth in our forecasted adjusted EBITDA relative to the lower growth in our forecasted revenue.

Over the past couple of years you've heard us talk about how our business has evolved from being 100% focused on residential and small business customers with services delivered over DS0s or POT and DSL circuits as we sometime call them to a business increasingly focused on larger customers with more sophisticated telecommunications and data needs typically provided over one or more T1 circuits.

As we've said in the past, Mpower's products delivered over DS0 circuits POTs and DSL have incremental adjusted EBITDA margins in the 40-50% range while products carried over T1 circuits have incremental adjusted EBITDA margins in the 60-70% range.

We've talked about how the shift of products and services that provide us with higher incremental margins has enabled us to grow adjusted EBITDA at rates that far exceed the growth in our revenue.

Slide eleven begins to illustrate this evolution for you. It shows the composition of the new recurring revenue that we installed in each quarter since the beginning of 2003. Recurring revenue by the way excludes usage revenue like long distance and switch access and other miscellaneous revenue. It's the fixed portion of what we bill our customers month over month and you can see from the slide that in first quarter of 2003 only 42% of the new recurring revenue that we installed in that quarter was carried over T1 circuits with the remaining 58% carried over DS0 circuits.

And by the way, we launched our first T1 based product in the first quarter of 2002 so you're looking at our mix of new installs only one year after initial launch of our T1 product. You can see how the incremental mix has increased fairly consistently since that time to now 70% in the first quarter of 2005.

And on slide twelve you can see how this has impacted the composition of revenue in our overall base. In the first quarter of 2003 only 14% of our recurring revenue was carried over T1 circuits with 86% carried over DS-0s circuits. The percentage of T1 related recurring revenue and our total recurring revenue base has increased consistently since that time as DS0 business has churned off and has been replaced by a greater and greater mix of T1 related recurring revenue - to now it's 46% in this first quarter of 2005.

One might imagine how the trend towards more and more of our recurring revenue being carried over T1 circuits as it continues into 2005 and 2006 might impact the growth in our reported adjusted EBITDA results relative to the growth in our reported revenue results over the same period. This I hope answers the question that many of you have posed.

So lets talk about our financial guidance on slide thirteen. We're still estimating 2005 revenue to be between \$200 and 208 million and 2005 adjusted EBITDA to be between \$18 and 21 million and we're still estimating our 2006 revenue to be between \$220 and 230 million and 2006 adjusted EBITDA to be between \$35 and 39 million. And based upon the deal that we announced in Las Vegas to move to the new switch site we are increasing our estimated CapEx to be between \$17 and 21 million in 2005 and \$11 and 13 million in 2006. This increases 2005 CapEx by \$7 million and 2006 expenditures by \$1 million for a total of \$8 million all of which has been prefunded by casino operator.

And finally, we're still expecting to incur a total of \$4.1 to \$5.2 million for ICG transition expense and capital in the first three quarters of this year including the first quarter we just reported and so given that we incurred a total of \$1.8 million in this first quarter, which was \$900,000 of expense and \$900,000 of capital we're now expecting a total of \$2.3 to \$3.4 million to be expended during the next two quarters.

And before concluding I'd like to take another few minutes of your time and discuss our valuation. On slide fourteen along with the accompanying notes on slide fifteen illustrates that at our current share price of \$1.50 Mpower's currently valued at 6.9 times the midpoint of our 2005 adjusted EBITDA guidance and 3.6 times the midpoint of our 2006 adjusted EBITDA guidance.

I'll invite you to take a close look at the five major public CLECs that the Wall Street research community follows which we are not one of by the way. What you'll find is that in aggregate the research community projects their combined EBITDA growth to be 7% for 2005 over 2004 and 55% for 2006 over 2005. That's an average of 31% growth in EBITDA over the next two years.

These same companies in aggregate are currently trading at 5.4 time their average projected EBITDA for 2006. So a 31% average growth in EBITDA yields a 5.4 times multiple of 2006 EBITDA for those companies and Mpower is projecting to average 100% growth in adjusted EBITDA over the same period yet we're trading at 3.6 times the midpoint of our 2006 adjusted EBITDA guidance. Hum.

Another interesting thing that you will find is that these same five companies produced an impressive \$367 million of combined EBITDA in 2004. Unfortunately however, their combined capital expenditures, interest and dividends on preferred securities totaled \$623 million so that actually burned \$250 million in cash last year and not a single one produced enough EBITDA to cover their CapEx, interest and dividends on preferred. Well, Mpower did. It may be small but our adjusted EBITDA was nearly \$100 million higher than our core CapEx, interest and our non-existent preferred dividends.

And that leads me to the last point I want to make today. Over the past several years Roll and I have had the privilege of discussing strategic deals with many, many companies in this space both public and private. We've learned a lot about in those discussions and I'd like to share some of that with you today.

First, we've learned that companies in the same business sometimes even using the same audit firm don't always account for the same activities in the same way. Shocker huh? We've learned that some companies recognize gross tax receipts and universal service obligation payments by their customers as revenue and some don't.

We've learned that some companies capitalize their costs of labor for installing a new customer and depreciate it over a long period of time instead of expensing those costs immediately and some don't. We've also learned that some companies account for switch and collocation rents in their costs of operating revenue and some move them into office leases in SG&A thus positively impacting their reported gross margins.

Slide sixteen illustrates some of these differences in the conservative and we believe proper major accounting policies relative to some other companies in this sector and if you don't do so already, I invite you to ask these types of questions as you do your comparative analysis of the quality of each companies EBITDA. Just some more food for thought.

Thanks for listening. Clearly, we are very excited about the progress the company's making and all the exciting things on our horizon and we look forward to the investment community sharing more in our excitement in the future.

On a quick housekeeping note, Rolla and I will be in New York next week meeting with existing and prospective investors and if you are not on a schedule and would like to be, please call me at 585-218-6540 and let me know when you're available and we'll do our best to work you into the schedule. Thanks again everyone and Rolla back to you.

ROLLA HUFF: Thanks Gregg. Before we get to your questions and I think this sort of goes to some of the points that Gregg was just making about the differences in the various companies and what our business model does, I thought it

might make sense to just step back for a minute and quickly review our company's over arching business strategy.

It really serves as the foundation for everything we do and its this strategy that I believe makes us unique in this industry especially when you consider how much of our EBITDA actually flows down to operating cash flow.

First, we strive to own as many network elements as possible and own them as close to our customers as possible. As I've said many times simply owning a switch in a market, but relying on the monopoly for everything else does not give you a network and it does not allow you to control your own destiny.

We believe owning switching, wire centers, Voice Over IP gateways, and fiber has allowed us to create more of a fixed costs network that gives us the ability to get more operating cash flow out of every dollar of revenue loaded onto our network. This has been evident as you look at our EBITDA growth over the past few years especially combined with our CapEx expenditures.

This is our most fundamental strategy. Fix the costs structure as much as possible, then load lots of revenue on it and by the way, owning our own deep dense network allows us to reduce our regulatory risk and control our network quality and you see the impact of that in our customer churn.

Hopefully you saw the announcement yesterday that we've deployed a wireless broadband capability in Las Vegas. In fact, we just partnered with Intel to provide significant broadband speed on a wireless circuit to the net world plus Inner Op show in Las Vegas this week. We'll use this capability to have more flexibility in getting DSL and above circuits to our customers without using the monopoly at all.

By giving ourselves the ability to reach our customers with the wireless broadband connection that's connected to the other elements of our network we move toward a business strategy that makes it possible for us to deliver a circuit completely independent from the incumbent. I believe we're the only company in our sector that has the capability what we're doing and how we do it and I can tell you this technology will be an important part of our future.

The second leg of our strategy is to always focus on operating cash flow. It seems pretty self-evident but maybe not. Top line growth doesn't mean anything if you don't have a path into turning it into operating cash flow.

The third leg of our strategy is to actively our risk profile. We do that by controlling and fixing the costs of as much of our network as possible. By not having a significant part of our revenue stream and switched access or reciprocal compensation or other regulatory based revenue streams which as if you know can be gone in a heart beat if the regulators desire.

We also control our risk profile by actively managing our balance sheet risk by keeping our business de-levered and the final element of our strategy again gets back to this idea of layering more revenue streams on the fixed costs element of our network and we do that by having products that can serve small, medium and large customers through multiple distribution channels.

We sell through a direct sales channel which includes a fast growing telemarketing capability, but in addition we sell through a wholesale channel and we sell through an agent channel which is growing very, very quickly for us. We've put in place pro-marketing agreements that target specific ethnic communities such as our recently announced agreement with GUFF Networks which services the Chinese communities in many of our markets in California and you can expect to hear about similar agreements which will target the Hispanic communities in our footprint.

If we can continue to create and nurture a new distribution channels, we become less dependent on just the direct sales force headcount and of course the final way we intend to layer revenue through our network is through acquisitions which we've done and will continue to do.

These four key strategies again shape how we run our business and how we intend to continue to grow value for our shareholders. We continue to encourage you to compare and contrast our business strategy, our network capabilities, our balance sheet strength and our business executions with any company in the industry. Thanks for listening and operator lets see if they're any questions.

OPERATOR: Thank you. (Operator Instructions).

Our first question is coming from Vic Grover of Thomas Weisel Partners.

VIC GROVER, ANALYST, THOMAS WEISEL PARTNERS: Hey guys, congratulations. A couple of questions.

First, with the headline M&A that's going on in the space, have you gotten a sense from your current customers or prospects on their thoughts? I mean it must be confusing for them considering these giant transactions. Do you think that there will be some incremental share shift that you can capture because of any potential confused or disgruntled customers? And a couple of follow-ups.

Can you talk more about your wholesale strategy? Out at the Channel Expo you guys are very busy and it's been a few months now. You mentioned you're in discussions — or partnered already with a number of agents or VARs. What does that base look like and what kind of revenue opportunity can we think about and is that in your current or most recent guidance?

And the last question is on WiMAX. I think AT&T's CTO a couple of days ago said he expects WiMAX to be a third of the market for broadband at some point and be the only real global standard. What can that do for your business? How much does that expand your addressable market and what should we think about in terms of margins for that kind of deployment? Thanks.

ROLLA HUFF: As it relates to sort of what's going on in the M&A space among the 800-pound gorillas, you know I think it does create — I think it does create some opportunities for us, not just with customers, but also with people that will become available to help us with our efforts. The one thing that we feel pretty good about now, and this is a big evolution in our business, is now we do have the capability with our fiber optic network to really service very, very large accounts and we do that today. In fact, some of these M&A participants now that you referred to are actually our customers. So we do have the ability to go into enterprise level businesses now and provide services to them on a — in a very, very rich platform.

From a wholesale strategy we're out talking to, first of all, and actively discussing with the various UNIP players out there that are — that have decided not to sign up with the LEC. We clearly have a network that is useable for them and when you look at that piece, combined with the M&A piece, the idea that there's a good likelihood that many of — there's going to have to be some divestitures of some of the local lines. Again, I believe we're well positioned to be a home for those lines because we're one of two competitive networks that are available in the markets that we operate in. So we think that there's a lot of upside for us there.

You mentioned the VAR channel. That is hugely important to us. We, in fact, have now assigned sales resources that simply go out and sell on a daily basis to these VARs. And I'm not talking about just selling products, but really selling our company to these value added resellers who, in the past, have been out selling PBX systems and our Voice over IP platform, as a result, is very, very attractive to them because they know that that's something that is really coming with a big head of steam and we have a private network that we can operate that Voice over IP platform on.

And I think finally the last question was about WiMAX. I think clearly, just given the fact that we've deployed this network in Las Vegas and here in the last several months should clearly demonstrate that we believe that it's an important part of our future. Our strategy has always been to use as little of the LEC as possible. That's always been our fundamental strategy and I believe that the broadband wireless area is just one more opportunity for us to operate our business without having to rely on the LEC. And it gets back to my comments before; to the extent that we can set up this broadband system and fix as much of that part of our last mile connectivity, fix that cost, again, it gives us the ability to leverage more revenue on that stream. So we absolutely believe that it'll be accretive to our margins going forward.

VIC GROVER: And how much does that expand your (inaudible) market? I mean you've got over 200 collos and it seems — are you putting this gear on top of the COs or on towers or both?

ROLLA HUFF: What we've done in Las Vegas is essentially set up a broadband network that can see most of Las Vegas. It's not 100%; it's probably — I think we can see about 75 to 80% of the buildings with the numbers that I recall. And so it'll give us the ability, combined with everything else that we have, to get a DS1 loop to our customers in a wireless way. We've not deployed it obviously in California.

You'll be hearing more about our strategy there, I think, in the coming weeks and months. But we believe this is a fairly capital — much more capital effective than deploying, for example, new markets with broadband wireless. We have not articulated any plans to go into new markets yet. What we want to do, again, is really focus on where we have lots of infrastructure, combine this technology with the voice technology, the substantial amount of assets that we have and continue to expand our margins and be able to take care of our customers without relying on somebody else.

OPERATOR: Thank you. Our next question comes from Lang Gerhardt (ph) of West Highland. (ph)

LANG GERHARDT, ANALYST, WEST HIGHLAND: This is a really basic question, but you're moving upscale with some of your corporate customers. You put out some press releases from time to time when you get a nice customer. So just kind of review from a customer's point of view some of these typical nice wins, what's the value proposition? In other words, it's a whole matrix of why they would want to hook up with you rather than whoever they're with and kind of give us what it looks like from their point of view and why they do sign on with you.

ROLLA HUFF: Sure. I think the first thing that a large corporate customer will see from us that they oftentimes don't see from the monopoly is a human being walking into their business and expressing an interest in what their business is doing, what the challenges they have in their business every day, and how our technology can help them with those challenges. So whether it's — whether it's network security, whether it's the need to have more of their office connected to the Internet, that sort of thing, we can begin to shape a solution for them and I think they see enormous benefit in that. In many cases they haven't talked to anybody from the incumbent carrier for years and years and years. So just the idea that we've got a knowledgeable person oftentimes coming in with a sales engineer to shape a technical solution that's customized for that particular customer is incredibly important to them.

The second thing that we're able to do is show them the network that we operate on and give them the comfort level that we can control the network quality and we have — and we can demonstrate the network quality. So they're — oftentimes these customers, especially large ones, get very concerned about going with the competitive players, many of which are private companies that sort of come and go. What we're able to do is, first of all, show them our network and secondly, show them our financial statements and our balance sheet and the fact that they can just look at our SEC filings and know exactly what's going on in the business and not have to guess based on statements that these private companies make but don't necessarily — they're not necessarily in a position to really stand behind. So I think being a public company is a big advantage for us. It gives us credibility and so I think they certainly see an advantage there.

And then finally, we create real value for them from a price perspective. We can enjoy the kinds of cash flow margins that we report every single quarter now, quarter in and quarter out, and still substantially add more value to these folks than they're getting from the incumbent. So I think it's a combination of those three or four things. And many times the cherry on top, and I've done this several times when calling on a customer, is I'll just ask them to dial up their current carrier's call center and if they've got a problem let's just find out how long it takes to get to a real person dialing up their incumbent. And then I ask them to dial up our call center. And it's certainly not a staged thing. Ask them to dial into our call center and that sort of is the final message.

LANG GERHARDT: You mentioned in the first part they derive enormous value from having the handholding and this kind of thing, but enormous value from where? And also, what's the price discount, generally speaking, on the other end?

ROLLA HUFF: Well, the value they get is getting a customized solution. You can't imagine how many people will go into and talk to and find out that they're paying for call forwarding on their security lines and fax lines. I mean, just little things like that will really get under their skin. But we also have a whole menu of products that they can use, especially — an emerging area is network security where they really haven't even thought about us because nobody's really called on them to really blend the voice and data world. And our Voice over IP product now, the ability to go in and show them online conferencing and show them how we can integrate that into their Microsoft Explorer product is really powerful for them. They really pay lots of attention to that.

From a value perspective there is still an enormous number of T1s out there that the incumbent is charging anywhere from 1,500 to \$2,000 a month for. And we can come in at \$800 to \$1,000 a month, have huge margins, I mean you see it in our results. So the discounts, it all depends on how long the customer has been with the incumbent. If they've been with them for a long time, chances are they're not getting treated very well from a pricing perspective, so the discount's much larger. If they've been somebody that has in the last two or three years looked at a competitive carrier, then the discount might not be quite as much. But what we can do that most of the competitive carriers can't do is carry this traffic on our network and have a quality type of experience.

LANG GERHARDT: Right. Just one more question. Clearly you're always looking at deals, tuck-ins or whatever, and when would you be ready for a deal and what kind of deal would — what kind of template would make sense when and if it occurs?

ROLLA HUFF: Well, we are always, always, always looking for ways to consolidate with others in our footprint. I've probably been too outspoken about the value that I see in that. The template is always the same; it's the idea of taking

the fixed cost elements of our network and being able to just put more revenue streams on it. So something that wouldn't fit in our template is paying a lot of money for a revenue stream where we can't leverage the network that we have. So buying revenue in Iowa wouldn't seem to fit that template at all. Buying revenue in Orange County would fit that template precisely. So that's one part of the template.

I think the second thing that we look for is the ability to get as independent as possible. So when we look at deals, we look at it from a revenue perspective, but we also look at it from a cost perspective; what are the types of transactions out there that we can bring our cost structure down. And the ICG thing was an example of that where we've taken a fiber backbone asset now and we're going to try to just continue to leverage the hell out of that in our cost structure. So that's another aspect of it.

And then I think the third thing is anything that gets us closer to our customers, and that's why the wireless broadband area is very interesting thing from our standpoint because it just gets us a little more independent and it gets us a little bit more able to leverage a fixed cost structure.

OPERATOR: Thank you. Our next question comes from Tony Tristani (ph) of Ashfield Capital .

TONY TRISTANI, ANALYST, ASHFIELD CAPITAL: I have a few questions. Just focusing on ICG contribution in the quarter, did you say their total revenue contribution was 7.7?

ROLLA HUFF: I think it was...

GREGG CLEVINGER: It was 8.4, Tony. It was 7.7 of core customer revenue and then a little more than 600 of switched access.

TONY TRISTANI: So 8.4, okay. So if I X that out, the ICG, you actually grew 4% sequentially?

GREGG CLEVINGER: Correct. We grew 4% even sequentially on a core customer basis and 4.2% on total revenue.

TONY TRISTANI: Right. So it seems to me that this is an inflection point if you look at your quarterly revenue numbers for the last four or five quarters, they've been in the 37, 38 million range. So to me it looks like this is an inflection point on your core growth and it looks very interesting.

Second question is on ICG, do you still have — I mean I was surprised how high the EBITDA was first quarter out of the chute. Is there still grooming and other costs that you can take out as you move circuits to ICG's network from the Bells, for example?

GREGG CLEVINGER: Absolutely.

ROLLA HUFF: Oh, yes.

GREGG CLEVINGER: Remember we just closed this at the beginning of this year so it's about a nine-month process to pull everything together and take out the costs. And we're kind of in the first few innings of that.

ROLLA HUFF: Yes, we're just in the very beginning of that.

TONY TRISTANI: Right. And on SG&A, I should look for kind of gradual increases, I guess, as you add sales people and stuff? Is there any efficiencies in the SG&A? It looks like that's pretty lean already if you combine the two companies.

ROLLA HUFF: I don't think that we'll ever say that's there not opportunities. I mean clearly it grew this quarter because we just layered on a little bit of an ICG infrastructure.

GREGG CLEVINGER: Yes, but we are making a very concerted attempt to segregate those incremental expenses that kind of go away. So the 900,000 of what we call the ICG integration expenses are kind of incremental expenses above and beyond that we segregate out so that you don't get the view that there is additional expense to come out. Like Rolla said, there's — as we pull things together and continue to move forward, I think there's probably still going to be some opportunities to do things smarter, like we always do. And like any integration of two businesses, I think you'll see that kind of trend.

TONY TRISTANI: Okay. I guess third question is Qwest lost its bid for MIC and they've made comments about they're still interested in looking for assets, et cetera, and they've also said that they think that Sprint and AT&T will have to divest their UNIP, a substantial portion of the UNIP lines. It seems to me that a partnership with Qwest and Mpower would make a lot of sense because you guys have the platform in your regions to roll those UNIP lines on net and looks

like it would be a valuable combination. Has Qwest come to you to talk about partnerships as a potential deal?

ROLLA HUFF: I don't think we're in a position to talk about anything like that. But I do agree that — you know one of the real strengths, and I think Lang was asking about this in terms of what makes us different, one of the things that makes us very different and, therefore — and it really goes to the point that you just made, is that because of the network we operate on, we're a provider that can really provide all services on our network all the way down to POTs lines and all the way up to OC192s. And I think that's just very unique and I think it makes us valuable to our shareholders, valuable to other companies, valuable to customers. I'm not sure that the value has been recognized, but we're hopeful that one of these days that's going to happen.

But we think it is a unique collection of assets that's very different than anything out there right now and it really is a competitive advantage for us when we can go into a customer and do everything from their alarm lines to if they want fiber into their building, we can do that. And that's a wide range of capabilities that's not out there.

TONY TRISTANI: And a few more questions, if I could. I guess on the WiMAX on your fixed broadband wireless, can you just give an idea of the impact potentially to your business? How much a year do you guys spend on Bell loops? I'm just trying to get an idea...

ROLLA HUFF: I don't have an exact number but it's a — obviously it's a huge, huge number. And I don't want to — I don't want to give anybody the view that we're looking at just transferring all of our lines over to this different technology. That's not the case at all. But what we — but what this does do is it gives us the ability in the future to grow this business on more of a fixed cost structure. It gives us the ability to not be exposed to many of the issues that you have to be exposed to when you're dealing with your biggest competitor as a key supplier. You can look in our income statement and see that it represents probably half of our cost of goods sold. So...

TONY TRISTANI: And so...

ROLLA HUFF: So the ability for a technology, a bypass technology like this to truly change the game is there. And I don't think that we're ready yet to make any predictions about what's going to happen, but clearly this has got all of our — it's got a lot of our attention. This is a big opportunity for us. And I think there's several people that are doing wireless broadband out there, but no one that I know of today that's combining that capability with the infrastructure capability that we have.

As we look at it, the wireless broadband, a big part of their cost structure is transport and Internet access. Well, we have that. It's fixed cost for us. And so it really creates a big point of leverage and differentiation for us. So again, we're deadly serious about the technology because we're deadly serious about fixing as much of our network costs as we can.

TONY TRISTANI: Okay. And then last thing is Gregg talked about valuation versus the comps and everything and it strikes me as yes, you're a lot cheaper than the comps, but just on a pure numbers basis, if you look at 2006, it kind of looks like you're roughly trading an enterprise value to free cash flow of about four times. So it seems to me, forget about the comps, just on a — this could be a shoe company or some other company that's growing. Looks like you resumed some really good growth here, but four times free cash flow, I don't care what business it is, it seems like it's a pretty attractive proposition.

ROLLA HUFF: I think you're exactly right, Tony. And you're spot on. Unfortunately, you can't really compare to others in the industry because they don't generate free cash flow.

OPERATOR: Thank you. Our next question comes from Andrew Moss (ph) of Corsair Capital.

ANDREW MOSS, ANALYST, CORSAIR CAPITAL: My question is related to the wholesale business and I was wondering if you could expand a little bit on the outlook and the timing for when we might see some of those types of deals. And then also what the incremental margins — we talked about the incremental margin on pops and T1. Where does the wholesale incremental margin fit within that?

ROLLA HUFF: Well, I think that — so the first part of your question is just the outlook for the wholesale business and the timing of when you're going to see larger deals. We literally just in the last three months created a separate wholesale division. We've done some — we've made some important steps. The first important thing that we wanted to do was take the substantial amount of wholesale revenue that we acquired through ICG and make sure that we didn't lose it.

So our first and biggest priority over the last three or four months was to get the customer consents nailed down, to

establish a separate sales relationship with these larger wholesale accounts, and get a separate customer support capability because these accounts require a different level of support than what our traditional business has done. So we've done—we've gotten a lot of that in place and so I think it's been an enormously productive quarter for us in just locking that down.

As we look into now Q2 and Q3, we'll begin chopping up the opportunities really by market segment. So we'll have people addressing the wireless sector, we'll have other people addressing the larger long distance players and local players, many of which are already our customers but now looking to expand the opportunity. One of the things — one of the things that we now are in a position to do is to marry our collocation infrastructure with our wire center infrastructure.

Traditionally we've talked about the opportunity there is to turn it to bring our costs down, but it also is a revenue opportunity because it allows us to do termination very close to large customer, which is a very appealing product for large telecom players who are looking to terminate traffic. It's a very attractive feature. So marrying our wire center infrastructure with our fiber infrastructure is a large sales opportunity.

We're very actively talking to UNIP players. We've got several conversations going. I'm not in a position to talk about timing of when or if we'll get those deals. Again, we're one of two players that can do these things in California and, if I'm not mistaken, we're probably the only player that could do it in Las Vegas. I don't think there's another competitive network quite like ours in Vegas that I'm aware of. So we'll continue to work those deals.

From a margin standpoint, there we don't — when I look at a wholesale deal I don't think about it from a gross margin perspective; I think about it from an EBITDA percentage. We look — because the components are different. Our SG&A in these deals is substantially lower, our gross margin is substantially lower. And so again, it gets back to that overall concept of what it's all about is operating cash flow. So to the extent that — we're not doing any sort of deals now or in the future that aren't going to generate operating cash flow.

If we can generate a 15% EBITDA margin on a 20% gross margin, I'll do that all day. I'll do that all day as long as I'm getting a return on my capital and a return on any new capital that I have to invest. And so we recently announced a fairly large deal with a company, Tierzero, and we think that it's a great deal for them. We provided excellent value for them and they're a wholesale customer. And it'll be very accretive to our operating cash flow. Is that helpful?

ANDREW MOSS: Yes, that's helpful. Thank you.

OPERATOR: Thank you. We have a follow-up question from Lang Gerhardt of West Highland.

LANG GERHARDT: Relating to the organic growth hopefully inflection point, how about an update on growing your sales force productivity? I know that as an initiative you were somewhat disappointed about the progress along the way and how's that going?

ROLLA HUFF: Well, as I mentioned, I don't think that we're burning the house down in terms of darkening the skies with new sales people. We delivered these results, these year over year results, with essentially three more people than we had in the prior year period. We continue to look for opportunities to grow the sales force, make them stick at an acceptable productivity level, but I just — I think it's part of this discipline that we talked about.

I clearly am — I would love to have 150 quota-carrying salespeople, all of which are very productive, but one of the things that we see as sort of an industry phenomenon is we've got a lot of very talented salespeople in our industry going to alternative channels. They're going to the agent channels and they're going to — as wholesale players and that sort of thing. And so I think we've tried to — we've tried to adapt to that and go where the market is really growing.

And so that's why I think you've seen we reported double-digit core growth and we were able to do it without darkening the skies with salespeople and I think that's an important point, Lang, because salespeople do cost money. There's no question about that. But don't get me wrong, we will continue — if we can get 150 productive quota-carrying salespeople on the street, we will do it all day long. But we won't do it just to have — be able to give you a big number on the sales headcount. Because again, what matters is growing operating cash flow.

LANG GERHARDT: So those potential hires are going at the margin to the indirect channels, is that right?

ROLLA HUFF: Yes, many of them are.

LANG GERHARDT: And so you're fine-tuning the indirect channel, is that what you're saying?

ROLLA HUFF: We're investing heavily in the indirect channel across — in all areas. Headcount, we've seen our

indirect channel — what we're — what we're investing in terms of heads there is substantially higher than it was a year ago. We've invested a lot of money in IT infrastructure to shape portals and that sort of thing that specifically addressed the agent and wholesale channel. And just to give you some sort of — some sort of sense, just on a sequential basis we're seeing substantial growth in the agent part of the business. Substantial growth.

LANG GERHARDT: And relating to the wireless broadband, did you say you had a deal with Intel? Are you a poster-boy of Intel's now? What's going on there?

ROLLA HUFF: No, we don't have a deal with Intel at all. Basically what happened was we partnered with Intel for network plus inter-op (ph) in Las Vegas and Intel did a demo of their capabilities on our network. They used our network to do it.

LANG GERHARDT: So are you using WiMAX?

ROLLA HUFF: Well, WiMAX has not been sort of officially defined yet. It's a WiMAX-like capability, but the standards that will define what WiMAX is, we expect that to be sort of standardized in the — towards the end of the year.

LANG GERHARDT: Okay.

ROLLA HUFF: WiMAX is sort of a misnomer right now. There's no defined — there's no clear definition of what WiMAX is. But clearly, what we're doing is very much along those lines. I wouldn't expect that what we're doing right now will change substantially with what WiMAX is a year from now, but I think what WiMAX will — what it will do is we will be able to begin to ride the upgrade curve so that you could see — you could see mobile broadband in the coming few years where the ability to take a 3 meg circuit and go across a business park and hold that circuit on your PC while you're moving from point A to point B, that is absolutely going to be there.

LANG GERHARDT: Does EV-DO play in that — in your thing as well or no?

ROLLA HUFF: Because we can create high capacity loops, it could, but that's not our focus right now. We don't — we think we've got a good business model right now going after the target market that we do. But I think that WiMAX capability or broadband wireless capability just expands — it gives us the ability to expand into a lot of different areas. But we sort of prove it in economically by thinking about our business as it currently exists and then anything else will be great.

LANG GERHARDT: You just want to be able to suit it up at the batter's box if a fat pitch comes along.

ROLLA HUFF: Yes, I mean, look, my background is wireless, as you know, and I think it's the technology that is not to be ignored. And so it's — with what we have, our ability to leverage that I think is pretty important.

OPERATOR: Thank you. We also have a follow-up question from Andrew Moss of Corsair Capital.

ANDREW MOSS: Can you tell me what's the size of the NOL that the company has currently?

ROLLA HUFF: Hold on a minute. Let's see if we can...

GREGG CLEVENGER: We're noodling.

ROLLA HUFF: ...dig it up here.

GREGG CLEVENGER: I want to say, Andrew, that it's in the 40 to \$50 million range.

ANDREW MOSS: That's good.

ROLLA HUFF: But it's important to note that the NOL is not — we can take — Greg, correct me, it's like a \$4 million a year over the next...

GREGG CLEVENGER: Yes.

ROLLA HUFF: ...several years. So we don't have an NOL that can just drop into our P&L all at once. Because of the restructuring and the resetting, I think we can take about 4 million a year.

GREGG CLEVENGER: And it's built up. It's around 25 million that's unrestricted today with 4 million that bleeds in every year for the next, I want to say 17, 18 years or so above and beyond the 25 million plus whatever losses we may generate or income that we may generate to change that 25 million that we have today.

ROLLA HUFF: It's an important point...

ANDREW MOSS: (inaudible)

ROLLA HUFF: I was going to say it's an important point when you look at our guidance for 2006.

ANDREW MOSS: Right. It's 25 million of unrestricted and then 4 million per year for a number of years.

ROLLA HUFF: Right.

OPERATOR: Mr. Huff, there appear to be no further questions at this time.

ROLLA HUFF: Okay, thanks. Well, thanks to everybody for joining us. We're going to get back to work and we'll look forward to talking to you at the end of the second quarter, if not before. Take care, everybody.

OPERATOR: Thank you. This does conclude today's teleconference. Please disconnect your lines at this time and have a wonderful day.

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LOAD-DATE: May 20, 2005

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SHOW: THE O'REILLY FACTOR 8:48 PM EST

May 5, 2005 Thursday

TRANSCRIPT: 050506cb.256

SECTION: NEWS; Domestic

LENGTH: 916 words

HEADLINE: Conservative Talk Show Host Defends Runaway Bride

BYLINE: Bill O'Reilly

GUESTS: Mike Gallagher

BODY:

O'REILLY: In the "Back of the Book" segment tonight, as you may know, I believe the runaway bride should be prosecuted for causing disruption to the police and who should be protecting us, not looking out for some nutty woman running around. All right? So the police are there to protect us, not chasing some woman.

And most of you agree with me. The BillOreilly.com poll asked the question, "Should Jennifer Wilbanks be prosecuted?" Forty-thousand of you, about, voted. Seventy-five percent say yes, she should. Twenty-five percent say no.

One of the minority, conservative talk show hosts Mike Gallagher, coast to coast. He joins us now.

Gallagher, I — you know, when they told me this yesterday I couldn't believe it. I said, Gallagher is the champion of personal responsibility, making your own way. Not intruding on society, because you're a nut. And now you're sticking up for this woman.

MICHAEL GALLAGHER, RADIO TALK SHOW HOST: I am. Because it's the right thing to do. Bill, the woman had the world crashing down around her.

O'REILLY: Yes.

GALLAGHER: How many of us can't say that we've been in a bad situation — I have been — 20 percent of marriages don't go to the altar because somebody jilts the other partner at the altar.

Come on. This woman needs some compassion. Let's get off her back. We're treating her like she's Hannibal Lecter.

O'REILLY: I — as you know, I am the most compassionate guy in the country. As you know, all right?

GALLAGHER: If you say so.

O'REILLY: No, everyone, I think, knows that. I am Mr. Compassionate. And I don't want to hurt this woman. But I think she has to be held accountable.

I don't want her to go to jail. I don't want her to go to the chain gang. I don't want any of that. But you have to send a message.

Now you said that all of us have done things in our past. Is that what you said?

GALLAGHER: Well, I think we can relate to having a bleak time when we panic and we...

O'REILLY: See, I can't relate to skipping out on my family and friends, causing unbelievable pain to them.

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GALLAGHER: Right.

O'REILLY: All right. I can't relate to that.

GALLAGHER: It's a terrible thing. It's an ugly thing.

O'REILLY: Can you relate to that?

GALLAGHER: No.

O'REILLY: Have you ever done anything like that, Gallagher?

GALLAGHER: Have I hurt my family, sure, I'll bet I have.

O'REILLY: At that level?

GALLAGHER: Not to that extent. But you know what? She's in counseling right now.

O'REILLY: Oh, really? Is she in counseling?

GALLAGHER: Well, she's troubled.

O'REILLY: She's troubled?

GALLAGHER: Not make her go to jail or...

O'REILLY: No. Let's let everybody be in counseling if they have issues. How did you become so California? What happened to you?

GALLAGHER: She has issues.

O'REILLY: Don't you live in Texas?

GALLAGHER: Her issues have issues. I mean, this woman is in bad shape.

O'REILLY: Did you take a left and go to Malibu? What really happened?

GALLAGHER: I think she really is a victim of a media firestorm.

O'REILLY: She's a victim.

GALLAGHER: No, no, of a media firestorm.

O'REILLY: The media made her go to Vegas?

GALLAGHER: No, the media — she didn't make the media cover her, though. I mean, now she's got a blanket over her head.

O'REILLY: Wait, wait, wait.

GALLAGHER: She's like Hannibal Lecter.

O'REILLY: You don't think a story of a young woman in Everytown, USA, Duluth, Georgia...

GALLAGHER: Of course.

O'REILLY: ... disappearing off the face of the earth, you don't think the media should cover that?

GALLAGHER: I have. I've done it on my radio show. I admit it. We're all doing it.

O'REILLY: So don't blame the media.

GALLAGHER: Well, I'm not blaming the media, but it's part of why this woman is now being treated like Jack the Ripper. I mean, come on, the woman is not a serial killer. She was...

O'REILLY: So give her a fine and some community service.

GALLAGHER: Give her a fine, but don't put her a day behind bars.

O'REILLY: No. I don't...

GALLAGHER: O.J. Simpson's free.

O'REILLY: I don't think there's anybody that wants to put her in prison.

GALLAGHER: Well, according to your earlier report, a lot of people think she ought to spend some jail time for what she did.

O'REILLY: Not — not anybody I know. They want her to go in, to plead guilty to a misdemeanor, OK.

GALLAGHER: She'll...

O'REILLY: And send a message to other people that you can't pull a fire alarm unless there's a fire.

GALLAGHER: Right.

O'REILLY: And you can't tell the police — or fake your disappearance so all of these people have to go searching for her.

GALLAGHER: Bill, they're calling her a racist because she said she was abducted by Hispanics. They're saying that she's a criminal who needs to go to jail.

The woman is troubled. She's had a rough go of it. I think we ought to get off her back, give her a little bit of compassion and feel sorry for the family.

O'REILLY: I think we should take up a collection and send Gallagher down to Georgia...

GALLAGHER: Great.

O'REILLY: ...to counsel the woman. Are you all with me on that?

GALLAGHER: Great. The dread — the most dreaded situation in America being confronted by Bill O'Reilly. Great.

O'REILLY: How did this happen? Gallagher...

GALLAGHER: I've got a heart.

O'REILLY: Gallagher is now Barbra Streisand. How did this happen?

GALLAGHER: Stop that. Don't say that.

O'REILLY: All right. There he is, everybody.

GALLAGHER: Don't say that.

O'REILLY: She has issues. She has issues. Thanks for coming in.

GALLAGHER: I do, too, now.

O'REILLY: Yes.

GALLAGHER: Thanks, Bill.

O'REILLY: Next, we'll wrap things up with the "Most Ridiculous Item" and some of your mail.

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2005

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Copyright 2005 The National Journal Group, Inc.
The Hotline

May 5, 2005 Thursday

SECTION: PEOPLE

LENGTH: 222 words

HEADLINE: PRESS PASS: GOTTA HATE IT WHEN THIS HAPPENS

BODY:

"Page Six" reports: "Jessica Alba and her pals were hanging out at the Coldplay concert at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas the other night when Toby Maguire, who looks a lot bigger than he did in 'Spider-Man' or 'Seabiscuit,' approached. The two exchanged pleasantries. But after the lardy leading man left, Alba said to one girlfriend, 'He's [bleep]ing huge!' — sending both of them into hysterical laughter" (Johnson, New York Post, 5/5).

And "Lowdown" reports: "What happens in Vegas goes to Lowdown: Jessica Alba and Jessica Simpson were both spotted at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino the other night. A Lowdown spy says Alba was hanging out at the Coldplay concert when a pudgy Tobey Maguire — no longer in 'Spider-Man' form — approached to say hey. When Maguire left, Alba allegedly laughed to a girlfriend: 'He's f-ing huge!'" (Grove, New York Daily News, 5/5).

TWO BS IN IPOD

From the Business Week Blog: "Well, since Steve Rubel asks when we're going to dive into podcasting, we might as well answer. We're going to start May 23rd. Initially, the plan is to do podcasts to go with our cover stories. And Steve Wildstrom, our technology reviewer and officially our Tech Maven will also be doing a show. But we're thinking about how to expand that" (Green, Businessweek.com, 5/5).

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2005

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The Independent

May 5, 2005

LENGTH: 405 words**HEADLINE:** POKER**BYLINE:** Nic Szeremeta**BODY:**

A couple of recent happenings in the non-poker world underline the massive change in public perception of the game " from negative to positive, that is.

One occurred last weekend, when the first classics of the year were staged at Newmarket, horse-racing's HQ. The meeting was sponsored by UltimatePoker.com and the 2000 and 1000 Guineas races both carried the online card room's name.

It wasn't surprising that a company associated with gambling should throw a six-figure sum at an event attended and watched by thousands of people not averse to having a flutter. But the presenter of the prizes was. Up stepped pro poker player Dave 'Devilfish' Ulliott to hand over the trophies for the 2000 Guineas to the connections. One of the best known poker faces on the planet, he is sponsored by UltimatePoker.

Five years ago, the bookies would have offered 1,000-to-one against a poker player handing out the prizes at the Sport of Kings' most prestigious occasion. How things have changed.

The other unexpected sight is currently greeting shoppers at Selfridges' stores in London, Manchester and Birmingham. A couple of poker tables have been set up on the shop floors, complete with dealers, chips and cards " and tutors ready to teach Joe Public the mysteries of Texas hold'em.

The daily lessons will be available until 15 May. Not surprisingly, the promotion is the brainchild of another online poker operation, PartyPoker.com.

Meanwhile, in the real poker world, a couple of English players were demonstrating how to earn a few pounds if you play your cards right and get a bit of luck. Over in Las Vegas at the Bellagio Casino, the biggest buy-in no-limit hold'em event in the world pulled a record field. A total of 472 hopefuls put up \$25,000 (pounds 13,200) each to create a pool of almost \$11m (pounds 6m).

Paul Maxfield from Stoke-on-Trent came within a whisker of winning. His chip stack was destroyed at the heads-up stage " just two players remaining. His opponent drew a gutshot straight on the river " poker-speak for drawing one of only four cards from the remaining 46 with the last common card dealt.

Maxfield had to make do with the runner-up spot, but returned to England with a consolation prize of \$1,698,390 (pounds 896,774). The other Brit to do rather well in Vegas was Hendon's Joe Beevers, who finished seventh and picked up \$188,000 (pounds 99,000) for his efforts.

JOURNAL-CODE: FIND**LOAD-DATE:** May 5, 2005

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Copyright 2005 The Kansas City Star
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The Kansas City Star

May 5, 2005 Thursday 1 EDITION

SECTION: G; BRIEF; Pg. 19

LENGTH: 1382 words

HEADLINE: DISCUSSIONS;
REVIEWS OF RECENT RELEASES

BODY:

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Lucinda Williams

'Live at the Fillmore'

(Lost Highways)

A double-disc live album, "Fill

more" (due in stores Tuesday) gets a good grade mostly for how it sounds: Williams' voice is so wired and weathered it feels like she's reliving her songs, not merely repeating them, and her band has reached a point where it's as raw and tight as Dylan's was when Charlie Sexton and Larry Campbell were still around.

But "Fillmore" isn't a live one for the ages. For one, it was recorded back in November 2003, almost 2 1/2 years ago, so it's already a little ripe. Second, it's almost solely an album for fans who think her latest work is her best: 19 of the 22 cuts are off Williams' two most recent records — a self-inflicted sleight she remedies by delivering each song like she has known it all her life

The album starts off sad and blue ("Ventura" and "Reason to Cry"), peaks during a stretch that includes hellfire blues anthems like "Atonement," "Pineola" and "Joy," and then goes back to more loss and regret. But that's OK: Blue becomes her. — Timothy Finn/The Star

Stereolab

'Oscillons From the Anti-Sun'

(Too Pure)

"Oscillons" is a four-disc box set that comprises 35 songs, 28 of them new to U.S. fans except the diehards who paid big cash to import the original EPs those cuts are on.

Despite its packaging problems (cheap and annoying), "Oscillons" is highly recommended to those who like this French-pop, space-age rock band so much they keep a copy of "Emperor Tomato Ketchup" ever-handy. Even collectors who already own most of this music will want the DVD, which includes videos, live performances and other cool visual swag. — T.F.

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John Prine

'Fair & Square'

(OhBoy)

1/2

One of America's best-ever songwriters, Prine builds songs the way he always has: with wit, grace, poignancy, insight and political bite. Even better, he still has an ear for killer melodies and a knack for coaxing a lovely lady with a beautiful voice to join him on a song or two. This time it's Mindy Smith, who coats Prine's warm, craggy rasp with a thick layer of country satin.

Beyond the clean, rootsy/folk production and the sturdy melodies and vocals, however, "Fair" is missing something indelible — songs that sound like they were inspired by something deeper than a bad round of golf or a good mood on a sunny day.

Only two of the 14 tracks here leave a scratch or break the skin. One is "Some Humans Ain't Human," which gives President Bush a kick in the shins. The other is vintage Prine: a live piece of comedy verite called "Other Side of Town" that he sings for all the old married folks who are still together in spite of each other. — T.F.

Bobby Valentino

'Disturbing Tha Peace Presents

Bobby Valentino'

(Def Jam)

1/2

Valentino's huge breakthrough hit, the slow jam called "Slow Down," is so ridiculous it's impossible to hate. "Slow down," he pleads, "I just wanna get to know you/But don't turn around, 'cause that pretty round thing looks good to me."

It's no slight to say "Disturbing Tha Peace" contains more of the same. Valentino keeps his voice just low enough not to ruin the mood, and the production team known as Tim and Bob wears out the "satin sheets" setting on its synthesizers. And when he sings, "If we keep doing these girls wrong/Somebody's gonna do us wrong," Valentino knows what he's doing: There's nothing more effective than a big fat apology. — Kelefa Sanneh/The New York Times

Ben Folds

'Songs for Silverman'

(Sony)

1/2

Now a husband and a father who loves his wife and adores his kids, Folds has completely shed the persona that made him a cult favorite in the college-radio world years ago: the wisecracking slacker whose idea of wit was to call his trio the Ben Folds Five and whose pet peeves included rappers who honed their flows in their parents' finished basements.

On "Silverman" he focuses on deeper, more adult material — as in what people think about when they've taken stock of their lives and realized how much they have to lose: family, friends, lovers and peace of mind.

In "Give Judy My Notice," a guy concedes self-respect is worth more than the rare moments of love and commitment he gets from the girl he loves; "You to Thank" is a story of an impromptu Vegas wedding with a mild Randy Newman twist; and like John Lennon's "Beautiful Boy," "Gracie" is a lament about parenthood (they grow up so fast) and a song any man with a daughter should appreciate.

Not everything works, though. "Late," written for Elliott Smith, is a little too trite for these ears; "Jesusland" is a lovely piece of music, but its lecture about consumerism vs. religion is neither original nor incisive; and "Time" is a cool kiss-off from a guy who doesn't seem to be worth the pain he's causing.

The music is where Folds really loosens the reins. He's still a guy whose hands could use a piano with more than 88 keys, and throughout "Silverman," he takes several opportunities to play like everyone from Elton John and Billy Joel to

Victor Borge.

All that showboating can be impressive and entertaining, but it can't always save "Silverman" from other lack of refinements that make Folds sound like a guy treading water. Or maybe he's really just a guy in the right place at the right time of his life and happy to be there. — T.F.

New Order

'Waiting for the Sirens' Call'

(Warner)

All the parts are here: Peter Hook's rotund bass hooks, Bernard Sumner's dance-pop melodies and enough bouncy grooves to kill more than 30 minutes on the treadmill. But the songs feel rendered quickly and halfheartedly, like vague recollections of their older, finer moments. And the lyrics? As bad as lines like: "Out there the world is a beautiful place/With mountains, lakes and the human race..." — T.F.

The Wrights

'Down This Road'

(ACR/RCA)

1/2

The husband in this husband/wife team has a famous uncle, Alan Jackson, who signed them to his own small label (Alan's Country Records) and probably didn't have to pull too many strings to get them some help from a big one (RCA).

The Wrights, Adam and Shannon, wrote all the songs on "Road," a debut that hardly sounds like one. Both have been working in Nashville for years as performers and songwriters (they stuck two songs on Jackson's "What I Do" album). Their forte is their singing: Shannon has some Neko Case in her voice, and Adam inherited the family baritone. When they harmonize, their voices interlock, not as cosmically as June and Johnny but not as cosmetically as the McGraw-Hill concern, either.

Their songs tend to fall on the good side of a country ditty — like a Carter Family ballad or a good Hank Williams throwaway (especially "Hole in My Pocket").

When the Wrights veer off into the bluesier side of country, "Road" sounds a little false and forced. But when they stay on the main road (a crisp blend of traditional and contemporary country), they sound like a marriage destined to last, with or without Uncle Alan's help. — T.F.

Luny Tunes and Baby Ranks

'Mas Flow 2'

(Universal Music Latino)

1/2

The production team called Luny Tunes knows how to give reggaeton stars exactly what they need: futuristic staccato beats full of stuttering sound effects that hint at violence and sweeping keyboard lines that hint at love.

The Luny Tunes' great new compilation, "Mas Flow 2," features tracks from Baby Ranks (the CD's co-creator) and virtually all the top vocalists in the Puerto Rico-based genre of reggaeton. Here, as elsewhere, the explosive rhymers Daddy Yankee rules. His "Mirame," with singer Deevani, appears twice, the second time with a verse from the languid reggaeton veteran Tego Calderon. "Dale Castigo," by Hector (El Bambino), has squiggly new wave synthesizers, and "Verme," by Baby Ranks & Notch, is a Vocoderized pop song that sounds like a crossover hit waiting to happen. But nothing here is more exciting than the posse cut "Mayor Que Yo," where half a dozen rappers and singers attack a charged-up merengue beat. — K.S.

IN STORES TUESDAY

Weezer, "Make Believe"

Spoon, "Gimme Fiction"

Constantine Maroulis and Pray for the Soul of Betty, "Pray for the Soul of Betty"

Dave Matthews Band, "Stand Up"

Lucinda Williams, "Live at the Fillmore"

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Lansing State Journal
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Lansing State Journal (Michigan)

May 5, 2005 Thursday

SECTION: WHAT'S ON; Pg. 17TAB

LENGTH: 818 words

HEADLINE: localmusicbeat

BYLINE: Erickson Anne

BODY:

Quiet Tip celebrates one year of parties

By Anne Erickson

Promotions company draws hundreds to Club X-Cel

Inspired by the latest crop of eclectic, big-city entertainment, Michael Smith and Steven Walker launched Quiet Tip Productions last May - a Lansing promotions and event-planning company.

"We got into this because for the type of entertainment we like, we would normally have to travel to Detroit or take trips to Vegas or Miami," said Smith. "We're trying to incorporate the things we have seen through our travels into something we can bring to Lansing."

Lansing folk caught on. Quiet Tip's events - running the first Friday of every month at Club X-Cel - draw patrons from Detroit, Flint, Jackson and beyond. In fact, Quiet Tip's second event ever attracted a 200-plus New Jersey crowd. The East Coast group just happened to be in town that weekend for a national ballroom event.

"The promoters came to us because they wanted a place to take them," said Smith. "That really set us off."

And with crowds now topping 500, Quiet Tip couldn't be busier.

This Friday, Quiet Tip celebrates its one-year anniversary. Here's a rundown of the night's events: Happy hour is from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.; hors d'oeuvres are at 6 p.m.; a ballroom seminar is at 6:15 p.m.; live jazz is from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. featuring Too Smooth for Notes, the band that kicked off Quiet Tip's first event; hip-hop music is from 11 p.m. to 2 a.m. D.J. Randi Ross and D.J. Butcher will spin throughout the night.

Smith sees Quiet Tip's mission in line with Lansing's greater good.

"We're interested in getting this out because it's positive," Smith said. "It's bringing money to the downtown area, and we think it's in line with the governor and mayor's thoughts about the Cool City - trying to bring something to the downtown area."

Event details: Quiet Tip's anniversary with live jazz music, DJs, more, 6 p.m. to 2 a.m. Friday, Club X-Cel, 224 S. Washington Square, 484-2399; cover ranges from \$10-20, dress code, 21 and older.

Solo act parades into Mac's

He's based in the Big Apple, but Christian Gibbs found himself in seclusion last year.

In preparation for his fourth solo album, Gibbs retreated to the upstate property of Big Pink - the same serene setting The Band recorded Bob Dylan's "Basement Tapes."

"Walking around the grounds, there's a magical aura to the place," said Gibbs. "Not to sound cheesy or anything, but it was really calm. What affected my songwriting was that solitude."

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True, for a guy who lives and breathes the songwriting process (he's been at it for years, playing guitar in Modern English and heading Morning Glories), the idea might seem a bit "cheesy."

But what matters most is the resulting CD: a daring mix of gothic country, pop and folk called "Parade of Small Horses." While the disc shows off some killer

finger-picking, Gibbs maintains that "it's more focused on the lyrics."

"It's more personal," Gibbs said. "I take more care with the lyrics with my solo records because it's more coming from me."

Personal? Yes. Happy? Not necessarily. But while the album has undercurrents of loss and unrequited love, the upside is that Gibbs ended up with a cornucopia of heartbreakingly honest songs.

"It's not just about relationship loss," said Gibbs, "it's about all types of different loss. I like to let those emotions arise rather than put them on the backseat, so I'm not afraid to put something like that in my songs."

Show details: Christian Gibbs with The Good Mornings, 9 p.m. Monday, Mac's Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave., 484-6795; \$5 21 and older, \$6 ages 18-20.

Half-note: Hidden is undercover no more

Hidden Agenda has been anything but secluded lately. Since releasing 2003's "Believe in America," the classic rock band - playing rock 'n' roll blues with a patriotic slant - has been spotted packing venues around town like the Green Door and the Blue Gill Grill.

"Recording in the studio is fun," said lead singer/rhythm guitarist (and Lansing Police Department sergeant) Darin Lerner. "But nothing will ever replace the feeling of getting feedback from a live audience."

Tonight, the band zeroes in on the Door.

Show details: Hidden Agenda, 9:30 p.m. today, Green Door Blues Bar & Grill, 2005 E. Michigan Ave., 482-6376; \$2-\$3.

Briefly noted: Oh, what a Ladyfest

For someone as passionate about raising money for charity as Ladyfest Lansing coordinator Latricia Horstman, it doesn't get much better than this year's tallies. Horstman reports the event raised \$500 for the VFW National Home for Children. Add to that

Ladyfest Lansing's diverse crowd (it attracted concertgoers from all over the U.S.) and the fact that next year's plans are already under way, and we say, "Very sweet!"

Anne Erickson's column appears Thursdays in What's On. Have a band or a concert to promote? Contact her at aerickson@lansing.gannett.com.

GRAPHIC: Too Smooth for Notes; Back for the celebration: Too Smooth for Notes, which played Quiet Tip's first event, returns for the one-year anniversary Friday at Club X-Cel. Walker; Smith; Gibbs

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Copyright 2005 DR Partners d/b Las Vegas Review-Journal
Las Vegas Review-Journal (Nevada)

May 5, 2005 Thursday FINAL EDITION

SECTION: B; Pg. 2B**LENGTH:** 633 words**HEADLINE:** Water pipeline plan draws united front in opposition**BYLINE:** Henry Brean**BODY:**

Southern Nevada must control growth and look for other sources of water before it spends almost \$2 billion to pipe groundwater here from as far north as Ely.

That was the consensus Wednesday during a public meeting in Las Vegas that will shape a federal study of the pipeline project proposed by the Southern Nevada Water Authority.

Many of those who spoke said any study of the water authority's plans should include an honest look at growth controls, increased water conservation, new deals for Colorado River water and the desalination of Pacific Ocean water.

'In this case, what happens in Vegas stretches all the way into White Pine County,' said Jerald Anderson, who worries that the water authority's pipeline project could dry up rural valleys and wipe out wildlife and family-owned ranches and farms.

'It's not a question of money,' Anderson said. 'You can't mitigate extinction.'

Others lamented what Jane Feldman of the local chapter of the Sierra Club called the 'inordinate haste' in which the pipeline project was being developed.

'This pipeline should not be put on the fast track,' said Paul Brown of the Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada, who called for several years of environmental studies to establish a clear picture of what rural Nevada looks like now.

Before the so-called Clark, Lincoln and White Pine Counties Groundwater Development Project can be developed, the Bureau of Land Management must complete an environmental impact statement and grant the water authority permission to build about 345 miles of pipeline across federal land.

BLM plans to release a draft of its statement in July 2006, with the final version to follow in April 2007.

Water authority officials say the pipeline project could be finished by 2015 and supply the Las Vegas Valley with as much as 200,000 acre-feet of water a year. That amounts to roughly two-thirds of the state's annual share of the Colorado River, which provides Southern Nevada with about 90 percent of its drinking water.

Utah rancher Cecil Garland, who wore denim overalls and a baseball cap to Wednesday's meeting, tried to make his point by turning the tables on the water authority.

'I've come down here to take your water,' he said. 'What we'll do is sell a bunch of government land and use the money to build a pipeline down to here so we can continue to grow ... our crops and cattle.'

Garland was one of several people who made the 5-hour, 300-mile trek from the Snake Valley, which straddles the Nevada-Utah border east of Ely.

Late in Wednesday's meeting, Utah resident Merle Rawlings asked how many audience members supported the pipeline plan. The only hand that went up belonged to a 22-year-old Las Vegas man who declined to give his name. The man said he favored the pipeline because he liked 'the potential growth it offers the Las Vegas Valley.'

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'People want to move to Las Vegas, and we need water so they can,' he said.

But audience member Jason Andrew Fowler said something must be seriously wrong with a project that is opposed by a united front of ranchers, outdoorsmen and environmentalists.

'These aren't people who usually agree on things, to put it mildly,' Fowler said. 'We damned well better listen.'

More than 100 people turned out for the meeting, and 26 of them went to the microphone to speak.

Four meetings in the White Pine County towns of Ely and Baker and the Lincoln County towns of Caliente and Alamo drew more than 300 people and produced 200 separate comments.

The Bureau of Land Management will hold another meeting today in Reno, followed by three meetings next week in Utah — May 9 in Salt Lake City, May 10 in Cedar City and May 11 in Delta.

BLM officials will accept input on what its pipeline study should include through June 15.

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Las Vegas Review-Journal (Nevada)

May 5, 2005 Thursday FINAL EDITION

SECTION: E; Pg. 1E**LENGTH:** 730 words**HEADLINE:** Easton to sing while Aladdin showroom under construction**BYLINE:** Mike Weatherford**BODY:**

The Aladdin won't be without ticketed entertainment for the year that its new showroom is under construction.

Sheena Easton will sing for at least a month in the room that has been known as Sinbad's Lounge, and now will be closed in with heavy velvet curtains and renamed the Aladdin Showroom.

The setup is much like the Las Vegas Hilton's smaller venue, now called Shimmer Cabaret, where Easton sang in 2002 and David Brenner now performs. When her show is over each night, the curtains will open and the room will revert to a lounge.

Easton starts May 13 and sings six nights weekly in the 302-seat venue. The show will run until at least June 9. Tickets range from \$35 to \$55.

Magician Steve Wyrick recently closed the Aladdin showroom that will become part of a 1,500-seat theater. Construction begins on Monday. ...

Bandleader Lon Bronson hopes to be part of a Vegas-based TV show that actually tapes in Las Vegas. Bronson's group was the house band for 'The Ron White Show,' a pilot for a comedy-variety series that aired on the WB network last week. Bronson also co-wrote the theme song with Stephen 'Doc' Kupka of Tower of Power.

Bronson says people are excited about the April 28 ratings for a TV night that was turned topsy-turvy by President Bush's prime-time news conference. White taped the pilot at the Stardust in March and said at the time he would try to do the series here if it's picked up.

A big week for Bronson's big band also included Sunday's release of 'Live from the Golden Nugget,' the CD capturing the band's twice-weekly late shows at the downtown casino. It's available at his shows or through the Web site <http://lonbronson.com>. ...

Producer David Saxe updates an item from last week's column, saying his friend Gordy Brown won't be moving into the V Theater that Saxe operates at Desert Passage. While it's true that Saxe is adding a second 300-seat showroom, he says singing-impressionist Brown plans to work the corporate circuit while holding out for a venue that will offer him more than a rent-the-room operation.

He may have to move his own 'Showgirls of Magic' there after July 25, the last day the show can play the San Remo, which is being transformed into Hooters Casino. But the show couldn't play topless at the Desert Passage.

Saxe drew e-mailed resentment on behalf of the producer of a mob-themed dinner show when his plans to court Sean 'P. Diddy' Combs went public last month. But Saxe says Combs was less the reason for going cold on the pitch for a 'Sopranos'-themed show than the fact that the producer had no rights to the 'Sopranos' name beyond the fact that 'soprano' — as a word describing a singer — is in the public domain. ...

Hypnotist Justin Tranz didn't last a full two weeks in an afternoon show at Fitzgeralds. 'I didn't like the time slot,' the hypnotist said of the 3 p.m. berth.

Gene Sagas, who oversees the room for Fitzgeralds, agreed the afternoon slot 'just wasn't conducive' for the nightclub

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act. He said Tranz couldn't draw a large enough head count for the self-financed venture. The hotel is in no hurry to sign another afternoon show. ...

Summer must be just around the corner if Hawaiian luaus return to the Strip. The most consistent one over the years has been outdoors at the Imperial Palace. The hotel recently launched the 14th year of luaus on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Performances are overseen by Rosita Lee.

Others tend to come and go. The latest contender is the Flamingo, which would seem a natural given the theming of its pool area. The luaus begin May 30. Patrons eat indoors in the Paradise Garden Buffet then move outside for entertainment by Hot Lava. ...

The Golden Nugget will host crooner Matt Dusk in its showroom from May 16 to June 16. Dusk's 'Two Shots' CD got a boost when the Golden Nugget-based reality series 'The Casino' used it as the theme song, but seemed lost on the bigger stage of the Las Vegas Hilton last November. ...

Another 'crooner' with a strong local following has given local rockers The Killers the ultimate sign they've made it. Richard Cheese, who remakes rock and rap singles as swingin' lounge covers, offers a drunken saloon rendition of 'Somebody Told Me' as the closer for his new album, 'Aperitif for Destruction.' It's due in stores May 24.

Mike Weatherford's entertainment column appears Thursdays and Sundays.

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Copyright 2005 Legal Week

Legal Week

May 5, 2005

LENGTH: 1311 words**HEADLINE:** Media, Sport & Entertainment: Not so Vegas**BYLINE:** Hilary Stewart-Jones; news@legalweek.com**BODY:**

When the Gambling Act eventually received Royal Assent on 7 April this year, the response of the industry was mixed. The Act represents a severe disappointment for those who had supported chairman of the Gambling Review Body Sir Alan Budd's vision of a deregulated industry. Essentially, this view was that provided criminal elements were excluded and the vulnerable protected, the industry should be allowed to proliferate as much as the free market desired. For those anti-change lobbyists - not only church groups and Daily Mail readers, but some existing industry players - the Act has granted too many concessions.

The elements of the Act that have attracted most attention have been in relation to the Vegas-style' resort casinos which Budd originally envisaged could be established anywhere in the UK. This led to a flurry of overseas interest with many US operators looking for exclusive relationships with UK land and premises owners. However, by autumn last year when the Bill was introduced into the House of Commons a furious anti-gambling press campaign was unleashed, peddling the view that we were on the brink of becoming a nation of gambling addicts as a result of the expected growth of casinos.

In November 2004 the Government announced they would restrict the number of regional casinos to only eight. This was significant not only in terms of the overall scale of the Vegas-style casinos, but because the Government had decided after the joint scrutiny committee stage that only the regional casinos would be permitted to install the so-called category A' machines. Category A are the new unlimited jackpot machines, which would be a significant draw for any casino.

By December, the proposals were diluted yet further when the triple lock' was announced: there would be no more than 24 casinos across the whole of the UK in the first wave' of applications. This meant that not only would the numbers of regional casinos be capped, but also only eight of the so-called large and small casinos would be permitted. Since small' casinos will be required to have a minimum area of 500m sq of gaming space and 250m sq of non-gaming space, all new developments will be substantial: very few existing casinos would re-qualify as small casinos under the new regime.

Understandably this caused uproar not only from those overseas investors who had spent substantial sums of money in tying up sites and partners, but also from existing industry players. The announcement also stripped existing casinos of the planned deregulation to permit betting to take place on their premises, which would have substantially enhanced their core products. Worse was to come, however.

The Bill's passage was looking extremely rocky at the time of the Easter recess. Many industry members were of the view that they were better off working with the existing legislation and regulator - the Gaming Board of Great Britain which oversees UK gaming machines and lotteries.

There was concern voiced about the ambiguity of certain elements of the drafting and the fact that it appeared that the Bill intended to strip existing operators of the concessions they had already secured under deregulation, and by dialogue with the Gaming Board. Proposed amendments were dropping like confetti into the hands and the ears of opposition members and the House of Lords in wash up week' - the period prior to the compulsory break and run-up to the General Election.

The conservatives retained the power to block the Bill while it remained in the House of Lords and would have done

so had the Government not conceded that there should only be one regional casino.

So there will be no Vegas-style strip for the UK, or not for some time at least. The Government will review the position three years after the first premises licence is granted and the process for choosing the areas where the new casinos will be built will invariably be drawn out. An independent advisory panel has to choose the areas from competitive bids, in effect, and then the local authority must determine which of the various schemes proposed should be given the licence. This, as any lawyer will appreciate, is an instant recipe for appeal or judicial reviews.

On the plus side, the Act does introduce much-needed statutory controls in relation to the online gambling industry, with betting exchanges also requiring specific licences. A number of online gambling companies support their offshore entities from the UK; it will still not be feasible to obtain an online gaming licence (as distinct from betting) in the UK until the Act is fully implemented. The problem from the proposed provisions is that it is not clear what activities are intended to be caught and licensed in the UK. Also, the tax rate for online gaming has yet to be clarified – but it is unlikely to be as low as some offshore jurisdictions. Many companies, in all probability, will elect to move offshore.

In addition a plethora of new licences will be required by all operators, including gaming machines suppliers and some gaming machines premises owners. These will comprise operating, personal and premises licences. The potential logistics of this are mind numbing.

First, operators such as bookmakers do not have to go through the extended probity checks and disclosure of personal information required by the Gaming Board when granting a certificate of consent to run gaming premises. There will now be one unified system. Likewise personal licenses, whereby managers are tested for their knowledge of the sector in which they work, are currently not utilised outside the casino and bingo industry. Again, this will be a rude awakening for some in the betting industry, although there are exceptions for small-scale operators.

Second, applications for premises licences have, under the existing legislation been made to the local magistrates. They will now be made to local authorities. There is a concern that their inexperience in the gambling sector coupled with the intense battle to secure one of the few new casinos may lead to bad decision making by them. Third, the newly formed Gambling Commission will similarly suffer from lack of experience; it is unlikely that any of the much-respected Gaming Board team will make the move to Birmingham where the new Gambling Commission premises will be located. And finally, it is difficult to imagine how the Gambling Commission will physically cope with the transition of existing licences to the new regime as well as new licence applications. In some respects it might be relieved that there will now be so few new casinos.

Despite this, the fact that the licensing objectives' include a requirement that the vulnerable should not be exploited is welcomed. Operators are obliged to provide socially responsible' gambling to ensure that it remains a legitimate mainstream leisure activity rather than another social problem. Compulsory training of staff involved in the gambling industry about the issues surrounding problem gaming is long overdue. Likewise anti-money laundering obligations for all gambling businesses, not just casinos, is also desirable, not least because the operator will then at least know' his customer when he has a problem.

In short, the Act's laudable aims have been diluted by lobbying and a government prepared to go some lengths to avoid bad press. The Act insofar as it addresses areas not previously tackled by the legislation is welcome, but to create such a statutory beast to oversee casinos is disheartening. Most of our clients have responded with a good news for lawyers' remark or similar but what we had wanted, and consistently lobbied for, was what was best for the industry. Sadly the Act has not delivered.

Hilary Stewart-Jones is a partner at Berwin Leighton Paisner.

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2005

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Los Angeles Times

May 5, 2005 Thursday
Home Edition

SECTION: CALENDAR WEEKEND; Calendar Desk; Part E; Pg. 17

LENGTH: 497 words

HEADLINE: BUZZ CLUBS

BYLINE: Heidi Sigmund Cuda

BODY:

3-day bash in Vegas

Hollywood clubbers are still recovering from a fun-filled weekend trip to the Hard Rock Hotel in Las Vegas, which celebrated its 10th anniversary with a star-studded, three-day blowout. Here's how it all went down: Friday, owner Peter Morton hosted a dinner at the hotel's Nobu with such pals as Courteney Cox, David Arquette, Nicky Hilton, Jesse Metcalfe, Dave Navarro, Carmen Electra and Jessica Alba, before everyone trekked to the hotel's live music club, the Joint, to hear an intimate performance by Coldplay. And that was just the appetizer. Party people then headed to the hotel's dance club, Body English, to catch DJ AM and rapper Tone Loc. On Saturday, actress Laura Prepon hosted a celebrity poker tournament and Navarro took home the winnings (10 Gs, to be exact). Next on the menu, guests headed to the hotel's parking lot, where Bon Jovi performed. And then it was off to dinner at Simon's, where Hollywood promoter and Body English owner Brent Bolthouse hosted a dinner party with Danny Masterson and Wilmer Valderrama, whose bodyguard was hypnotized by mind-

control illusionist Keith Barry. And then it was off to see Nine Inch Nails at the Joint. Later, the super group Camp Freddy performed at Body English, with such guest stars as Rob Zombie, Robbie Williams and Mark McGrath. And on Sunday, DJ Paul Oakenfold entertained folks poolside. Whew.

Vince and Carmen

We hear tonight's Cinco de Mayo blowout at La Velvet Margarita in Hollywood is the bash to crash. Vince Vaughn and Owen Wilson are hosting, along with everyone's favorite icing on the cake, Carmen Electra. And check this: Cut Chemist (Jurassic 5) and Lethal (Limp Bizkit) are DJing and the bar is sponsored by Sauza Not to be one-upped by Jessica Simpson, who has been making appearances at the Roxy's Metal Skool night, teen queen Lindsay Lohan got onstage and sang "Jessie's Girl" with the rockers on Monday.... And our new favorite Elvis impersonator, Lebanon native James King (see Going Out review), has a Saturday night residency at the Queen Mary in Long Beach, where he also sings hits by the likes of Tom Jones, Roy Orbison and Jerry Lee Lewis.... We hear the power players behind the Alliance — L.A.'s premiere event gurus — will be hosting Wednesdays at Mood, David Judaken's new nightclub on Hollywood Blvd..... We popped into Geisha House on Wednesday for a bit of ear candy, courtesy of Penelope Tuesday. The provocatively clad DJ spins a fab '80s set.

Skater chicks

Texas Terri Bomb plays a Check It Out magazine skateboarding party Friday at Pearl in WeHo, to celebrate the top girls of skating.... Punk parents alert: Bassist Corey Parks is back in action at the Troubadour on Saturday with Die Hunns, her group with beau Duane Peters. The two have a 6-month-old son, Clash....So the Tiger Army shows scheduled for May 20, 21, 22 and 26 at the House of Blues in WeHo are already sold out, but the band might be adding another. Stay tuned.

— Heidi Sigmund Cuda

GRAPHIC: PHOTO: BON JOVI: Jon and the boys toast the Hard Rock Hotel in Vegas. PHOTOGRAPHER: Ethan Miller Reuters

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The Miami Herald

May 5, 2005 Thursday F1 EDITION

SECTION: D; Pg. 7

LENGTH: 531 words

HEADLINE: Pace's pain: another early playoff exit;
For the second year in a row, nationally ranked Pace failed to get out of the district playoffs, losing to Hollywood Chaminade 1-0;
BASEBALL / DISTRICT 14-3A: HOLLYWOOD CHAMINADE 1, PACE 0

BYLINE: By MANNY NAVARRO; mnavarro@herald.com**BODY:**

His team gone and his clubhouse empty, Pace baseball coach Tom Duffin spent about an hour Wednesday sitting in his dugout, staring blindly at the field.

How could it happen again?

Pace lost to Hollywood Chaminade 1-0 in nine innings Wednesday afternoon, marking the second year in a row the nationally ranked Spartans (21-5) were eliminated from the state playoffs by the last seed in District 14-3A.

For Duffin and his players, who have been ranked as high as No. 1 nationally by Baseball America the past two seasons, the loss was tough to swallow. Star senior pitchers Tommy Mendoza and Anthony Perez and first baseman Jose Jimenez cleaned out their lockers with tears in their eyes.

"I love these kids and this team to death," said Duffin, whose team, ranked No. 1 in the state in Class 3A and 14th nationally by Baseball America, had beaten Chaminade twice during the regular season. "But there's no way on earth I'd ever take them with me to Vegas. All we needed was Lady Luck to shine on us once, and it didn't happen."

Luck wasn't on Pace's side last year, either. The Spartans lost to Archbishop McCarthy 3-0 in nine innings in the district semifinals. McCarthy, a sub-.500 team, went on to reach the regional finals. Pace ended its season 24-2.

This year's loss to Chaminade (9-17) came to an opponent who plays much better than its record indicates. The Lions, who also knocked off defending Class 3A state champion Gulliver during the regular season, have lost 10 games by a run this season.

On Wednesday, starting pitcher David Rivas, who mixed an array of curveballs with a roughly 86-mph fastball, kept the Spartans off balance. He struck out 10 and never allowed a Pace baserunner to reach third.

Reliever Anthony Nalepa came in in the eighth. With runners on first and second, Nalepa got Pace cleanup hitter Chris Marrero to swing at a high fastball for the third out.

Rivas came through with the winning RBI in the ninth — a two-out single to right field that scored Rian Kiniry.

Pace's Chris Hernandez, who came in relief of Mendoza in the top of the ninth, had Kiniry picked off at first earlier in the inning. But Kiniry, who was caught in a rundown between first and second, caught a break when Pace shortstop Adrian Cardenas dropped the ball at second while attempting the tag.

Mendoza, considered a top pick in the June Major League Baseball draft, pitched a gem for the Spartans. He struck out 12 and gave up one hit in eighth innings before Duffin pulled him after throwing 117 pitches.

Pace, which ended the season with three straight losses and without scoring a run in its final 17 innings, went three

up, three down to end it.

"As much as it has hurt to lose the past two years, there's more to life than this game," said Duffin, who left the dugout Wednesday to prepare for his grandmother's funeral. 'War. Death. That's life. All 10 of my seniors are going to college. I just hope for the kids' sake they take the good experiences they've had here and realize this is just a game."

Chaminade 000 000 001-1 3 1 Pace 000 000 000-0 4 2 WP:Anthony Nalepa (3-0). LP:Chris Hernandez (5-1).
Records:Pace 21-5; Chaminade 9-17.

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2005

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THE MONTEL WILLIAMS SHOW

Prepared by Burrelle's Information Services, which takes sole responsibility for accuracy of transcription.

SHOW: The Montel Williams Show 5:00 AM EST SYND

May 5, 2005 Thursday

LENGTH: 5587 words

HEADLINE: True Crime: Evidence Left Behind; Stories previously featured on Court TV's "Forensic Files"

BODY:

HOST: Montel Williams

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: Montel Williams, Diane Rappoport

TRUE CRIME: EVIDENCE LEFT BEHIND

MONTEL WILLIAMS: It's TRUE CRIME Thursday. Today on Montel:

Unidentified Man #1: Ron Rudin just disappeared off the face of the earth.

WILLIAMS: Was a Las Vegas millionaire murdered, then torched by his wife? Was a devout Mormon really sleepwalking when he stabbed then drowned his wife? Forensic detectives crack the cases, including a bizarre Alaska murder, the victim decomposed beyond identification.

Mr. DAVID R. WALLACE (Prosecutor): By rehydrating her mummified fingers, we were able to obtain a fingerprint.

WILLIAMS: Solving crimes with evidence left behind, that's what's coming up right now on MONTEL.

Yeah, welcome. And today, we are doing one of our favorite shows. We're about to see how real murder mysteries unravel right before your eyes, because, you know what, this is one of my most favorite shows that I do. Every single Monday through Friday at 9 PM, Court TV airs a show called "Forensic Files," and every now and then, they put their best stuff together, they send it over to us so we can show it to you. And that's what we're going to do today. So this is about murder, money and betrayal. And where else would things like this happen? Las Vegas. Take a look at this.

(Excerpt from "Forensic Files")

Narrator: Every 20 minutes, a new home is finished in Las Vegas, Nevada, making it one of the fastest growing cities in the United States. And that's how Ron Rudin made his fortune, building residential housing in the Las Vegas suburbs. On a Monday morning in 1994, Ron Rudin didn't show up for work as he had always done in the 20 years he was in business. Ron's fifth wife, Margaret, called police to report him missing. She said he didn't come home the night before.

Man #1: After that night, Ron Rudin just disappeared off the face of the earth. There were no ATM transactions, no account activity. He wasn't seen anywhere, his cell phone wasn't being used.

Narrator: A week later, police found Ron's car in the parking lot of a gentlemen's club just off the Vegas Strip. Inside the car were traces of blood too badly degraded for DNA testing. Forensic experts also found mud. But a forensic analysis could not determine where the mud came from. One month later, about 60 miles away, a man hiking along Lake Mojave made a gruesome discovery, he found a human skull. Nearby, police found a gold bracelet with diamonds spelling out the name "Ron." What started out as a missing person's case was now a murder investigation.

(End of excerpt)

WILLIAMS: Well, if Ron Rudin had been murdered, would the evidence lead the police to a stranger or someone

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much closer? Take a look at this.

(Excerpt from "Forensic Files")

Narrator: Dental records confirmed that the skull found on the shores of Lake Mojave belonged to Ron Rudin. The medical examiner determined that Ron had been shot in the head four times with a .22 caliber pistol. Not far from where the skull was discovered was a fire pit. Tests on the soil indicated Ron's body had been cremated. Also in the pit were several strips of metal and a locking mechanism, which looked like pieces of a trunk. A search of the Rudins' home turned up nothing suspicious. But the search of Margaret Rudin's antiques store in town was far more telling.

Man #1: I found two receipts for two humpback trunks, or steamer trunks. And by then, we knew that that's what the body was found in.

Narrator: And in Ron's will was another clue, Ron's fifth wife, Margaret, was to receive the bulk of his estate, which was approximately \$7 million. Although police found nothing suspicious when they searched Rudin's home, a local handyman told police he saw plenty that was suspicious when he worked there just days after Ron disappeared.

Unidentified Man #2: He found this dry, gooey, crunchy material in the carpeting that he was sure was blood.

Narrator: The handyman helped Margaret convert the master bedroom into an office. Although the room had been redecorated, investigators decided to test the walls and ceiling for blood that may have been removed.

Unidentified Woman #1: Used the Luminol. It looked like the Milky Way.

Man #2: Lit up like a Christmas tree. They were certain this was the death scene.

Mr. MIKE PERKINS (Crime Scene Analyst): One of the homicide detectives, he was walking around, and he had kind of a funny look on his face. And then he stopped and he said, 'Wow, I think I've been in here before.'

Narrator: And he was right. Twenty years earlier, Ron's second wife, Peggy, shot and killed herself in that same bedroom. Now investigators couldn't be certain whether it was Ron's blood on the walls and ceiling or that of his previous wife's suicide. But on the wall, just above where the Rudins' bed had been, was a photograph of wife number five, Margaret Rudin. And on it was an important clue.

(End of excerpt)

WILLIAMS: Well, every picture tells a story. And when we come back, we'll find out how that particular picture and a scuba diver, of all people, helped to crack this case. We'll be back right after this.

(Announcements)

WILLIAMS: Well, when a man's skull was discovered in the desert around Las Vegas, police were slowly building a case against his wife. But they needed a break. Now take a look at this.

(Excerpt from "Forensic Files")

Narrator: The investigation into the murder of Las Vegas millionaire/real estate developer Ron Rudin had initially focused on his ex-wives and business contacts. Inside Ron Rudin's bedroom, forensics scientists found evidence of blood on the walls and ceiling, blood that had been removed. Forensic scientist Mike Perkins performed a microscopic examination of the few blood drops that remained. Perkins concluded the blood hit the wall at high velocity consistent with gunshots from two locations. Several shots originated from the right side of the bed, and one from the left. Ron's previous wives told investigators that Ron always slept with the right side of his head on the pillow. Not surprisingly, the medical examiner found four bullet holes in the left side of Ron's skull.

Man #1: We learned from the housekeeper that Ron, when he was getting ready in the morning, would cut himself shaving and would dab himself with a handkerchief.

Narrator: Investigators located that handkerchief in Ron's bathroom, then compared the blood to the blood found on the walls and ceiling of the master bedroom. And it matched. There was a photograph of Margaret Rudin hanging on the wall of the bedroom above the bed which showed evidence that some kind of liquid had been professionally removed from the picture. Investigators believed that liquid was Ron Rudin's blood. Based on the forensic evidence, the police decided to arrest Margaret Rudin for her husband's murder. But she successfully eluded police. Over the next several years, there were reports that Margaret was hiding in Arizona and later in Mexico. In the meantime, a scuba diver found

what looked like a gun wrapped in some cloth at the bottom of Lake Mead, about 45 miles outside of Las Vegas. The weapon had a factory-made silencer and was turned over to Las Vegas police. Torrey Johnson restored the gun and test-fired it. He noticed that the test shots had very unusual markings, and they reminded Johnson of the bullets removed from Ron Rudin's skull.

Mr. TORREY JOHNSON (Firearms Examiner): When I finished all those examinations, there was no—no doubt whatsoever in my mind that that was the murder weapon.

Narrator: When Johnson called the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms with the serial number of the silencer, he was told the gun was registered to Ron Rudin.

Man #1: The only one who had access to where the gun was at, besides Ron, was Margaret.

Narrator: But the question remained: where was Margaret Rudin?

(End of excerpt)

WILLIAMS: So how many people got it right? It was the wife, she did it. But she got away, right? To this moment. But it would take almost two years, a television show and a pizza delivery guy to finally bring Margaret Rudin to justice. Take a look at this.

(Excerpt from "Forensic Files")

Narrator: After Margaret Rudin had eluded police for close to two years, a true crime television show featured the case and broadcast Margaret's photograph. A viewer in Revere, Massachusetts, reported that a woman matching Margaret's description was living near him in an apartment. So they set up a surveillance and waited for an opportunity.

Man #1: And Margaret had ordered Domino's or some pizza delivery, so the quick-thinking cops put on a pizza delivery outfit.

Narrator: With a fellow officer nearby, he knocked on the apartment door.

Man #1: And she opens the door and then she looks at the pizza guy, and they said, 'We're the police, we need to come in.' And they said, 'You know why we're here?' And she says, 'Yeah, it's about that Vegas thing.'

Narrator: Margaret Rudin was arrested and charged with her husband's murder.

Investigators found evidence that Margaret and Ron Rudin were having marital problems. Margaret sensed the end of her marriage was near, and she was obviously aware of the financial implications of a divorce. Prosecutors believe Margaret waited until Ron went to sleep, then used the pistol she had taken from Ron's gun collection years earlier. The forensic evidence shows that Margaret fired three shots from the right side of the bed, causing the blood spatter on the walls, the ceiling and on her own portrait. She then moved to the other side and fired the last shot. Prosecutors were convinced Margaret had help getting Ron's body into the trunk from her antiques store and out to Lake Mojave, where it was cremated. But to date, no one has been charged. Prosecutors think Margaret intentionally left Ron's bracelet in clear view near the fire so the remains would be easily identified, allowing her to collect the \$7 million from his estate. The murder weapon was thrown to the bottom of Lake Mead, where a weekend scuba diver happened to find it. And Ron's car was left at the gentlemen's club as a diversion. The jury found Margaret Rudin guilty of first-degree murder. She was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

(End of excerpt)

WILLIAMS: You know, this is part of the reason why I like this show, because most people think they're going to get away with the simple crimes, they got it all locked up, and these guys—some scuba diver diving in the bottom of a lake pulls up a gun, and you're busted.

All right, we're going to take a break. When we come back, a young woman who—this is crazy—she's a mother of two. She was stabbed 44 times—times and then drowned in a swimming pool, and you'll be surprised at what the defense was: sleepwalking. We'll be back right after this.

(Announcements)

WILLIAMS: Well, every Monday through Friday at 9 PM Court TV airs "Forensic Files." And they like to bring stories to us so we can share them with you.

Now, in the next case, when a neighbor called 911 in the middle of the night to report a crime in progress, the police thought they had a pretty straightforward homicide. But they didn't. Take a look at this.

(Excerpt from "Forensic Files")

Narrator: On a brisk January night in Phoenix, Arizona, a man heard some noises coming from his neighbor's backyard. He saw Yarmila Falater on the ground and her husband, Scott, was in the house upstairs, changing his clothes. Scott came back downstairs, silenced the dog, walked outside to Yarmila, then threw her into the swimming pool and held her head underwater. The neighbor immediately called police. The police found Yarmila floating in the pool. She had been stabbed and drowned. Scott was inside the house, dazed and confused. At police headquarters, investigators were convinced that Scott would confess, but they were met with a complete surprise.

Mr. SCOTT FALATER: Obviously, you think I did it. I don't—I don't know what makes you think that.

Unidentified Man #3: Only because I had the neighbor staring at you watching you do it, that's why.

Narrator: Scott Falater said he had no recollection of killing his wife. At Yarmila's autopsy, the medical examiner found 44 stab wounds, as well as water in her lungs. In the back of Scott's car, in a plastic container, police found a knife covered with blood. They also found Scott's bloody clothing in the car. When questioned by police, Scott didn't deny he killed his wife, but he insisted he had no recollection of the incident. And Scott's sister offered a possible explanation, she told police Scott had a history of sleepwalking.

Unidentified Man #4: She had been attacked by Scott when he was sleepwalking years ago, when they were growing up in Illinois.

Narrator: So the question remained: was Scott Falater sleepwalking when he murdered his wife?

(End of excerpt)

WILLIAMS: Is it possible for a person to stab somebody and then drown them and be asleep? Well, the battle of the sleep experts began. Listen to this. Take a look at this.

(Excerpt from "Forensic Files")

Narrator: If Scott Falater was sleepwalking when he committed the crime, then, legally, he wouldn't be responsible. Prosecutors hired their own sleep expert, Dr. Mark Pressman, to analyze Scott Falater's behavior on the night of the murder. Falater said he went to sleep with his contact lenses in, then apparently got up, got dressed and took a flashlight outside. Dr. Pressman said true sleepwalkers can't distinguish day from night. The neighbor said he saw Scott inside his house after the stabbing, removing his bloody clothes. Scott put those clothes and the murder weapon into a plastic container in the trunk of his car. And he also bandaged a cut on his hand.

Man #4: Again, shows that he was consciously aware of the fact he was injured. He knew what he had to do in response to the injury, and he successfully completed it.

Narrator: The neighbor also saw Scott trying to calm his dog.

Unidentified Man #5: Scott claimed not to have heard any screaming from his wife and yet apparently was aware of the agitation of a pet.

Narrator: But the defense experts believed there was another explanation for the incident with the family dog.

Ms. ROSALIND CARTWRIGHT, Ph.D. (Sleep Disorders Specialist): I'm not at all sure that Scott quieted the dogs in terms of responding to them barking. They were jumping up on him is the way it was described to me. So I don't think that the auditory system was functioning.

Narrator: Sleep experts were at odds on how to interpret Scott's behavior. The jury would have to weigh the evidence and decide whom to believe.

(End of excerpt)

WILLIAMS: I don't know. You saw the guy walking around. He looks like he's in a daze, does he not? All right, I got to take a break. But when we come back, police will piece together the possible murder for th—motive for this murder. I'll be back.

(Announcements)

WILLIAMS: There was no doubt that Scott killed his wife, but the jurors had to decide whether or not he was asleep or was he awake? Take a look at this.

(Excerpt from "Forensic Files")

Narrator: As investigators searched for a possible motive in Yarmila Falater's murder, they learned that the couple's marriage was not as happy as friends and family thought. Scott Falater was an active member of the Mormon Church, and investigators found evidence that Yarmila resented the amount of time Scott spent on church activities. Investigators also found evidence that Scott wanted more children and Yarmila didn't.

Man #5: Mormon families typically have a lot of kids. She apparently put her foot down, did not want to have more children beyond the two teen-agers that they already had.

Narrator: Prosecutors believe Falater made the decision to kill his wife and to make it appear to be the work of an unknown assailant. When the children went to bed, Yarmila was on the sofa watching television. Prosecutors think Falater lured Yarmila out to the pool, then stabbed her. He went back upstairs to clean up, and he also bandaged his hand. He hid the murder weapon and his bloody clothes in the trunk of his car. When he returned to the pool, Scott quieted the dog and noticed Yarmila was still breathing. So he dragged her over to the pool and drowned her. Prosecutors think his original plan was to go back to bed and the next morning let the children find their mother's body outside. But those plans changed when his neighbor saw the whole thing.

Unidentified Man #6: That was the only thing that Scott Falater did not predict.

Narrator: Dr. Pressman testified for the prosecution and listed 65 behaviors Scott exhibited during the commission of the crime that were inconsistent with sleepwalking. Scott Falater took the stand and testified in his own defense.

Mr. FALATER: I assume that I must have gone crazy, or that something in my head had broken.

Narrator: The jury didn't buy it.

Unidentified Woman #2: We, the jury, duly impaneled and sworn in the above entitled action, upon our oaths do find the defendant guilty of murder in the first degree.

Narrator: Scott Falater was sentenced to life in prison.

(End of excerpt)

WILLIAMS: A community was stunned when a mother was found by her children beaten and stabbed to death on a family vacation. But the biggest surprise was yet to come. We'll be back right after this.

(Announcements)

WILLIAMS: Well, this next story is about sexual obsession that led to a cruel murder of a mother on vacation with her family. Take a look at this.

(Excerpt from "Forensic Files")

Narrator: Puerto Penasco, Mexico. Americans call it "Rocky Point." And it's where the Willoughby family chose to take their winter vacation in February of 1991. After several days of enjoying the warm weather, Dan Willoughby decided to take his three children to the local science museum. His wife, Trish, had a headache and chose to stay at the beach house. When the family returned from the museum two hours later, they made a grisly discovery.

Mr. MIKE LESSLER (Prosecutor): When young Farrah and little Hayden went to the back bedroom, they saw their mother there, lying on the bed, with her head wrapped in a blood-saturated towel.

Narrator: She died several hours later at the hospital of blunt force trauma to the head.

Ms. THERA HUIISH (Trish's Mother): Trish was a very giving, loving, wonderful person. And she touched the lives and the hearts of so many people as we traveled, and they loved her, because she was just so warm and so wonderful and so filled with life and enthusiasm.

Narrator: The medical examiner found a bruise on Trish's abdomen. And she had been struck in the head with a blunt

object at least nine times. She had also been stabbed with a kitchen knife. Police suspected the motive was robbery. Four hundred dollars was missing from Trish's wallet. Her wedding ring and an expensive pearl ring were also missing. But the Mexican police did little to secure the crime scene.

Mr. JIM HENDERSON (Author, "Damaged Goods"): The police department didn't even have a fingerprint kit. I think they basically arrived at the scene, took a quick look and sealed it off.

Narrator: And the Mexican police had a significant problem. They had no forensic evidence with which to identify the perpetrator.

(End of excerpt)

WILLIAMS: Since Trish Willoughby had been murdered in Mexico and there was no forensic es—evidence, investigators faced an uphill battle until they started getting some more information that was a little bit closer to home. Now, I don't know. I see story like this after story like this after story like this, and it—it just drives me nuts. If you want out of a relationship so bad, why you got to kill somebody? Just go. Here, take a look.

(Excerpt from "Forensic Files")

Narrator: The murder of Trish Willoughby in Mexico made headlines in the family's hometown of Gilbert, Arizona. This prompted numerous calls to the Arizona Police Department from concerned citizens who said that all had not been well in the Willoughby household.

Unidentified Police Officer #1: What can you tell me about this girlfriend?

Narrator: Dan Willoughby had been having an affair with a woman named Yesenia Patino, a 34-year-old Mexican native. When police interviewed Yesenia, she readily admitted the affair. But Yesenia denied having anything to do with Trish's murder and said she wasn't even in Mexico at that time. At the end of the interview, Lieutenant Ruitt asked Yesenia for some identification.

Lieutenant RUITT: I came across the Social Security card with a male name on it. The birth name was Alfredo Patino.

Mr. HENDERSON: And they asked, 'Who is this?' She said, 'Oh, that's me.' And she told them that was before her corrective surgery.

Narrator: When they ran a background check, police discovered that Yesenia, or rather Alfredo Patino, had a criminal record before her sex change operation.

Lt. RUITT: We found out that she had been arrested in Oregon for male prostitution. There was no question about her sex.

Narrator: Surprisingly, Dan Willoughby said he knew nothing about this, despite the fact the two were lovers. While all of this was interesting, police found nothing to link Yesenia with Trish's murder, so they decided to drive down to Mexico to inspect the crime scene.

Lt. RUITT: It was just very good that we were able to get a lab crew down there to Mexico to get in there and check the fingerprints.

Narrator: And they found several, on the back door and on a soda bottle in the kitchen. These fingerprints belonged to Yesenia Patino. Police also learned that Dan Willoughby had been fired from his job months earlier.

Mr. HENDERSON: He was living on his wife's income. He had a mistress to support.

Narrator: This explained a possible motive. Trish had a lucrative career of her own. She and her mother had built a very successful home business selling nutritional supplements.

Ms. HUIISH: He could see all of this money that was coming in, and I think he thought he was going to get half of all this.

Narrator: But police had no forensic evidence against Dan Willoughby. The fingerprints implicated Yesenia. And when police went to arrest her, she had vanished.

(End of excerpt)

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WILLIAMS: Well, the hunt was on for Yesenia, and new information from a surprising source led investigators closer to arresting Dan Willoughby for the murder of his wife. We'll take a break. We'll be back right after this.

(Announcements)

WILLIAMS: When a mother of three was brutally murdered while on vacation with her family in Mexico, the husband and the mistress become the lead suspects. But the police are searching for the mistress, can't find her. They still have to build a case against the husband. Take a look at this.

(Excerpt from "Forensic Files")

Narrator: When Arizona police interviewed the three Willoughby children, they told a story very different from their father's. The oldest daughter, 17-year-old Marsha, said that when they left their mother in the beach house and got into the car, their father said he forgot something and went back inside alone. He was gone for about 10 minutes. Marsha said she grew hungry and went back to the house to get a candy bar but found the door locked. But when Marsha knocked, her father answered and told her to wait in the car. He came out a few minutes later. This meant he was alone with Trish just before her death. Yesenia's fingerprints were found at the crime scene, but she had fled before she could be arrested.

Trish's family tried to find Yesenia on their own by posting flyers in Arizona, as well as Mexico. And this produced results. An informant spotted Yesenia working as a bartender in Mazatlan, Mexico. When confronted with the evidence against her, Yesenia not only confessed, she implicated Dan Willoughby as the architect of the crime and said he was the actual killer. The plan called for Dan to take the children out to the car, pretend he left something behind, then go back inside, subdue Trish with a blow to the stomach, then beat her to death. After he left with the children, Yesenia went inside to stage the robbery and found Trish still breathing. Yesenia said she got a knife and stabbed her. She took Trish's rings and cash, scattered some papers to make it look like a robbery and fled. But she forgot the red blouse. At a trial in Mexico, Yesenia was convicted of Trish Willoughby's murder and was sentenced to 35 years in prison. Dan Willoughby went on trial in Arizona, and Yesenia was the state's star witness. Dan Willoughby was convicted of first-degree murder and conspiracy and sentenced to death.

Several years passed, and Yesenia Patino changed her story.

(Excerpt from videotape)

Ms. YESENIA PATINO: Before she said anything, I went like this.

Unidentified Police Officer #2: OK.

Ms. PATINO: Six times.

(End of excerpt)

Narrator: Investigators turned to forensic science to find the truth.

(End of excerpt)

WILLIAMS: Even after the case is solved, there's still a question, and it's going to take forensic evidence to really, finally put this case to rest. Take a look at this.

(Excerpt from "Forensic Files")

Narrator: Within months after he was sentenced to death for his wife's murder, Dan Willoughby appealed his conviction on the grounds he was denied access to effective counsel and won. So the state of Arizona was forced to retry the case. And now, Yesenia was telling a different version of how Trish Willoughby was murdered. She now said she killed Trish by herself and that Dan Willoughby knew nothing about it. She said she used a homemade mace.

Mr. TOM BEVEL (Blood Spatter Expert): She actually described in the video and overhand by holding the end of the tether of the mace. That would be a physical impossibility because there was a two-foot depth shelf above the victim's head that the mace would have had to have gone through. That simply was physically not possible.

Narrator: When he examined the bloodstained sheets, he found two types of spatter. Tom Bevel concluded that there were two separate attacks on Trish Willoughby in the beach house at least 10 minutes apart, a conclusion that matched Yesenia's original story. Prosecutors believe this proves that both Dan and Yesenia were involved. And Marsha Willoughby remembered an important fact that she hadn't mentioned in the first trial. She said when her father came to the door, he

was tucking in his shirttail. And it wasn't the same shirt he was wearing when he went into the house. Prosecutors believe Willoughby changed his shirt because of the blood spatter.

At Dan Willoughby's second trial, Yesenia took the stand and surprisingly told the same story she told in the first trial. Prosecutors believed Yesenia changed her story after the first trial because she was upset that her jewelry and other personal items weren't returned to her in prison. Dan Willoughby was convicted once again of first-degree murder. This time, however, he escaped the death penalty and was sentenced to life in prison.

(End of excerpt)

WILLIAMS: Well, the badly decomposed body of a woman is found in Alaska, and the only evidence lies in the sheet that's wrapped around her body. I'm going to take a break and we'll find out about this story when we come back. We'll be back right after this.

(Announcements)

WILLIAMS: Well, when the badly decomposed body of a missing woman is discovered in the Alaskan wilderness, investigators used an investigating technique, a really odd one, to identify her. Take a look at this.

(Excerpt from "Forensic Files")

Narrator: When 36-year-old Judy Burgin walked into her favorite bar at the Samovar Inn in Anchorage, Alaska, it was apparent something was terribly wrong. Judy told the bartender that she was tired of life in Alaska and wanted to move away. Later, a man approached Judy at the bar. The two shared some drinks, and witnesses said Judy left with the man and went to his hotel room. Later, she returned to the bar, said her goodbyes and left in a cab. Two weeks passed, and no one had heard from her, so Judy's family contacted police.

Ms. PEGGY A. BURGIN (Judy's Mother): She would call and just checking in, and so when the calls stopped coming, then I thought something had happened.

Narrator: Police interviewed employees and customers of the Samovar Inn, where Judy was last seen. In particular, they wanted to interview the man Judy left with. But no one at the bar knew who the man was. He paid cash for his room, did not register under his real name and hadn't been in the bar before or since. Four months after Judy Burgin's disappearance, several hikers along Grey's Creek, about 200 miles north of Anchorage, Alaska, saw what appeared to be a bundle of clothing. Police immediately sealed off the area. The badly decomposed body was that of a female, approximately five feet tall, with short, brown hair.

Mr. WALLACE: By rehydrating her mummified fingers, and we were able to obtain a fingerprint, match that fingerprint, and the body that was found was identified as Judy Burgin.

(End of excerpt)

WILLIAMS: Now that investigators knew her identity, they had to find a cause of death and also a possible suspect with very, very little forensic evidence. Take a look at this.

(Excerpt from "Forensic Files")

Narrator: The medical examiner determined that Judy's death was clearly a homicide. Investigators were intrigued by the sheets that covered Judy's body. Large hotels usually have their sheets washed by outside commercial laundries. To keep the sheets separate, each hotel uses a different colored stitching. Only one hotel chain used sheets with orange stitching.

Mr. WALLACE: We discover that these same sheets that Judy's body was found in were used at the Sheraton Hotel here in Anchorage.

Narrator: This tied Judy to the Sheraton Hotel, but no one at the Anchorage Sheraton recalled seeing her. So investigators turned their attention to another piece of evidence, a tuft of red carpet fibers found inside the sheet which covered Judy's body. Officials in Alaska sent the sample to forensic microscopist Skip Palenik, who recognized it as junk fiber, which is used in less than 5 percent of all carpet. Investigators now knew that Judy Burgin had been with someone who had a connection to the local Sheraton Hotel and someone who had inexpensive red carpet.

Judy had been living in Anchorage with her boyfriend, Carl Brown, a commercial fisherman. Judy told her family that

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at times, Carl Brown was physically abusive. Brown said that Judy moved out of his house and that he had no idea where she went. But police discovered a potentially explosive piece of information. Several years earlier, Carl Brown worked at the Sheraton Hotel in Anchorage. At police headquarters, investigators decided to ask Brown whether he made any improvements to his home after Judy left.

Unidentified Police Officer #3: Any type of changes at all? I mean, did you change windows, floors, stuff like that?

Mr. CARL BROWN: I put carpet in my bedroom.

Narrator: But having new bedroom carpet wasn't enough evidence for the local judge to issue a search warrant.

(End of excerpt)

WILLIAMS: Well, when we come back, the police finally get the break they needed. But would it be enough? We'll be back right after this.

(Announcements)

WILLIAMS: Well, police felt they had the perfect suspect in Judy Burgin's murder, her live-in boyfriend. But they needed to get into his house to prove it, and it would take them almost a year and a half. Take a look at this.

(Excerpt from "Forensic Files")

Narrator: When Carl Brown put his house up for sale, Alaska police were free to conduct a thorough search.

Unidentified Police Officer #4: We—we knew up front that the carpet had been changed. So obviously, we're going to look underneath the existing carpet.

Narrator: And when they did, they made a startling discovery—red carpet fibers like the ones found with Judy's body. The fibers were sent to the forensics' lab for analysis.

Unidentified Man #7: We see seven distinct types of fibers in this case which corresponded in every single instance to fibers that were found in the other tuft.

Narrator: Even the dyes were identical. For investigators, there was no doubt that the tuft of carpet found with Judy Burgin had come from Carl Brown's house. Carl Brown was arrested and charged with Judy Burgin's murder. Prosecutors believe that Judy grew tired of the physical abuse in her relationship with Carl Brown and decided to leave Alaska, fly to Hawaii and start a new life. After she left the Samovar Inn, she went home to pick up her things. When Brown learned Judy was leaving, he responded with violence. The autopsy revealed he beat her to death with a blunt object. Then he wrapped her body in the bed sheet he'd taken from the Sheraton Hotel, a sheet which contained the signature stitching. He didn't see the tuft of carpet which clung to the sheet with fibers so unique they could only have come from his bedroom.

Brown dumped Judy's body 250 miles away in the Alaskan wilderness. Prosecutors believed Brown removed his bedroom carpet to get rid of the blood evidence left by the murder. After a five-week trial, Carl Brown was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to 85 years in prison.

(End of excerpt)

WILLIAMS: Well, you know, they say it on "Forensic Files" that the evidence speaks when the victims can't, and I think in these cases we saw today it was very clear that the evidence spoke very loud and clear. Now, every single Monday night, Monday through Friday at 9 PM, you can go to Court TV and see "Forensic Files." It's a great show. And if you want more information about this show or want to be a guest on a future MONTEL WILLIAMS SHOW, contact us at our Web site, www.montelshow.com. Hey, join us on the next MONTEL.

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2005

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SHOW: SCARBOROUGH COUNTRY 10:00 PM EST

May 5, 2005 Thursday

TRANSCRIPT: 050501cb.471

SECTION: NEWS; International

LENGTH: 7856 words

HEADLINE: SCARBOROUGH COUNTRY For May 5, 2005

BYLINE: Don Teague, Alex Witt

GUESTS: Michael Johnson, Michael Gross, Arthur Aidala, Lisa Bloom, Carmen Rasmusen, Kennedy, Tanika Ray, Ann Coulter

HIGHLIGHT:

Was ABC's expose on "American Idol" a scoop or a hatchet job? The runaway bride sends out her minister to apologize and explain, but will America buy her explanation? Ann Coulter discusses being on the front lines of the conservative culture war.

BODY:

ALEX WITT, GUEST HOST: Tonight's top headline, "American Idol" off its pedestal, but was the big expose a scoop or a hatchet job?

Welcome to SCARBOROUGH COUNTRY, no passport required, only common sense allowed.

Secret trysts, breathless voice mails, but was the ABC News investigation an effort to find the truth or bring down "American Idol"?

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REV. TOM SMILEY, FAMILY PASTOR: "My running away had nothing to do with cold feet."

(END VIDEO CLIP)

WITT: The runaway bride sends out her minister to apologize and explain, but will America buy her explanation?

"TIME" magazine calls her a conservative flamethrower, and then they put her on this controversial cover. Ann Coulter is on the front lines of the conservative culture war, and she is joining us live in SCARBOROUGH COUNTRY.

ANNOUNCER: From the press room, to the courtroom, to the halls of Congress, Joe Scarborough has seen it all. Welcome to SCARBOROUGH COUNTRY.

WITT: Hey, there, everybody. I'm Alex Witt. I'm in tonight for Joe.

And, in case you haven't heard, last night, ABC News aired a heavily promoted prime-time special called "Fallen Idol." The program focused on the alleged relationship between former contestant Corey Clark, and judge Paula Abdul. Now, Clark claims that Abdul gave him advice to help him win the competition, and that they had an intimate relationship,

all while he was still a contestant.

Is this a real scandal that could bring down one of the most popular shows on TV or a dirty trick by ABC to knock off the competition?

Joining me now is Tanika Ray, a correspondent for "Extra" who interviewed Corey Clark today.

Tanika, good evening to you. Thanks for joining us here on SCARBOROUGH COUNTRY.

TANIKA RAY, "EXTRA": Absolutely. Good evening to you, Alex.

WITT: So, what's the deal? Do you think he is telling the truth?

RAY: You know what? It's such a tricky situation. It's so interesting.

I went into this interview. This morning, I interviewed him at Bonn 45 (ph) Restaurant, and I went into it going, wow, this is really sleazy, Corey. What's the real deal? But when I sat down with him, he was so comfortable with himself, and he made a very good point. He said, "American Idol" is a \$900 million industry. If I am lying, I am screwed. I can't pay \$900 million. And it made me sort of see him in a different light.

Now, he broke it down, the timeline and everything. And what it comes down so is, he was in love with her. And then I asked him, are you a jilted lover, because it sounds suspicious? And he said, no, I am really just trying to clear my name.

My problem is, nobody was talking about it, so what do you mean, clear your name? He insists that he had a record deal with Jive Records and that "American Idol" called them and told them bad things about Corey, told them that he was a liar, and they dropped his record deal. So, basically, he is trying to start from scratch and get his career started. This is the way he wants to do it.

WITT: OK, a couple things I want to bring up here. You say he talks about this \$900 million that he wouldn't have, as regarding — what is that, a lawsuit? Is he worried about a lawsuit? Did he talk about that?

RAY: Absolutely. I said, what do you think is going to come out of it? Paula could get fired. You could be sued. He said, well, if I'm telling the truth, I don't have to worry about any of that. And that's true. If he's telling the truth, he doesn't have to worry about a lawsuit. And that is his claim.

WITT: OK. But you know what? This new record, this timing here, come on, is this a publicity stunt?

RAY: Hey, I asked him that. I said, do you believe in all publicity is good publicity? And he said, I have heard about it, but, really, it's about I am just trying to clear my name. He kept going to that point.

And, you know, I really drilled him today. I did not let him off very easily. I kept asking him over and over, this is ugly. Everybody loves Paula Abdul. She can get in trouble. His response was, well, she left me in the dust, so it's about me right now. And he has been trying since he was 13 years old, for 10 years, to try to get a record deal going, and he sees this as his opportunity to clear his name and to start from scratch.

Of course, that's suspicious, too, because, last night, if you watched "Primetime Live," one of his hits that he was singing on air was called "Paulatics," P-A-U-L-A-tics. So, he is sort of perpetuating this whole spin, and it's going to keep going and going, and it just happens to be the day he drops his book and his album.

WITT: Funny how that happens, huh?

RAY: Isn't it interesting?

WITT: What do you think about the fallout for the show? Is there going to be any?

RAY: You know, I interviewed John Quinones as well earlier this week and asked him, is this similar to the "Quiz Show" scandal of the '60s, or whenever that was? I was too young.

WITT: Yes, me too. I don't recall. Or I can use that in court, too. I don't recall. But, anyway...

RAY: Exactly.

And he said he doesn't think so, because America votes. It's not really the judges. And I brought up a very interesting point, which is, the judges do get them to the top 30, and then they really do influence the American public. When it comes down to it, when Simon says, you know what, I think you really should worry about it, you might be kicked off

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tonight, it happens. They get kicked off, so they really do influence America's opinions.

WITT: So, Tanika, what do you think the buzz is out there? How is the country reading all this?

RAY: You know what? It's going to be very interesting. This is the first day. We were walking down the street. I picked him up at "GMA" and we walked a block to the restaurant. And you wouldn't think people would recognize. Apparently, everybody was watching last night.

There was a street vendor who just glanced up at Corey and said, yo, man, what's up? That was really sleazy. You kissed and you told? Wow, man, that's gross.

WITT: You mean this guy was saying he kissed and told him that was the sleazy part, not the fact that Paula may have been having an affair with him?

RAY: Well, yes. I guess, if Paula was there, he would have said something different.

But you are right; there is another person in this situation. Paula Abdul apparently had an affair with Corey Clark, who was a contestant on "American Idol." And Corey said a lot of interesting things. He said when they were hanging out at the Sprint phone store and they went to Fred Siegel to buy clothes, which she all paid for, he said, she was really bold about it. She had no qualms with being caught.

So, I thought that was really interesting, too. Maybe she was going through a rough time in her life at the time. Whatever it was, it's messy, and we haven't seen the end of it.

WITT: I am sure we have not. We appreciate your being on with us. Thank you very much, Tanika. Thanks.

RAY: Absolutely.

WITT: All righty.

So, was this program fair or was it not? The accusations and the speculation on what last night's special would reveal have already landed Paula Abdul and her "American Idol" future on the cover of multiple magazines this week and the cover of many of today's newspapers.

So, joining me right now, former MTV veejay Kennedy and Carmen Rasmusen, one of Corey Clark's fellow contestants on season two of "American Idol."

Thanks to both of you for being here.

CARMEN RASMUSEN, FORMER "AMERICAN IDOL" CONTESTANT: Thank you.

KENNEDY, FORMER MTV VEEJAY: Hi, Alex.

All right, here's the question. And I am going to pose it to you first, Kennedy. Should Paula be fired from this show?

KENNEDY: Paula Abdul should be fired from the show, because there has been a great injustice served to the American public. It is not the fact that she was having a possible sexual dalliance with a mediocre-looking man with a girly voice.

Her great injustice is the fact that she is the worst judge that could possibly be picked for the show. I am a huge "American Idol" fan. I think the fact that Constantine was voted off was also an injustice. And you could put a retarded sea mammal in between Randy and Simon. It would probably benefit the contestants more.

(LAUGHTER)

WITT: Oh, my God. A retarded sea animal, that's kind of harsh. OK, but Simon is defending her. There's a switch.

KENNEDY: Simon is defending her because Simon has the show's best interest at heart. They want to finish out the season. They want good ratings. And if FOX is smart, they will take this little entree to move the often slurring Paula Abdul from that very important chair.

WITT: OK, now, here's the deal. You are saying that Paula should be fired, if it's all true. I mean, we have to talk right now to see, Carmen, is the stuff that was said last night on the show — you watched very carefully.

RASMUSEN: Yes.

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WITT: Is it true, everything that Corey was saying, all the allegations, all the stories? You know behind the scenes, so, share.

RASMUSEN: Right.

No, I don't think all of it is true. I think there are elements to the story that are true. For example, I do think that Paula Abdul called Corey Clark to give him help on the show. I don't think she slept with him.

(CROSSTALK)

KENNEDY: How would you know, though? How would you know?

RASMUSEN: Well...

KENNEDY: Either way. You know what? Even if she didn't sleep with him, even if she was just helping him pick out songs and get some fancy clothes.

RASMUSEN: Right.

KENNEDY: That's help that you didn't have.

RASMUSEN: I agree.

(CROSSTALK)

KENNEDY: Now, what if Simon Cowell was courting one of your female co-contestants? Wouldn't that upset you?

RASMUSEN: OK. You know what? No, it wouldn't, because the judges helped all of us on the show.

I was given comments by the judges on what clothes I should wear, what songs I could sing. And Ryan Star from the first season of "American Idol" had Paula Abdul's phone number as well. And she said that she frequently called Paula Abdul to find out what songs she should sing, what clothes she should wear. And she had late conversations with Paula into the night. She didn't have a sexual affair with Paula Abdul.

WITT: Carmen, did you get her phone number? Did you get Paula's phone number?

RASMUSEN: No. No, I didn't.

But Paula Abdul was very kind and she was always quick to give any of us advice, if we wanted some, and she was very supportive and fair to all of us. And I think that Corey Clark has a very compelling story, but, as a whole, it just doesn't ring true. There are many inconsistencies.

WITT: OK.

All right, now, Carmen, you are saying you don't believe that they had sex.

RASMUSEN: No, I don't.

WITT: But let's listen to Corey talking about his sleepovers with Paula Abdul. Take a listen, everyone.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP, "PRIMETIME LIVE")

JOHN QUINONES, ABC: You slept with Paula Abdul.

COREY CLARK, FORMER "AMERICAN IDOL" CONTESTANT: yes.

QUINONES: What room? Where?

CLARK: In the guest room. That's where I always usually stayed at.

QUINONES: Why the guest room?

CLARK: I don't know. Like she — it seemed like kind of, you know, that is where she stayed a lot, too, because even though she had her room, like, that was the room that had like the little dog ramp for her dogs and stuff.

QUINONES: A dog ramp?

CLARK: Yes, because she has got like three little dogs. It's Thumbelina, Tulip, and Tinkerbell.

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(END VIDEO CLIP)

WITT: OK, he knows about the dogs, Carmen.

RASMUSEN: We all knew about the dogs, too, she brought the dogs to rehearsal with her every week on the show. So, we were all were actually introduced to Thumbelina and Tinkerbell and Tulip. So I don't think that that proves anything at all.

KENNEDY: I think we know why the song is called Paulatics, because Paula does not give her animals Frontline. And she has somehow gotten these mites under her skin, and she is infected and could infect the other contestants with Lyme disease, another reason she should be fired.

RASMUSEN: This is what is interesting to me, though. We had security around us 24/7. We were always in a group with at least one security guard around us.

And, at the mansion, we had three security guards at the house. Whenever a car would pull up to the mansion, it was a gated area and the security guard would say, who are you here for; where are you going; what are you doing; what time will you be back?

So it would have been very hard for Corey to slip away without someone knowing about it. And the fact that he has gone two years without telling anyone about this is kind of interesting. His family members knew about it. His friends knew about it.

WITT: All right, so, why do you think he is talking about it now?

RASMUSEN: Publicity.

WITT: What's the deal?

RASMUSEN: Publicity. He has got a CD coming out. He's got a book coming out, and he wants to get his face out there, because, without "American Idol," without hopping on this fame vehicle, no one would care about Corey Clark anymore. He wouldn't be where he is today without that show, and in order to get back to where he wants to be, he needs to use the "American Idol" fame vehicle.

KENNEDY: OK. But you know what? If it weren't true, if it were just a salacious rumor, why would Paula Abdul still be calling him?

Just because he is gross and is a publicity hound and basically a media whore doesn't mean that he didn't have an inappropriate relationship with Paula Abdul on a judged show.

RASMUSEN: Well, we don't know exactly what that phone call was regarding. She didn't say anything besides, call me back.

(CROSSTALK)

WITT: You guys, let's listen to this. For people who haven't heard this, let's listen to it, because Paula must have known this was wrong. Here's this message that she left for Corey after reading about his book proposal. Take a listen to this.

(BEGIN AUDIO CLIP)

PAULA ABDUL, JUDGE, "AMERICAN IDOL": Hi, it's Paula. Call me back. Listen, if the press is trying to talk to you, you say absolutely nothing. That's all you do.

(END AUDIO CLIP)

WITT: So what's the message there, Kennedy?

KENNEDY: I think the message is Paula sounds like she is slurring again. And I don't know if that's because she has got a neurological disorder or because she is ingesting something that is impairing her speaking abilities, and her, at one time, good judgment.

This is a woman who was married to Charlie Sheen's brother. She obviously has fantastic taste in men, or at least did at some point. And her taste has really gone downhill, I have to say, another reason she should be fired.

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(CROSSTALK)

WITT: Carmen, what about the flowers? You know, the "American Idol" contestants are giving flowers to the judges. What do you think that was about? Do you think they are trying to show support right now? Is that typical?

RASMUSEN: You know what? When we were on the season, we handed the judges flowers as well. I think they were definitely showing support for the show and for Paula and just being nice.

It's getting down to the finals, to the top five. And I think the contestants are showing their appreciation to the judges and to the show, because "American Idol" is a cultural phenomenon. I would not be where I am today if it weren't for that show. Corey wouldn't be where he is today if it weren't for that show.

Whether or not Paula Abdul was right — if this whole thing is true, if she had did have a sexual affair with Corey Clark, I think she needs to come clean.

WITT: All right.

RASMUSEN: I think that she needs to tell the truth about it. But I think, ultimately, America will forgive her and "American Idol" wouldn't be the same without her.

WITT: That is going to have to be the last word on this front.

Kennedy and Carmen Rasmusen, thanks so much for joining us tonight. We appreciate it.

So, here's the question. What do all of you think? Do you think the special program about "American Idol" and Paula Abdul was fair? Go to our live poll at Joe.MSNBC.com. Make your voice heard in SCARBOROUGH COUNTRY.

The runaway bride finally breaks her silence, releasing a statement through her pastor. But will Jennifer Wilbanks' words answer the question so many Americans are asking? We are going to talk to two women with very different answers to that hot one.

Then, Ann Coulter will be here live to talk about what she says is the radicalism against conservatives on college campuses.

Stick around. SCARBOROUGH COUNTRY is just getting started.

WITT: The runaway bride finally tells America what she was thinking. Is it enough to answer America's questions?

We'll be right back.

(NEWS BREAK)

WITT: Maybe the most famous runaway bride of all time, Katharine Ross, ditching her groom at the altar to run off with Dustin Hoffman in "The Graduate."

It's been more than a week since Jennifer Wilbanks disappeared, just days before she was set to marry John Mason in Duluth, Georgia. Authorities launched a massive manhunt, until Wilbanks turned up last weekend in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She told police she had been kidnapped and raped, but later admitted making up that story.

Today, we heard for the first time from the runaway bride.

And with more on that, here's NBC's Don Teague in Gainesville, Georgia.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

DON TEAGUE, NBC CORRESPONDENT: We have been waiting for nearly a week now to hear from Jennifer Wilbanks. And today, we did, sort of.

There was a news conference here at her family's church in Gainesville, Georgia. It was held by the senior pastor here at the church, who read from a written statement that he said Jennifer had spent the last two days writing. He said the words were heartfelt and sincere. In that statement, she offered her sincere apology for all of the troubles she caused. She also asked forgiveness from her community, from her family, and from her fiancée, John Mason.

SMILEY: "My running away had nothing to do with cold feet, nor was it ever about leaving John. Those who know me know how excited I have been and how excited I was about the spectacular wedding we planned and how I could not

wait to be called Mrs. John Mason. In my mind, it was never about timing, however unfortunate. I was simply running away from myself and from certain fears controlling my life."

TEAGUE: Well, Pastor Tom Smiley says that Jennifer Wilbanks is not emotionally ready to address the public, but she sincerely wants to and she plans to sometime in the near future. In the meantime, she is receiving what he calls professional counseling.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

WITT: Thank you, Don Teague.

So now that we have gotten a glimpse into what Jennifer Wilbanks was thinking, will that change what Americans think about her?

Joining me to talk about the very latest developments in this story are Lisa Bloom from Court TV and Arthur Aidala, a criminal defense attorney and former prosecutor.

Welcome to both of you. Thanks for joining us here on SCARBOROUGH COUNTRY.

LISA BLOOM, COURT TV ANCHOR: Thank you.

ARTHUR AIDALA, FORMER PROSECUTOR: Hi, Alex.

WITT: Ladies first on my shows, when I get a chance to do that.

So, Lisa, give me a read on what you think about the pastor today and his representation of Jennifer Wilbanks. Did he sell it to the American people?

BLOOM: You know, I think she is probably saving herself for the best TV offer for her story. I hate to say that, but you know those morning shows are probably circling as we speak. She is probably getting a lot of offers.

If I want to be less cynical and just be idealistic, I would say, she was a confused young woman. That's why she ran off to Vegas in the first place, hoping that what happened in Vegas would stay in Vegas. Instead, cable news world seized upon her story, making her an involuntary reality show participant, much, I'm sure, to her surprise.

She probably still is confused, if you take statement at face value. But I am too cynical. I don't it at face value.

WITT: OK. But you are supportive of the woman as someone who needs help, perhaps, psychological help?

BLOOM: Clearly. Look, clearly, she needs help.

And some of us who are divorced might say, I only wish I had left my husband in the days before the wedding. You know, I don't hold that against her. I don't hold it against her that she had issues, that she wanted to take some time on her own. It was terribly thoughtless, what she did to her family and friends, not calling to let them know that she was OK, if she made one phone call. But she shouldn't be prosecuted.

(CROSSTALK)

WITT: Thoughtless is one thing, but a crime is another thing.

BLOOM: Yes.

WITT: Arthur, is there a crime here?

AIDALA: I am jumping out of my skin here listening to Lisa.

First of all, the first thing that Lisa did, she just — she zoomed in on the issue. Money, this is what is going to come out of this, is that she is going to make a lot of money on the morning shows?

(CROSSTALK)

WITT: Yes, but, Arthur, do you think that is something she thought about?

AIDALA: Not only did she put everyone in her family through this; not only did she put the authorities through this; I will tell you the truth. She put me through this. I sat there all weekend watching this thing.

And this poor woman, right before her wedding day, she disappears. Now, that's one thing. And it's another thing also

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if she went to a hotel and she took a bottle of pills and she slept all weekend and she had no idea what was going on and then she woke up and she called and said, oh, my god. I'm so sorry. Here I am.

That's not what she did. When she found out, she called. She said, I was raped. I have been kidnapped.

BLOOM: For two hours.

AIDALA: She lied on two separate occasions.

(CROSSTALK)

BLOOM: She lied for two hours to the police.

AIDALA: As soon as she understood that there was some commotion about this, she didn't do the right thing. She did the wrong thing.

And according to you, Lisa — you are in the industry, so you know better than I do — she is going to make a lot of money.

BLOOM: She probably will.

AIDALA: From "Good Morning America" or something.

(CROSSTALK)

AIDALA: That's disgraceful.

BLOOM: Well, Arthur, if we put behind bars everybody who makes money by selling their story to the media, we are going to have to build a lot more prisons. When we catch all the murderers and rapists and we got nobody else to prosecute, then we can start going after poor little Jennifer Wilbanks. But, my goodness.

(CROSSTALK)

AIDALA: You know better than I do.

BLOOM: Is she a hard-core criminal?

AIDALA: They are not allowed to make money from their stories, right? When someone is...

(CROSSTALK)

BLOOM: Tell that to the tabloid world, Arthur.

AIDALA: The Son of Sam law, right, the Son of Sam law. She should not be able to make money.

BLOOM: She's not a criminal. She's certainly not a felon.

(CROSSTALK)

WITT: Yo, Arthur, I think the question has to be asked here. Do you think she was really doing this for the money when she set out on that run on Tuesday night?

AIDALA: Absolutely not. But do I think she should benefit from this? No. Do I think that she has to be made somewhat of an example of? I am not telling you she should get the death penalty. I'm not saying she should go to jail. Neither is the prosecutor.

WITT: But are you saying that she did a crime? Are you saying that she committed a crime? And, if so, what's the crime?

(CROSSTALK)

AIDALA: OK. It is very clear-cut. She called the sheriff, the chief sheriff from her town, and said, I have been kidnapped. That is lying.

(CROSSTALK)

BLOOM: That was not a statement under oath. That's not a crime, just to lie to the police. If it were, millions of Americans who lie during criminal...

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(CROSSTALK)

AIDALA: Well, Lisa, how come I just represented — how come I just represented a young woman very recently who called the police after she had a fight over a parking spot and lied and said the person she had the fight with had a gun, and it took me days to convince them not to charge her? They wanted to charge her so badly.

BLOOM: So, why did you defend her and you don't defend Jennifer?

AIDALA: Well, because that's my job. That is what I do for a living.

BLOOM: So it's whoever is paying you, Arthur?

AIDALA: Let me ask you something. That incident took one police officer about 15 minutes of his time, not \$40,000 or \$60,000.

BLOOM: And Jennifer Wilbanks was a couple of hours until she came clean. She should be rewarded for coming clean, not punished.

(CROSSTALK)

AIDALA: She didn't come clean.

(CROSSTALK)

AIDALA: She didn't come clean.

BLOOM: Leave that woman alone. She's a private citizen. She didn't sign up for this.

AIDALA: She said she was raped. How much more of a horrendous crime can you have than say, I was raped; I was kidnapped and raped?

AIDALA: How about actually being a rapist or being a murderer? I think those are more horrendous crimes. The police don't have enough resources to go after real criminals.

(CROSSTALK)

AIDALA: Who says that rapists and murderers shouldn't be prosecuted? Of course, they should.

(CROSSTALK)

WITT: All right, now, Lisa, you are saying this is a young woman who is confused.

BLOOM: Yes.

(CROSSTALK)

WITT: I want to get a little more of this statement from today. Let's have it as it was read by the family minister. Take a listen.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SMILEY: "I understand that many people wanted to hear from me personally today. And I wanted to be here. However, I look forward to the days ahead when I am strong enough to speak for myself."

(END VIDEO CLIP)

WITT: Strong enough to speak for herself. Are we going to hear from her? Are we going to hear the truth?

(CROSSTALK)

AIDALA: Who cares? If you have a lawyer, she should keep her mouth shut.

(CROSSTALK)

BLOOM: Let me say this.

Jennifer Wilbanks, you are always welcome to come on my show on Court TV and tell your story. I'll be happy to have you.

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AIDALA: That's not fair, Lisa. I can't make that offer.

WITT: Mine, too. Mine, too. I am sure Joe would like her here on SCARBOROUGH COUNTRY as well.

AIDALA: But, Lisa, let me ask you something. How come it's a crime to yell fire in a crowded movie theater?

BLOOM: It's not a crime, but it's not protected by the First Amendment.

You know, and that's inciting people to get hurt. We are talking about a young woman who took off, not illegal, without telling her mother, bad judgment, but not illegal. And the only possible crime is lying to the police for a couple of hours in the middle of the night.

(CROSSTALK)

AIDALA: So, it's a crime. You just admitted it's a crime, Lisa.

WITT: Lisa, what you have to think about here, though, too, is the premeditation. In fact, many people are sympathetic toward Jennifer, but there are others who are not. They are pointing out this whole series of things.

BLOOM: Premeditated bus ticket buying?

WITT: OK. No, listen, she apparently acted with premeditation. Here are the things. She lied to her boss about leaving to get her wedding dress fixed.

BLOOM: Not a crime.

WITT: OK. She bought the bus ticket in advance.

BLOOM: This is not a crime.

(CROSSTALK)

WITT: ... panic vs. preplanned. Look at the full screen right here.

BLOOM: OK, but none of these are crimes.

WITT: She cuts her hair to disguise herself. She leaves all her personal belongings behind, making it look like a disappearance. Then she's seen at a Las Vegas casino. She gets to Albuquerque. Then she calls the cops, told them she has been kidnapped and raped.

(CROSSTALK)

BLOOM: Only the last one is a possible crime. And if all of us who got haircuts that were bad and lied to our bosses were criminals, again, we really have packed...

(CROSSTALK)

AIDALA: So, Lisa, you are admitting it's a crime. You are admitting it's a crime.

BLOOM: She ran off to Vegas. She had 600 people coming to her wedding. She had 14 bridesmaids. The girl wanted a little time of her own. And, instead, cable news seized on...

(CROSSTALK)

AIDALA: Don't you think there's a certain responsibility to tell someone, to tell one person, just tell one person?

BLOOM: Yes. As a mother, I would strongly recommend — I think what she did is terrible. But it's not a crime.

(CROSSTALK)

AIDALA: You keep referring to it as a crime.

WITT: The one thing that the two of you agree to as having been a crime, calling in this false police report. The Albuquerque Police Department says, you know...

(CROSSTALK)

WITT: Prosecutor — we are not going to prosecute here.

(CROSSTALK)

WITT: And, yet, Gwinnett County says, we are looking at this. Could be a couple of weeks. We still may.

AIDALA: Because the Albuquerque Police Department didn't use all of their resources. What would have happened if, God forbid, there was a fire, and because all the police officers and the firemen are looking for this young woman, a child died in that fire because all the resources were wasted?

WITT: All right.

And that's going to be rhetorical question. We have got to leave it right there.

Lisa Bloom and Arthur Aidala, thank you so much for being us. Greatly appreciate both your time.

Coming up, we have a piece of videotape that is truly outrageous and disturbing, and he is still on the loose. We have all the details.

Plus, it's the most popular book ever written, so, should the Bible be taught in American public schools? A new twist on the battle to teach the Bible coming up.

WITT: Should a public school in Texas be allowed to offer a class on the Bible? It's a hot question down in Texas and in many parts of this country. We are going to debate it in our SCARBOROUGH COUNTRY showdown,

But, first, here's the latest news your family needs to know.

(NEWS BREAK)

ANNOUNCER: From the press room, to the courtroom, to the halls of Congress, Joe Scarborough has seen it all. Welcome back to SCARBOROUGH COUNTRY.

WITT: Thanks for joining us, everyone. I'm Alex Witt, in for Joe Scarborough tonight.

Now we're going to get a story that is really just outrageous. I'm also going to tell you, it's very hard to watch, a helpless 83-year-old woman beaten in a D.C. Metro station, the entire stunning attack all caught on tape. The victim works as a vendor at the Foggy Bottom train station.

And Tuesday afternoon, here, you see it. The man seen in this video -- look at that -- approaches the woman, just starts beating on her. In fact, much of the attack is so brutal, we can't show it to you, but you certainly can get the idea right there. Police have sent the video to a lab at Quantico. They are hoping to get a better picture of that man. D.C. Police Chief Charles Ramsey says, if it were up to him, he would give this man a life sentence. Now, Charles.

If you know anything about this crime, call this number you see on your screen. There is a reward. Look at that number and call it, 202-727-9099. Talk about a heinous crime right there. Need your help.

Meantime, today is the national day of prayer. And people around the country bowed their head with the president as he marked the day by giving thanks for freedom and asking God's help in defending it. President Bush prays a great deal. He reads the Bible every day. Almost three billion copies of the Bible have been sold, but public schools in this country are not allowed to teach the Bible.

The National Council on Bible Curriculum in Public Schools is fighting to change all that. Their most recent victory was in Odessa, Texas, where 6,000 residents voted to get the Bible back into their classrooms. But not everyone was happy with that vote.

And joining me right now is Michael Johnson from the National Council on Bible Curriculum in Public Schools, as well as Michael Gross, civil rights attorney.

Gentlemen, thank you for being here.

MICHAEL GROSS, AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION: Thank you.

MICHAEL JOHNSON, NATIONAL COUNCIL ON BIBLE CURRICULUM IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS: Glad to be with you.

WITT: All right, Michael Gross, we are going to begin with you, because you say this is a very sneaky way to teach religion in public school. What do you mean?

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GROSS: Well, there is a wall of separation, to use Jefferson's term.

And you will remember that the Constitution, a more important document than any other document for students in public school to study and learn about, begins, "We the people." And the first of the Bill of Rights says, Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion. That has been interpreted many times by our Supreme Court without exception to say, don't teach religion in public schools. This is a simple rule. This curriculum violates that rule. And it's unconstitutional.

WITT: Supreme Court in 1963 says the Bible can be appropriately used, as long as it's taught objectively to teach, not preach. Don't you think that's possible, Michael?

GROSS: This is not objectively. The National Council on Bible Curriculum. And what is the Bible curriculum? What is the Bible curriculum?

(CROSSTALK)

JOHNSON: Well, perhaps you should read it, Michael, and then you would be a little more informed.

GROSS: Don't presume.

JOHNSON: I'm glad to join you, Alex.

(CROSSTALK)

GROSS: Don't presume. I make no judgment about the Bible, sir, but about separation of church and state.

JOHNSON: OK.

(CROSSTALK)

GROSS: This is not a matter of disrespect for the Bible, but it's not to be taught in the public school.

JOHNSON: Alex, can I jump in here?

(CROSSTALK)

WITT: Let's show some respect for Mr. Johnson.

Have your — have a go at it.

JOHNSON: Thank you. Thank you.

I'm very happy to join you on the National Day of Prayer, which is one of the greatest threats on the calendar for the ACLU. You can see that they are hostile to religion. That has always been their M.O.

Look, the U.S. Supreme Court has been very clear on this issue. They have said, as you just stated, in *Abington v. Schempp* in 1963, that the Bible is an appropriate course of study in the public schools. In 1980, they revisited the issue in *Stone vs. Graham* and repeated that theme.

Here's the rule of thumb. Public schools can teach the Bible, but not preach. They can present, but not proselytize. And the National Council's curriculum does that.

WITT: All right. So, Michael, what do you want to do in Odessa, Texas? Give me the details. Lay it out.

JOHNSON: Well, in Odessa, Texas, the people, it's a grassroots movement, like it is in 35 other states, in 300 school districts, where the National Council's curriculum is being taught. It presents the Bible as an objective part of the secular program of education, just like you said the United States Supreme Court has clearly authorized.

The United States Department of Education stated under the Clinton administration that this is something that can and should be done. The Dictionary of Cultural Literacy observes that no one in the English-speaking world can be considered literate without a basic knowledge of the Bible.

It was the blueprint and the foundation of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and our entire educational system.

GROSS: Whose Bible? Whose Bible? Whose Bible?

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(CROSSTALK)

JOHNSON: When it's removed from schools, we rob students of a complete understanding of history.

GROSS: It's theology. It is not history. It is creed. It is not geography. It doesn't belong in the public schools. What do you say to the wall of separation? The people who wrote the First Amendment to the Bill of Rights...

JOHNSON: Well, I will tell you.

(CROSSTALK)

GROSS: ... understood how dangerous it was to mix church and state.

WITT: All right.

GROSS: They realized it.

JOHNSON: Oh, right. And...

GROSS: They were close to the dangers in history.

WITT: Gentlemen...

(CROSSTALK)

GROSS: Let's not get back to the Dark Ages here. This is an important difference.

JOHNSON: No. No.

The true meaning of the First Amendment, Michael, as you should know, if you remember from law school, was to prevent the federal government from establishing a national church. That is all it was. It was to keep government out of religion, not to separate religion from our public life.

WITT: All right.

JOHNSON: And just because the ACLU and its allies are out to do that, they are on a search-and-destroy mission to obliterate all things religious.

WITT: And, gentlemen, let's put our passions aside.

(CROSSTALK)

GROSS: ... wonderful evangelical movement. Set up a tent.

WITT: Gentlemen.

GROSS: Keep out of our public schools.

WITT: I want to put passions aside here for a moment. Let's look at some statistics as offered by "The Educational World."

The question here, could reading the Bible make students any smarter? Listen to these numbers. A Bible literacy report questioned the top high school English teachers from around this country. Here's what they were asked. Should the Bible be studied? More than 98 percent surveyed believe Bible literacy gives a distinct educational advantage to the students. Also revealing in this study that 90 percent of English teachers interviewed believe that biblical knowledge is crucial for just an overall good education.

Mr. Gross, your reaction to that?

GROSS: Look, that's a matter of faith, not reason.

Are you teaching it as truth? Are you saying it's true?

JOHNSON: No. It presents the Bible objectively as part of the secular education.

(CROSSTALK)

GROSS: Did the sea open up? Did Jesus rise after death? Is that true or is that theology?

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(CROSSTALK)

JOHNSON: Mr. Gross, if you will let me finish, I will explain it to you.

(CROSSTALK)

WITT: What about offering the Bible as something that opens up discussion, interpretation?

GROSS: Look, you are masking — don't be deceptive. At least be honest and forthright. If it's creationism, don't get around it by calling it intelligent design.

JOHNSON: This is not a matter of creationism, Michael.

GROSS: This is a matter of teaching the Bible in public schools. Teach it at home. Teach it in church. Teach it in all sorts of public forum, but not where the government establishes a public school system and the First Amendment says keep them separate.

JOHNSON: Let me ask you, Michael. How can students understand da Vinci's "Last Supper," work like Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel, Handel's "Messiah," Milton's "Paradise Lost," or Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech when he says, I have been to the mountaintop? They can not understand basic references in our culture without a foundation in the Bible. That's what all these educators are saying in the polls.

WITT: Mr. Gross...

GROSS: You are going to teach the meaning of "The Messiah" by reading the New Testament?

WITT: Mr. Gross?

(CROSSTALK)

JOHNSON: No. We are..

WITT: I'm going to give you the last word here, sir. I'm going to give you 10 seconds to answer this question.

(CROSSTALK)

GROSS: What happened to the Koran? What happened to the other books?

WITT: Is there any — sir, is there any circumstance under which you think the Bible could be fairly taught, Mr. Gross? Last word to you.

GROSS: Not in a public school, no.

WITT: All right, Michael.

JOHNSON: Because they are hostile to all things religious.

GROSS: That isn't true.

WITT: Michael Gross, Michael Johnson, gentlemen, thank you very much for your time.

Their passions will certainly continue, no doubt.

Now, you never know what she is going to say, but it is always entertaining. Up next, conservative author and commentator Ann Coulter joins us live in SCARBOROUGH COUNTRY.

Wave, Ann. Say hello to everybody. There you go.

And don't forget, our live vote question. Do you think the special program about "American Idol" and Paula Abdul was fair? Go to Joe.MSNBC.com to vote.

We're going to be right back.

(NEWS BREAK)

WITT: Welcome back to SCARBOROUGH COUNTRY.

Five months after the presidential election, the battle between red and blue states is very much alive in America.

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Ann Coulter, who last month made of the cover of "TIME" magazine, has experienced this firsthand. While speaking at universities across this country, some are branding her a hate-monger.

But joining me now, Ann Coulter, the author of "How to Talk to a Liberal (If You Must)," although I must say, you say it much better when I hear you do it in interviews than I just did there.

ANN COULTER, AUTHOR, "HOW TO TALK TO A LIBERAL (IF YOU MUST)": Hi, Alex. It's great to talk to you. I thought I had to get up early on a Saturday morning to do that.

(LAUGHTER)

WITT: OK, well, I am going to book you for my show, too, so just — I'll be calling you afterwards.

Anyway, let's take a look here at the cover of the "TIME" magazine. First of all, I understand you didn't like this too much, the way the photographer shot this, this fish-eye lens. Why?

(CROSSTALK)

COULTER: Yes, let's not look at that one.

WITT: No, no.

(CROSSTALK)

COULTER: Look at the one that was supposed to be the cover. Flip through that and go to the one that was supposed to be the cover. I like the one on the inside.

(LAUGHTER)

WITT: But why were you upset by this? I mean, look, you've got great legs. If you've got it, flaunt it, as long as you do it tastefully.

(CROSSTALK)

COULTER: I am just saying, why can't — it's like what liberals do with my clothes. Why can't they just show me honestly? That's a fish-eye lens.

WITT: OK. So...

COULTER: It's a distorting lens. Why can't they just show an accurate photo of me?

WITT: So, what do you think? Do you think the liberals, the liberal media, "TIME" magazine, was trying to show you inaccurately?

COULTER: I think it's a distorted photo. And I don't like distorted photos of myself. That's all. We can move on.

How about showing the nice photo inside that should have been the cover photo?

WITT: OK. Well, I have heard many people say it's an attractive photo. But, anyway, moving on, as you suggest.

COULTER: The "TIME" magazine photo editor apparently didn't think it was an attractive photo, because when I ran the same photo of her, they asked me to take it down.

WITT: Oh. All right. Well, point taken.

Now, you recently spoke at St. Thomas University in St. Paul. You've been doing this all around the country. And the president of that university, the Reverend Dennis Dease, had this to say: "Although Ann Coulter's presentation may have been meant as an act or a shtick to entertain by provoking those who disagree, such behavior unfortunately contributes to the growing dark side of our culture, a disrespect for persons and their sincerely held beliefs. Such hateful speech vulgarizes our culture."

Harsh words, Ann. I mean, so, here's the question. Are you disrespectful of other people's beliefs?

COULTER: I was taking such positions as that the spread of democracy through the Middle East is a good thing, that we should not be overturning a 5,000-year-old institution like marriage on the whim of a few state court judges.

What were my other wacky and controversial positions? No, I mean, I was saying things that apparently a lot of

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people agree with, apparently a vast majority of Americans, in fact. But college campuses are — it's like a safe streets program for capitalism or for normal people. As people have seen a small slice of in the case of Ward Churchill, the typical college professor is a raving lunatic.

The idea that a Catholic college is appalled and is referring to hate speech, someone talking about, like I say, the spread of democracy and the sanctity of marriage, as if that's the hate speech, really tells you where college campuses are today.

WITT: Which is what? You think they are just bastions of liberalism?

COULTER: No, I think they're lunatic asylums.

(LAUGHTER)

COULTER: Let's run clips from Ward Churchill here and compare that to the things I say.

WITT: Yes, but aren't there a bunch of Young Republican clubs all over this country?

COULTER: Yes. Yes. They're the ones who invite me to speak.

WITT: So, what's happening to them?

COULTER: Well, they are the ones — they're the rebels on campus.

And I must say, you are getting a very bright breed of Young Republicans coming up to fill the ranks. I don't know what liberals are going to do, since what they have are a bunch of lemmings and grade-grubbers, saying what the professors want them to say, protesting the people they know their professors want them to protest.

Whatever you can say about liberals on college campuses, the one thing you can't say is that they are courageous. They are doing exactly what their professors want them to do. And the College Republicans, no, they are tremendous. They are the ones who are usually inviting me to speak, so that the dean of students or the president of the university can then denounce the speech as hate speech, because I didn't say something loving and outreaching, like calling the people who died in 9/11 little Eichmanns, as a university professor did. No, that's not hate speech.

WITT: OK.

I want our viewers, in case they haven't clued into this already, to see when this all began. This is a clip from back in October at the University of Arizona. Take a look.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

COULTER: You take away the terrorism and liberals would hate Muslims. Could the Marines please find them?

You take away the terrorism and liberals would hate Muslims.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

WITT: All right. What was that? That was a pic that came right at you. What did you think?

(CROSSTALK)

COULTER: Missed me. Two pies. Both missed.

WITT: OK. And were you — how scared were you? I am just curious. When you saw that come at you, what did you think? Did you think terrorism?

COULTER: No. I was being attacked. Why would you say that?

Yes, I thought it was Adolf Hitler back to life, Alex.

(LAUGHTER)

COULTER: What do you mean, terrorism?

WITT: Well, I mean, but terrorism of a certain kind, I mean, terrorism of your beliefs, mean, terrorism of your ideology.

COULTER: Someone was...

WITT: People trying to take you down. It's got to be unnerving.

COULTER: You don't have a lot of time to think when someone is running at you throwing things at you.

I could put a pie in the face of Hulk Hogan if he were giving a speech and I staged a sucker punch like that, but that's different a category from idiotic questions, students yelling up — standing up and yelling obscenities. That is a physical attack. And, as I mentioned, despite the fact that it was a sucker punch, both of them missed me, whereas the two handsome young men didn't end up so well. They got beaten up.

(CROSSTALK)

WITT: But let's extrapolate that even further. Do you think that college campuses are not safe for conservatives?

COULTER: No.

When I give a speech, I don't think I would want to be the liberal running at me. Let them try it again. All of MoveOn.org is going to end up in the emergency ward. But I do think that's a different issue from — and I have been giving college speeches for five or six years.

(CROSSTALK)

WITT: Ann Coulter, you know what happens when you get told to wrap? That's what I am getting. Five, four.

(LAUGHTER)

WITT: Anyway, thank you very much, Ann Coulter.

And we'll be right back.

WITT: And don't forget about our live vote. Do you think the special program about "American Idol" and Paula Abdul was fair? Go to Joe's Web site at Joe.MSNBC.com to vote.

And stay with us.

WITT: Tonight's show brought to you by the number five.

And, no, this is not "Sesame Street," but, in fact, today is a special day, May 5, 2005. That is 5/5 of '05. And at 5:05 and five seconds today — Got all of this? — you should have made a wish, because this day with only zeros and fives only comes along every 1,000 years. So, if you made a wish, here's hoping it came true.

And that's all the time that we have tonight. Joe will be back tomorrow night. Be sure to watch Imus tomorrow morning. His guests include Tom Brokaw.

And got something to say? You can send Joe an e-mail at Joe@MSNBC.com.

Meantime, as we approach 11:00 p.m. here on the East Coast, "HARDBALL" is next.

Have a good night, everyone.

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SHOW: COUNTDOWN 8:00 PM EST

May 5, 2005 Thursday

TRANSCRIPT: 050501cb.468

SECTION: NEWS; Domestic

LENGTH: 7247 words

HEADLINE: COUNTDOWN For May 5, 2005 MSNBC

BYLINE: Keith Olbermann, Kristen Dahlgren, Melissa Stark, Don Teague

GUESTS: James Bone, Dana Milbank, Mo Rocca

HIGHLIGHT:

The Justice Department admits it's having trouble hiring and keeping FBI analysts, and that FBI fingerprint analysis failed to identify a suspected serial killer before he killed again. Two rumored child molestation victims testified in Michael Jackson's defense. ABC airs allegations of hanky-panky with contest judges on Fox's "American Idol." Pat O'Brien wins election to COUNTDOWN's "Apology Hall of Fame."

BODY:

KEITH OLBERMANN, HOST: Which of these stories will you be talking about tomorrow?

They don't make terrorists like they used to. Two toy grenades filled with gunpowder go off on a New York City street in the middle of the night, with no injuries.

Is it a good day or a bad day to be Tom DeLay? As the travel part of the ethics investigations continues, we'll talk to the reporter who spent much of yesterday tracing DeLay's steps.

The big "American Idol" expose. Not exactly the fixing of the 1919 World Series, was it? But at least now we know what Paula Abdul calls her chihuahuas.

And, well, this will never get Jennifer Wilbanks into the COUNTDOWN Apology Hall of Fame. She doesn't read her own apology. She apologizes only to the families and the churches. How about the police? How about the communities that spent cash looking for her? She even denies it was cold feet.

Forget it. We're inducting Pat O'Brien instead. Mo Rocca will join us.

All that and more now on COUNTDOWN.

Good evening.

If they were as painted by at least one news organization, the first, quote, "terrorist attacks" in New York since 9/11, there is this important development to consider. Terrorists are now reduced to filling toy grenades with gunpowder and hurling their missiles while riding bicycles.

Their yield and actual damage, a foot-long chunk taken out of a streetside flowerbox, and one shattered window at

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the Manhattan office building that houses the British consulate.

The two toy grenades, believed by the New York bomb squad to have been the size of a lemon and a pineapple, respectively, went off outside 845 Third Avenue between 51st and 52nd Streets at 3:35 this morning Eastern time. There were no injuries.

Whether the British were targeted is speculative. It was election day in the U.K. But the consular staff doesn't see a connection.

And just how sophisticated this entire operation was is also speculative. Police have the video from at least one security camera to study. Sources telling the Reuters news service one of those tapes shows the minimum-force grenades being thrown by a passing bicyclist.

Do investigators have anything more than that?

Our correspondent, Kristen Dahlgren, is at the scene.

Kristen, good evening.

KRISTEN DAHLGREN, MSNBC CORRESPONDENT: Good evening to you, Keith.

OLBERMANN: The FBI and city police had someone in for questioning. Do we know if they got anything out of that person?

DAHLGREN: Yes, "had" the operative word there. You know, all day we heard about this Dutch national, a U.N. employee that police were questioning. Late this afternoon, they announced that they had released him from custody and that he has been cleared as a suspect.

So nothing there. Police seem to be back at square one, asking anyone who was here early this morning to give them a call.

OLBERMANN: Has anybody yet decided to classify this as a terrorist act?

DAHLGREN: You know, we haven't heard anything from police or from Mayor Mike Bloomberg. They had a lot of cautions this morning, not even to link this directly to the British consulate. There are a lot of other residents in the building that you see behind me. So they're not saying at this point what exactly the motive was.

OLBERMANN: And assuming that it — it's a bomber, it's not — you know, it's not a bomber on a bicycle who just doesn't like planters on the streets of New York City, we obviously know it's the British consulate on the ninth and 10th floors of that building. Do we know anything else about the other occupants of that building who might have been some sort of symbolic target, or some sort of personal target for somebody?

DAHLGREN: Well, it is interesting. At that news conference this afternoon, New York City Police Commissioner Ray Kelly floated another possible motive idea out there. He said that one of the other residents of this building is a board member of Caterpillar, the company that makes that heavy equipment, and that there have been protests outside here, people that disagree with Caterpillar equipment being used in parts of Gaza in the Middle East.

So floating that out there as a possibility, when all is said and done, this could be a very different story than what it was early this morning.

OLBERMANN: Yes, terrorism, ecoterrorism, or goodness knows what. Kristen Dahlgren in New York City, great thanks, Kristen.

Whether or not these explosions had anything to do with the British or the British elections, they held them today. A curious vote in which the opposition Conservatives tried to unseat the incumbent Labour Party of Prime Minister Tony Blair by beating him up over the Iraq War. The conservatives, of course, have totally supported the Iraq War.

With Blair favored to win his third consecutive election since 1997, to become the first Labour leader ever to do that, the questions were by how much, and would a significantly reduced majority hasten his turning over the premiership to chancellor of the exchequer and heir apparent, Gordon Brown, and if that smaller majority might hamstring Blair in the immediate future over issues like Iraq.

The current split in parliament showed Labour with 62 percent of the seats, the conservatives with 24 percent,

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everybody else, 14 percent. That's a Labour majority of 161 seats. But voting closed at 5:00 p.m. Eastern time, and the exit polls in Britain were released at 5:01. The projected split of the new parliament, showing the Conservatives now with 32 percent of the seats, picking up a few, not clearly enough. Labour, still a clear winner at 55 percent, but its majority down from 161 seats to 66 seats.

In two years of war, the number of British fatalities in Iraq is 87. But each has been its own separate big news story. When British Guardsman Anthony Wakefield was killed by a roadside bomb on May 2, his wife went on British cable television and blamed Tony Blair personally. "He sent the troops over, and he should not have done that," she said. "If it was not for that, their dad" — meaning his — her kids' dad — "would have been here today."

The British, Iraq, and the U.S. in a moment.

First, the insurgents in Iraq, and another day with another awful death toll, insurgents killing 26 people in four separate attacks that we know of, most of them targeting Iraqi security forces in what is now a familiar scenario, a man strapped with explosives, blowing himself up while waiting in line at a recruitment center.

Many centers have been turned into small fortresses, surrounded by things like concrete blast walls, razor wire to prevent against car bombings. But the insurgency adapting, striking back with an old weapon, the suicide bomber and his explosives belt.

It is grim and getting grimmer in Iraq. But once again, as in this country and in Australia, that fact did not overturn a sitting government, even as an opinion poll here indicated that 57 percent of Americans now feel it was not worth it to go into Iraq.

I'm joined now by James Bone, the New York correspondent for "The Times" of London.

Mr. Bone, good evening. Thanks for your time tonight.

JAMES BONE, NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT, "THE TIMES" OF LONDON: Hi, Keith.

OLBERMANN: No surprise, obviously, in the outcome of the British elections. But clearly, Tony Blair's latitude, what has been almost omnipotence the last eight years, is going to be severely restricted by this. Does — is there a chance that he would appease his opponents now by sacrificing some of this controversial Iraq policy?

BONE: Well, it certainly is being seen in Britain as a kick in the pants to Tony Blair. And the reason for the kick in the pants is Iraq. And you see, wherever the voters had an opportunity to stick it to Tony Blair, they went out and voted for whichever party had the best opportunity to defeat him.

That exit poll you mentioned, though, with the projected majority of 66 — which is already down almost 100 on his current majority or his previous majority — that seemed to be slightly optimistic, because the swing is actually larger in the marginal constituencies, which is where the votes are won or lost, the seats are won or lost.

So he could come out with a significantly smaller majority even than that. And that will limit his room for maneuver a lot.

The other thing is a kind of demographic thing within the Labour Party, which is that the New Labour that Tony Blair represents, which is this centrist Labour, the kind of Clintonian Labour, a lot of those people came into parliament in the last election. And those are the people who will be losing their seats this time around.

And therefore, it will be the old more left-wing Labour Party that is stronger in parliament.

OLBERMANN: So as I mentioned, appeasing his opponents, conceivably, he might wind up appeasing his supporters. If he only has a majority of 66 or less in the House of Commons, will he now be hearing from those antiwar members of his own party, and could they and the opposition materially affect how committed Britain remains in Iraq?

BONE: Yes, I think he'll have read the message of the voters. And it will restrict him on his policy in Iraq. And it will mean that British troops are more likely to come home sooner.

OLBERMANN: I'm sure President Bush did not write Mr. Blair or Labour or Britain off when Bill Clinton wound up doing an election appearance for Blair via satellite. But what happens now to the closest-ally stuff that Blair has managed to maintain with, first, the Democratic president, and then a Republican president, if he has to broach the subject to the U.S. of the possibility, even, of reducing Britain's role in Iraq?

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BONE: Well, that's all — his relationship with President Bush has obviously rebounded on him with the British electorate, and he'll have to be more distant. He's seen as having given a lot to President Bush and not having got a lot in return. He's pushed on things like Middle East peace, he wants more commitment for the Americans with Middle East peace, on things like the environment. He wants American support for limiting global warming.

And he hasn't really been repaid. And a lot of people in Britain say, Why are you giving so much to the Americans and you're not getting so much in return?

OLBERMANN: Last question, it's almost a given that Gordon Brown will accede to the throne, if you will, of the prime minister's house at Number 10 Downing Street sooner rather than later. If it's sooner, does he — would he have a different policy about Iraq than Blair does now?

BONE: Well, the thing about Gordon Brown is, although he's painted as being to the left of Tony Blair, he is actually a strong transatlantic supporter. And he summers every year in Cape Cod. So it's not necessarily clear that he would pursue a less pro-American policy.

OLBERMANN: The New York correspondent for "The Times" of London, James Bone. Great thanks for your insight tonight, sir.

BONE: Thanks a lot, Keith.

OLBERMANN: You do not become the number-three man in al Qaeda by getting elected. Nonetheless, fascinating new details tonight about the big capture in Pakistan earlier this week of Faraj al-Libbi, U.S. officials telling NBC News that Libbi was carrying a notebook when caught, apparently trying to rip it up before he was taken and before it was taken from him.

Investigators now studying its contents, also interrogating al-Libbi. The two key questions they want answered, obviously, Do you know where is Osama bin Laden, and what are al Qaeda's future plans? Broad questions, obviously, officials telling NBC News that nothing he has told them so far has been valuable in either regard. And the interrogation process, they say, going slowly.

From al-Libbi to al Qaeda's man in Iraq, and first there was the report last week that we had nearly captured Abu Musab Zarqawi in February. Now another one, that last week, Zarqawi was hospitalized. From the Al Assad Air Base in Iraq, the "Washington Post" reporting that the U.S. military is investigating reports that Zarqawi was at a medical facility in the Anbar Province last week, near Ramadi, possibly ill, possibly wounded.

"The Post" says its sources would not elaborate, but it also says that when he left behind a laptop computer when nearly caught two-and-a-half months ago, it contained information about his health.

Also tonight, information about Tom DeLay's alleged ethics violation in short supply indeed. And could that be one of the reasons Capitol Hill has turned into the great chase to find the House majority leader on camera?

And worst apology ever. The runaway bride doesn't even show up to say her "I'm sorries" herself. Mo Rocca will join us himself, and we will visit the COUNTDOWN Apology Hall of Fame. Jennifer Wilbanks will not be in it.

You are watching COUNTDOWN on MSNBC.

OLBERMANN: News that the House majority leader has found a new way of dealing with the ever-present media cameras, duck and run.

Dana Milbank of "The Washington Post" spent part of his week tracking down the elusive leader. We will hear from him in a moment.

First, the latest Tom DeLay developments. Two of the five Republicans on the House Ethics Committee have now recused themselves from any probe of their leader. Representative Lamar Smith of Texas and Representative Tom Cole of Oklahoma made that decision, because both of them, through their political action committees, have given DeLay's defense fund a little financial boost, Representative Smith forking over \$10,000, and Congressman Cole donating five G's to the cause.

Then there's Jack Abramoff, already accused of having illegally funded some of Tom DeLay's travel expenses. His firm is now accused of paying at least part of the way for two of DeLay's aides, and also for two House Democrats, South Carolina's James E. Clyburn and Mississippi's Benny Thompson.

As for the House majority leader, he made what is now a rare scheduled public appearance at the National Day of Prayer gathering on Capitol Hill.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REP. TOM DELAY (R-TX), MAJORITY LEADER: With God, all things are possible, ladies and gentlemen. And even greatness from lowly sinners like you and me, especially me.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

OLBERMANN: For weeks, the once-camera-houndish DeLay has been ducking and weaving out of potential situations when the issue of sinning, at least against congressional ethics, might have come up, and while the videotape was rolling.

But hot on his trail, "Washington Post" correspondent Dana Milbank.

Good evening, Dana.

DANA MILBANK, "THE WASHINGTON POST": Good evening, Keith.

OLBERMANN: So is this the new game on Capitol Hill, hunt the House majority leader?

MILBANK: Oh, it's an old game. I've been a DeLay stalker for much of the last 10 years, on and off. But it's definitely gotten more interesting now. He was always really a backroom kind of guy. He didn't mind being seen in public, but he didn't want to be questioned in public.

And now we are at a point where a lot of people want to ask him questions, and he is not going to have that done. So he's literally sort of scurrying through basement passageways in the Capitol, sneaking out back doors into other doors. He has locations scouted as to where the press is going to be and then goes the other direction.

So it's become quite a cat-and-mouse game, and I joined in for a day.

OLBERMANN: And when he gets caught, we have this extraordinary image from a week or two ago, he's actually gotten — called for security help and gotten caught calling for security help.

MILBANK: Well, it's not very pleasant having a lot of cameras in your face, unless you're hosting a show, as you are. Then you have some control over the matter. But it's not that Tom DeLay is not open at all. He has, behind closed doors, off camera, moments when he'll explain himself. He'll answer questions. And he's reasonably effective at that.

But what he knows is that as soon as you're seen being chased around the Capitol, as he was yesterday, saying Ronnie Earl, the district attorney down in Austin, says, You're America's problem, what do you say to that? I mean, there's nothing to be won by that. It's literally as if he were — had a coat over his head and handcuffs on his back. You can't look good doing that.

OLBERMANN: So apart from that obvious idea that it might look like a perp walk, does it translate to his supporters, though, as confirmation that he is being literally chased down the halls of Congress by the evil media?

MILBANK: Well, not much confirmation of that is needed. In fact, during his off-camera session yesterday, he was asked about whether this is injuring him politically. And he thought that was rather comical, and that the people support him will see that this is the liberal media, the liberal interest groups, and the Democrats. So he is holding up a very brave front that way.

OLBERMANN: According to your newspaper, two Democrats also had part of their travel expenses, at least initially, paid for by this man Jack Abramoff, who is so closely tied to Mr. DeLay, especially in the past. If there is an ethics investigation, A, is it, in fact, going to focus again on Mr. DeLay? Is it going to be about him, or is it suddenly going to be a roundup? Is it going to be half of Congress in there?

MILBANK: Well, there's definitely going to be an ethics investigation of DeLay, because he has said he would like to have one to clear the air here.

That said, as you indicated, it is not just two more Democrats. Lots of members throughout the Congress are having problems with their reporting. There's all these amended reports coming in right now. It could become one of those things that we all remember for when the house members were having overdrafts on their House bank accounts.

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The thing — this could damage everybody. The tendency, though, is it for to damage the party that's in power, and the leaders of those parties. So it may blunt the impact on DeLay somewhat. But it could cause a sort of toss-the-bums out kind of a reaction backlash from the voters.

OLBERMANN: Dana Milbank, who drew the short straw in the "Washington Post" newsroom and has been chasing the House majority leader. We appreciate the results of your chasing. Thanks for sharing with us.

MILBANK: Thank you, Keith.

OLBERMANN: Also tonight, it's not exactly the Virgin Mary, but we know someone will still buy it, the runaway bride appearing in toast form on the left of your screen.

And "American Idol" was all flowers and support on the show. But on another network, we were learning about Paula Abdul's dirty laundry. Well, at least about the name of her pet chihuahuas.

OLBERMANN: We're back, and once again we pause our COUNTDOWN of the day's real news for our nightly dose of the day's surreal news.

Let's play Oddball.

It's been a week and a half since she disappeared, traveled cross-country, and returned a media supersensation. But the only images we have of the runaway bride are these old "Do I look like I have a glandular condition to you?" pictures. And, of course, the now-infamous shot of her in the airport after the blanket fell on her head from the sky.

But alas, like the Virgin Mary herself, Ms. Wilbanks has been appearing all over the place anyway. One needs only to visit eBay.

The first sighting was the runaway bride on a piece of toast. It immediately became an Internet sensation, 85,000 visitors to the auction bidding for that piece of toast, climbing to higher than \$500 American.

Then there were more eBay apparitions — the runaway bride on a coffee cup, the runaway bride a peanut, on a light bulb stuck into the top of a Bud bottle, a chicken nugget in the shape of the runaway bride, and a vision of Wilbanks due to a rare printing error on the back of a Wisconsin quarter.

So far, GoldenPalace.com is nowhere to be found in these auctions, possibly because, as we already know from her itinerary of the week she spent during her spree, Ms. Wilbanks already has a deal with the Treasure Island Hotel in Vegas.

To Salt Lake City, home of Don Bright, the singing UPS guy. Don's dulcet tones can be heard every day all along his route. He's singing in the van, he's singing during deliveries, and he's singing even when people are trying to talk to him.

Don Bright, a man on a mission to take a routine event like package delivery and turn it into an unbearably uncomfortable experience for everybody involved.

What can Brown do for you? How about starting with shutting up, Brown?

And to India, where an entire village has banded together to save a baby elephant who has fallen into a well. They're sending their love down the well. Also some rope. The elephant slipped down into the 32-foot-deep well during a rainstorm more than two days ago. The villagers were alerted when the elephant's mother let out a huge cry. Other elephants arrived on the scene to help as well, but left when they realized they had no arms.

A group of men finally saved the elephant by digging a slope so he could simply walk up and out.

And then, they ate him. No, we just made the last part up for comedic effect.

Come on, little feller. There he goes. He's up, he's out, he's healthy, he's going to live 75 years, and he'll never forget any of those people.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you for helping me out.

Also tonight, there's no joke about a huge error at the FBI, an alleged serial cuss — killer was in custody but set free, apparently murdering again.

And Michael Jackson's attorneys get their chance now to put on a bunch of kids who say they were not molested. But as Puppet Theater will reenact for you, they do say Jackson encouraged them to throw stuff at lions.

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Those stories are ahead.

But now here are COUNTDOWN's top three newsmakers of this day.

Number three, Napoleon Bonaparte. Swiss medical investigators not convinced that the French emperor really died 200 years ago of stomach cancer. They are going to examine his trousers to see if he was poisoned. His trousers? My God, poisoned with what?

Number two, Paula Dawning, superintendent of schools in Benton Harbor, Michigan. She has prohibited a middle-school marching band from appearing in a parade Saturday and performing the Kingsmen's song "Louie Louie" because of its bawdy lyrics.

A note to Ms. Dawning, who evidently a bit dim. It's a marching band. They don't sing lyrics in a marching band. No lyrics.

And number one, Dennis Avner of Yuete (ph), California. He's had his teeth replaced with dentures that look like tiger fangs. He has had metal studs implanted in his upper lip so he can attach cat whiskers. He has had plastic surgery on his ears to make them pointy like a cat's. And he's had his body covered in tiger tattoos.

Mr. Avner, who answers to Cat or Catman or Tiger, is a computer technician. But he has found that he's having trouble finding work, for some unexplained reason.

OLBERMANN: For all of the consequences of 9/11, this one falls into the not merely unbelievable but perhaps the unimaginable. Even with the surge in the security industry, in increased patriotism, and a jump in the tangible quality of the often apocryphal clear and present danger, the FBI is still having problems hiring and keeping key employees. And when the bureau does hire them, it has trouble keeping them from making often deadly mistakes.

Our third story on the COUNTDOWN tonight, the hiring part first, a Justice Department audit finding that one third of bureau intelligence analysts positions are still unfilled. And worse still, morale is so bad, especially among the new hires, that many analysts are quitting. New intelligence analysts say they were asked to man the telephone switchboard, they were asked to supervise repairmen completing their work, even do Internet searches for other agents, anything, it seems, other than doing actual intelligence analysis.

In the three years after September's terror attacks, the FBI analyst corps increased by 37, from 1,023 to 1,403, but 291 analysts left their positions during that same period, so the FBI really increased the corps by only a net of 89. The bureau still says it hopes to meet its hiring goals for analysts by the end of the year. That would be 880 of them. To do that, however, they would have to hire three times as many in the next seven months as it has in the last three years.

The FBI's apparent malaise is not limited to hiring nor analysis. A suspected serial killer, though captured, managed to elude the bureau simply by giving authorities a false name and then letting the bureau's computers do the rest.

As our correspondent, Don Teague, reports from Atlanta, the suspect was released 15 months ago, and since the mistake, he was allegedly to be able to kill twice more.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

DON TEAGUE, NBC CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Thirty-two-year-old Jeremy Jones is suspected in at least 20 murders, charged in three states and considered a person of interest in killings across the country. But the FBI now admits four murders might have been prevented if its fingerprint analysis system had worked.

CLINT VAN ZANDT, FORMER FBI PROFILER: This is the worst-possible-case scenario. This is the last guy you want to miss.

TEAGUE: The bureau says it did miss Jeremy Jones twice, failing to match fingerprints after Jones was arrested for minor offenses in 2003 and 2004 that should have identified him as being wanted for rape in Oklahoma. Instead, he was let go and allegedly killed four more women...

ROB ENDRES, HUSBAND OF VICTIM: It's not acceptable.

TEAGUE: ... including Rob Endres's wife, Patrice, in Georgia.

ENDRES: The FBI owes it to these four women and themselves and the country to find out where their failure was and resolve it.

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TEAGUE: In a statement, the FBI says it regrets this incident, which it describes as "a technical database error, not a human examiner failing to make an appropriate match." Little comfort to Jennifer Murphy, whose mother was allegedly killed by Jones last September.

JENNIFER MURPHY, DAUGHTER OF MURDER VICTIM: There's nothing we can do that's going to bring her back. We would like to know what happened, how it happened, and what are they going to do in the future to prevent it from happening again?

TEAGUE: When the FBI realized its mistake, Jones was already in custody, awaiting trial in Alabama for the murder of Lisa Nichols. Jones maintains he's not guilty of any murders.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP - OCTOBER, 2004)

JEREMY JONES, SERIAL KILLER SUSPECT: Every time I hear about something on TV, I hear that another state's coming after me. There's the state of California, these other states I've never been to, you know? Give it up, all right? I'm not the person.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

TEAGUE: But prosecutors won't give up. And the FBI promises a thorough review of the system used more than 50,000 times a day to match crimes and criminals. Don Teague, NBC News, Atlanta.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

OLBERMANN: And from the most serious kind of criminal evasion to our nightly criminal case diversion. It is your tax and entertainment dollars in action, day 535 of the Michael Jackson investigations.

Judge Rodney Melville today denied the standard-issue defense motions to dismiss all charges and declare a mistrial, so the defense began its case, put up its first two witnesses. Both deny claims by earlier prosecution witnesses that Jackson fondled them when they visited his Neverland ranch more than a decade ago.

Brett Barnes began a friendship with Jackson after he wrote the entertainer a fan letter in 1991. That was when Barnes was 11 years old. He said that Jackson had never touched him in a sexual manner. Same for 22-year-old choreographer and dancer Wade Robson. He won a Michael Jackson dance contest once, and at the age of 5, met Jackson. He said he stayed at Neverland 20 times, considered Jackson a close friend, insisted Jackson never touched him sexually. Under cross-examination, Robson did describe a sleepover that included himself, Jackson, Macaulay Culkin, Culkin's brother, and the boy who accused Jackson of molestation in 1993. Robson said Michael Jackson slept on a cot.

One particular memory of Mr. Robson provided a dramatic and unexpected moment in the courtroom today. We'd love to show you videotape of this, but I'm afraid the best we can do is another edition of "The Michael Jackson Puppet Theatre."

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Michael would kiss me on the cheek but never on the mouth.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Was there ever any unruliness?

"MICHAEL JACKSON": Oh-oh! I smell a flashback scene coming on. Go ahead, boys. Throw stones at the lions, just as I have.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: But Michael, I thought only he who is without sin should cast the first stone?

"MICHAEL JACKSON: We'll let a jury determine that, boys. Whoo-hoo!

(END VIDEO CLIP)

OLBERMANN: Just a coincidence that they're also questioning the appropriateness of kisses on "American Idol." Not exactly a scandal, but we'll do the best we can. And the stunning upset in the COUNTDOWN "Apology Hall of Fame" voting. The favorite falls short, and an unlikely candidate is elected. That's ahead.

First now, here are COUNTDOWN's top three sound bites of the day.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

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UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Mark and Michael Brummer (ph) are sending two tons of salami to the 42nd Infantry Division.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: For \$10, we could send a salami. We're not making money on this, so it's like a salami and a half, plus mustard and postage. And 100 percent of everything goes to salamis.

SCOTT MCCLELLAN, WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY: Good afternoon. We begin with one world leader called from earlier today. The president had a good conversation with President Hu of China.

QUESTION: Who?

QUESTION: Hu?

QUESTION: Who?

MCCLELLAN: There we go. You all need to go home and pack and get ready for the trip.

DAVE LETTERMAN, HOST, "LATE NIGHT WITH DAVID LETTERMAN": Whoa! He'll bite into something electric!

JACK HANNAH, COLUMBUS ZOO: Ow! Oh!

LETTERMAN: Look out! What's happening here? Oh, look out. What's that?

HANNAH: Dave! Dave!

(END VIDEO CLIP)

OLBERMANN: Well, cancel that Pulitzer Prize judging. Thanks to the investigation of the TV show "American Idol" by the TV show "Primetime Live," we now know that Paula Abdul's chihuahuas are named Tinkerbelle, Tulip and Thumbelina, and they have their own ramp on which to climb up into her bed. It's like reading them Watergate stories!

"We have concerns about the motives behind last night's purported news special," Fox Broadcasting responded today, "as much of it was filled with rumor, speculation and assertions from a disqualified contestant who admitted during the special to telling lies. Regardless, we are absolutely committed to the fairness of the competition, and we have already begun looking into this."

The rest of the story of false idols and less than idyllic ideals from our correspondent, Melissa Stark.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

MELISSA STARK, NBC CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): The allegations are explosive and detailed.

COREY CLARK, FORMER "AMERICAN IDOL" CONTESTANT: She needed a way to get in contact me, so she gave me one of her old phones.

STARK: Former "American Idol" contestant Corey Clark tells of secret phone calls.

CLARK: She's calling, and we're having a conversations for, like, two and three hour.

STARK: Clark claims he received coaching and wardrobe consulting and alleges he had a sexual affair with Judge Paula Abdul during the show's second season.

CLARK: She came up behind me and she just started kissing my neck. And you know, that's the first night that we had ever been together.

STARK: Clark was dropped from the contest when producers of the show learned that he had a criminal record. Now he's releasing a new album and has plans for a tell-all book. Clark says when Abdul learned of those book plans, after not speaking to him for two years, Abdul allegedly called him and left this message.

(BEGIN AUDIO CLIP)

PAULA ABDUL, "AMERICAN IDOL" JUDGE: Hi, it's Paula. Call me back. Listen, if the press is trying to talk to you, you say absolutely nothing. That's all you do.

(END AUDIO CLIP)

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STARK: No comment this morning from Abdul. Last week, her spokesperson had called Clark, quote, "an admitted liar and opportunist." If Clark can be believed, some say it spells trouble for one of America's top-rated shows.

CYNTHIA LITTLETON, "HOLLYWOOD REPORTER": Did she coach him? Did she give him advice on song selection, on wardrobe, on everything, including his haircut? If that is true on any level, that cannot stand.

STARK: But last night, the show went on, and it was business as usual on stage during the live broadcast. The only hint of the brewing storm came when contestants presented the judges with flowers.

LITTLETON: There will be some repercussions, but I would find it hard to believe that this would bring an end to the show.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

OLBERMANN: An easy segue from Melissa Stark's report to our nightly round-up of the celebrity and entertainment news, "Keeping Tabs." We go from one lousy program that's still on television to one terrific program that suddenly and mysteriously is not. Dave Chappelle's show is a no-show. A day after trumpeting its third season at its so-called "up front" presentation for advertisers, the Comedy Central network suddenly announced that Chappelle's has halted production. The season premier scheduled for later this month has been postponed. No explanation, other than the statement that all parties are optimistic that production will resume in the near future.

If you've never seen it, you have missed episodes in which squeaky-clean comedian Wayne Brady turns out to be a pimp and a murderer who eventually kneecaps Chappelle, and another in which various races conduct a draft of multi-racial celebrities, with blacks choosing Tiger Woods with the first choice, and Asians with a later upset selection, the Wu-Tang Clan.

Meanwhile, Pat O'Brien says he's entered alcohol rehabilitation, quote, "because I was dying," unquote, not to avoid stories circulating on the Internet that he had supposedly left a series of bawdy messages on the voice-mails of women acquaintances. "Thank God, on some level, this happened, and I'm not dead," he said, the "Insider" host speaking with Dr. Phil, also known as America's new confessional. O'Brien was back at work tonight, just a week-and-a-half after having left the rehab program. In that interview, O'Brien said he was, quote, "out of control." "I started drinking in the late '60s," he said. "I kept drinking." He did not volunteer to expand upon his apology in a series of messages on the voice-mails of women acquaintances.

Speaking of apologies, is it OK to issue a public one and have somebody else read it? The runaway bride a runaway loser in the latest elections for the COUNTDOWN "Apology Hall of Fame." We will have news of this latest apologist elected. We will show you the entire "Apology Hall of Fame" tape, and Jennifer Wilbanks will be analyzed by the one and only Mo Rocca next.

OLBERMANN: Simply one of the greatest upsets in the history of the voting for the COUNTDOWN "Apology Hall of Fame." Jennifer Wilbanks was a lead-pipe cinch of a lock for election. All she had to do was show up. She didn't even have to cry. A little nervous tremor would have been enough. She would have gotten in unanimously.

No, she tanked, had her pastor do it for her this afternoon. He read a statement about how she's getting professional help, how she was excited about the wedding, how it wasn't about her fiance, and about how you at home could send her prayers by e-mail. And as he explained as he read her apology to everybody but the police and the searchers and the taxpayers, she was, quote, "running away from myself." Sounds like she still is.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REV. TOM SMILEY, WILBANKS FAMILY MINISTER: "Please, may I assure you my running away had nothing do with cold feet, nor was it ever about leaving John. I am sorry for the troubles I caused, and I offer my deep and sincere apology. I understand that many people wanted to hear from me personally, and I wanted to be here. However, I look forward to the days ahead when I am strong enough to speak for myself."

(END VIDEO CLIP)

OLBERMANN: As if we'll still care.

So there's the voting — 375 votes required for election. Pat O'Brien the only electee to the CHOF, this time with 404 votes. Jennifer Wilbanks not even breaking triple digits, what a disappointment, barely finishing ahead of Paula Abdul,

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who got 44 mercy votes. We will go live to the induction ceremonies for Pat O'Brien, and as for tradition, we will show you the entire revised video tour of the COUNTDOWN "Apology Hall of Fame" from Bryant to Schwarzenegger.

All that in a moment, but first, back to Jennifer Wilbanks. And I'm joined now by TV personality Mo Rocca. It's been too long, Mo. I'm delighted you're back. I'm only sorry it's under such disappointing circumstances.

MO ROCCA, TELEVISION PERSONALITY: It is. Well, Jennifer apparently is still shrouded beneath her beach towel burqa, and I suppose she couldn't deliver an apology from there. The sound could be quite muffled. Her very absence, Keith, I think, makes this a non-apology apology, quite frankly. It reminded me so much of the so-called Japanese apology for the atrocities in Manchuria recently. And let's not be surprised if the Chinese in Duluth, Georgia, begin rioting en masse in reaction to this. I mean, it made Jane Fonda's recent sort of apology for Vietnam seem like the full apology that she's about to offer for "Monster-in-Law."

OLBERMANN: If it was not also cold feet, as she said — or I correct myself again — her spokes-pastor said...

ROCCA: Yes.

OLBERMANN: If it was not cold feet, was it, what, damp brain?

ROCCA: No, I think she's suffering from exhaustion. I mean, it's evident that the woman can't shut her eyes. Her eyes don't close.

OLBERMANN: Yes.

ROCCA: And so she's just extremely tired. It's like a "Clockwork Orange" nightmare that she has to live with. And you know, let's just face it. John Mason for his next book should read what is sure to be the next best-seller in America, "She's Just Not That Into You." I mean, it's just evident right there. (INAUDIBLE) disappointed that she didn't apologize to Hispanic men. So I hope she's not planning on attending any of tonight's Cinco de Mayo parties in Duluth.

OLBERMANN: So that...

ROCCA: Duluth is very international, by the way.

OLBERMANN: Indeed. And as we all do our impression of her from those pictures, it is — it is — what, she's got the Chinese and then the Hispanics after her. But perhaps more than that, because the pastor gave out an e-mail address for people to send her prayers. Are we thinking that she might get a lot more than just prayers in those e-mails?

ROCCA: She's going to get some prayers, but she's also probably going to get about 14 hateful e-mails from her bridesmaids that are all now saddled with hundreds of dollars worth of taffeta. And I don't know what they're going to do with it. Maybe strangle her?

By the way, if you have HDTV, it's not actually a beach towel burqa, it's more of a crocheted blanket burqa that she's wearing in those shots. You can see very closely if you do have HDTV. There you go.

OLBERMANN: Why did this story, on the whole, Mo — why did this resonate in this country, apart from the fact that the cable networks covered it non-stop for a week?

ROCCA: Oh, well, that always helps just to sort of spoonfeed us, so that we know what to look for. I think it's — you know, she's a character that many of us know, that many of us relate to. It's a very human story. And it doesn't involve upwards of 60 innocent people being blown up in Iraq.

OLBERMANN: Would you think that anybody who had dated somebody like this would have gotten a sign earlier that this was prospectively going to occur?

ROCCA: Geez, I don't know. I mean, I'm not sure how many bus trips she took to Albuquerque. And by the way, that's going to be the new hot destination, not just the destination because Albuquerque is great, but getting there by bus via Las Vegas.

OLBERMANN: I bet you the price on Greyhound has just gone up 10 bucks in the last week. Television personality Mo Rocca.

ROCCA: Thank you.

OLBERMANN: Great. Thank you, sir.

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OK. So tonight we have a new "Hall of Fame" apologist, but as the white smoke pours out of the exhaust pipe at the rear of the COUNTDOWN "Apology Hall of Fame" and National Museum, it is not the person we thought it would be. The pantheon of the greats opens again tonight, but Jennifer Wilbanks still has to buy a ticket to get in.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

(BEGIN AUDIO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Let's get crazy, get some coke, hire a hooker. If you agree with this, just look at me and say yes.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I'm sorry I did it. I'm sorry it offended people. And I apologize to the people that this has offended.

DAN RATHER, CBS NEWS: It was a mistake. CBS News deeply regrets it. Also, I want to say personal and directly, I'm sorry.

TERRELL OWENS, PHILADELPHIA EAGLES: Personally, I didn't think it would have offended anyone, and...

Oh, hell!

You know, if it did, you know, we apologize.

GOV. JAMES MCGREEVEY (D), NEW JERSEY: I am sorry, so, sorry that mistakes...

DONALD RUMSFELD, DEFENSE SECRETARY: To those the Iraqis who were mistreated by the members of the U.S. armed forces, I offer my deepest apology.

BERNARD KERIK, FORMER NEW YORK CITY POLICE COMMISSIONER: I apologize to anybody that's been brought into this unnecessarily.

ASHLEE SIMPSON, SINGER: I feel so bad. My (INAUDIBLE) the wrong song. And I (INAUDIBLE) excuse, so I thought I'd do a hoedown. I'm sorry!

JANET JACKSON, SINGER: And unfortunately, the whole thing went wrong in the end. I'm really sorry.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: I know that my public comments and my silence about this matter gave a false impression. I misled people, including even my wife.

KOBE BRYANT, LA LAKERS: I'm so sorry. I love my wife so much.

SEN. TRENT LOTT (R), MISSISSIPPI: In order to be a racist, you have to feel superior. I don't feel superior to you at all. I don't believe any man or any woman is superior to any other...

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: But did you always hold that view?

LOTT: I think I did.

TONYA HARDING, FIGURE SKATER: I feel really bad for Nancy, and I feel really lucky that it wasn't me.

JAY LENO, HOST, "TONIGHT" SHOW: What the hell were you thinking?

HUGH GRANT, ACTOR: I think you know in life pretty much what's a good thing to do and what's a bad thing. And I did a bad thing, and there you have it.

STEVE IRWIN, "CROCODILE HUNTER": Sweetheart, who do you want to be when you grow up?

UNIDENTIFIED CHILD: Just like my daddy!

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Steve? Steve?

IRWIN: Poor little thing!

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Let me — let me...

IRWIN: You know what? I am...

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: ... jump in here.

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IRWIN: ... sorry, Matt!

GOV. ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER (R), CALIFORNIA: ... that I have behaved badly sometimes. And to those people that I have offended, I want to say that I'm deeply sorry about that, and I apologize.

RICHARD M. NIXON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: But if some of my judgments were wrong — and some were wrong — they were made in what I believed at the time to be the best interests of the nation.

REV. JIMMY SWAGGART: Please forgive me! I have sinned against you, my Lord! And I would ask that your precious (INAUDIBLE)

(END VIDEO CLIP)

OLBERMANN: I know that's the ninth time we've shown that, but I'm not sorry.

That's COUNTDOWN. Thank you for being part of it. (INAUDIBLE) is — "THE ABRAMS REPORT" — in English — "THE ABRAMS REPORT" with Dan Abrams is next here on MSNBC. I'm Keith Olbermann. Good night, and good luck. It had been such a good show until that point, too.

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Thursday Vegas Getaway - Steve Paulsen 267-736, Chuck Kinney 256-719, Kevin Keener 652, Stephanie Feagin 238-647, Mel Lassiter 635, Ken McKinney 632, Jamie Holliday 632, Noah Brockman 615, Tom Smith 257-613, Milton Gantt 608, Dennis Baszile 608, Billy Paul 596, Sylvester McCoy 581, Janet Dalton 544, Juanita Eagles 541, Melissa Brockman 535, Connie Jackson 530, Margie McIver 529, Lori Friguletto 506, Bri Anama 503, Joleen Kuhn 501.

Big Bucks Trios - Tom Robowski 289-716, John Roberts 628, Wilbur Smalls 617, Kurt Peters 256-614, Artie Dionisio 613, Andy Kemp 596, Brian Kuppert 570, Ken Kuppert 558, Donald Duncan 555, James Cunningham 554, Heather Nowak 548, Debbie Grainger 546, Cynthia Tarantini 528, Heather Grainger 523, Barbara Herrmann 514, Jaime Whitehead 511.

Whittemore Alumni & Friends - Greg Hemingway 616, Solomon Eagles 602, Wilbur Small 588, Bonnie Eaddy 241-575, William Gause 573, Aaron Friday 557, James Moore 554, Levi Moody 549, Margie McIver 542, Sylvester McCoy 539, Robert Eaddy 537, Juanita Eagles 512, Viola P. Lawrence 510, Mark Alexander 509, Connie Jackson 502.

Myrtle Waves Youth - Steven Richardson 244-604, Matt Arrowood 200-565, Jimmy Vreeland 196-536, Kyle Ogden 203-531, Michael Anderson 190-510; Games-Jason Bates 177, Bryan Lattimore 160, Brittney Gaumond 159, Katie Anderson 150, Zara Bailey 131, Patrick Christenson 131, Justin Sitkowski 125, Sabrina Verno 115, Brittany Tanner 107,

Teaira Collins 105.

Strikes & Spares - Bill Bumgardner 592, Ronald Wright 587, Mike Lapriore 582, Jamie Lapriore 517, Ronna Creel 512.

Conway Hospital & Friends - Bill Bumgardner 615, Michele Utermark 235-573, Ralph Utermark 546, Carol Deese 506.

Nascar Cafe - Tony Rabon 277-713, Jeff Johnson 637, Brian Bahl 628, Jackie Koerner 511, Cathy Nolen 503.

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Bahama - Tom Smith 626, Billy Hatoway 258-597, Kris Hansen 523.

Nascar - John Kinman 525.

CLUB GOLF

Aberdeen

Aberdeen Men's Association - Woodlands/Highlands. Point quota. Jim Greco/ Matt Zeikel/ John Ritter/ Ron Kercher +25; (+18) Joe Cox/ Joe Powell/ Charles Chapin/ Bob Clodfelter/ Harry Painter/ Jay Shimko/ Glen Shaffer/ Blind +16; Larry Fosbaugh/ Glen Galezewski/ Bob Montgomery/ Blind +15.

Bay Tree Golf Plantation

Bay Tree Ladies - Silver. Eenie-meene-minie, three best par 3s, 4s and 5s 1/2 handicap. Flight A: Jan Young 26.5; Phyllis Welch 29.5; Gail Wayand 30. Flight B: Yvonne Kaldahl 29.5; Shirley Berg 29.5; Louise Gipple 29.5. Flight C: Marilyn Protz 27.5; Shirley Donaldson 29; Judy Walter 32. Flight D: Mary Connelly 26; Dawn Bonnett 28; Sis Delphus 30. Closest to pin: Julia Burgess #2; Barbara Finn #14. Chip-ins: Jan Young #3; Gail Wayand #9; Phyllis Welch #9; Julia Burgess #11. Birdies: Judy Nicoletti #1; Iris Parr #2; Julia Burgess #2; Janis Ortmeier #6; Jan Young #8; Barbara Finn #14.

Black Bear

Colonial Charters Ladies - A flight. Gross: Grace Boyd 89. Net: Mary Wolfe 72; Pat Mannion 76. B flight. Gross: Judy Wright 96; Ariel Dailey 98. Net: Betty Reitzel 62; Arlene Luckett 71. C flight. Gross: Barbara Mediate 108; Carol Crist 112. Net: Mame Amenkowitz 69; Barbara Rosensteel 76.

Burning Ridge

Burning Ridge Tracers - East. Man in box plus 1. Don Coffin/ Jim Delaney/ Bernie Mccann/ Howard Perrault-24; Neil Florenz/ Carmen Perruzzi/ Sam Delitta/ Mike Gudanowski-21.

Burning Ridge Tracers - West. One low net, two low net, three low net. Mike Ciraco/ Neil Florenz/ Howard Perrault/ Mike Gudanowski-38; Don Coffin/ Donn Ebert/ Dick Singleton/ Bernie Mccann.

Calabash Golf Links

Rebelettes - Low gross: Ellen Hartage 84; Donna Merrill 85; Rose Coleman 90; Bonnie Dunlap 92. Low net: Dawn Bonnett 60.

Carolina Shores

Carolina Shores Ladies Golf League - ONES. Marie Strickler 35; Shirley Vazquez 35.5; Dottie Meader 36; Ilsa Bateman 37. Low putts: Barb Kassner 28. Chip-in: Marie Strickler #17. Birdie: Nancy Sneska #7. Low gross: Marie Strickler 88. Low net: Esther Wannstedt 71.

Carolina Shores CC Mens Golf - One low gross, two low nets. Jay Leskowitz/ Paul Jordan/ Jim Garrigan/ Bruce

Kibblehouse 197; Jerry Stricker/ Tony Sneska/ Frank Bolda/ Joe Fioravanti 201; Bill Stanley/ Bill Adams/ Don Rose/ Blind 203; Wayne Burchfield/ Bob Kassner/ Buddy Broadnax/ Roger Thompson 204. Closest to pin: Wil Groner #3; Jay Leskowicz #7; Wayne Burchfield #12; Jay Leskowicz #17.

Skins: Bill Stanley; Bill Marsh; Jay Leskowicz; Paul Jordan; Tony Sneska; Bill Adams; Bob Fyock; Wil Groner.

Colonial Charters

Calabashers - Two low nets all around, four on 9 and 18. Mike McCormack/ Soupy Campbell/ Walt Benes/ Larry Bollinger. Skins: Walt Benes 2; Dave DeJulio; John Goss; Larry Bollinger; Walt Lee; Bobby Griffin; Hank Hayes.

Conway Golf Club

Conway Women's Golf Association - Captain's choice.

Brenda Skeen/ Shelba Gump/ Madelyn Hatchell 71. Closest to pin: Madelyn Hatchell #14; Terry Eisenhardt #17. Chip-in: Carol Cole.

Crown Park

Crown Park Par Savers - Best three nets. Gene Gordon/ Hal Hazell/ John Marcotte 18; Earl Blasch/ Bob Cantwell/ Red Nicholson 16. Individual low gross: John Marcotte 70. Individual low net: Bob Cantwell 63.

Cypress Bay

Cypress Bay Bogey Busters - One gross, two nets each hole. Dick Bolton/ Lars Lorentzon/ O.J. Wilson/ Denny Wallace; Bob Simler/ Charles Gaskell/ J.R. Styers/ Ralph Brothers; Marion Teegarden/ Dan Kiely/ Bob Meaney/ Rita Torre; Charles Calcutt/ Nancy Lorentzon/ David Simpson/ George King.

MVP Players - Low net: Buck Holcombe 64; Tom Brown 65; John Vecchio 67; Don Koch 69; Bill Woods 70; Kevin Brown 71.

MVP Players: - Low net: Bill Woods 66; Marty Lacey 68; Tony Dolcimascolo 67; Joe Bruno 69; Buck Holcombe 69; Don Koch 70; Charles Dolcimascolo 70.

Deer Track

Men's League - Gross: Jim Hall 79; Jerry Kerschner 84; Dave VanNostrand 86. Net: Emil Silvoy 70; Nick Bernard 71; Bill Naimey 72.

Women's League - Gross: Maria Lutchman 88; Maggie Harrington 94; Annette Whitcomb 99. Net: Joanne Battaglini 69; Sandy VanNostrand 71; Sue Stafford 74.

Eastport

Loomis Gang - Two best balls, blue tees first three holes, white tees second three holes, red tees third three holes each nine. Front nine: Jim Fye/ Ray Glasgow/ Frank Hummell/ Bill Graziano even. Back nine: Ron Johnston/ Bill Hutchinson/ Al Jose/ Harry Butler +2; Overall: Ron Johnston/ Bill Hutchinson/ Al Jose/ Harry Butler +3.

Heritage Plantation

Heritage Men's Golf Club - 1, 2, 3 Waltz. John Skarzynski/ Irv Henke/ Charlie Harris/ Jed Klingensmith 126; Al Smith/ Steve Sweeney/ Bud Fette/ Wil Breeze 128 m/c; Paul Beaudry/ Peter Allen/ Kent Mina/ Blind 128. Low gross: Jack Corrado 79. Low net: Jed Klingensmith 65.

Heritage Ladies - Club Championship, two-day tournament. Gross: Mary Bilotta 178. Low net: Marlene McKone 135.

Indian Wells

South Strand Veterans/Elks - Individual low net by flight. A flight: Cliff Marcum 65; Bob Johnson 67; Tom Stricker

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70; Norm II 70; Dick Chugg 71. B flight: Ed Bartholomey 69; Ken Youmans 69; Woody Pencille 70; Regis Kolasa 71; Jack Smith 71. C flight: Tony Ricci 68; Bob Berthiaume 68; Jack Ruel 69; Jack Leiz 71; Tom Luff 72. D flight: Robert Lodeski 64; Gil Jesch 69; Larry Miller 70; Jerry Lucido 71; Leo Flynn 72.

Indigo Creek

Indigo Creek Men's Golf Association - Individual low net: Bobby Ward 68; Guy Cioffi 69; Bill Frank Ritrievi 70; Ray Wynne 72; Clem Gagne 72; Art Martin 72; Don Reynolds 73; John Stanislaus 73; Norm Seguin 73; Toby Evans 74; Bill McKinney 75.

Indigo Creek Men's Golf Association - Individual low net: Ted Potts 67; Bob Morgan 69; Clem Gagney 70; Guy Cioffi 72; Joe Sobolewski 74; Ray Wynne 75; John Stanislaus 75; Larry Gehman 76; Leon Homan 76; Don Reynolds 77.

Indian Wells Senior Men - One, two or three low nets on selected holes. Joe Belarge/ Tony Russo/ Joe Ditta/ Jim Ditta 118; Vern Roche/ Norm Houck/ Milt Nichols/ Tom Sarnecky 120; Charlie Cinelli/ Clis Jennelle/ LT Moore/ Ken Howard 120.

International Club Of Myrtle Beach

Men's Association - White tees. Gross: Curt Miel 76; Bill Silvers 78; Guy Baker 81; Marty Rowatti 81; Dick Viele 81. Net: Carl Johnsen 65; George Young 67; Larry Port 70; Jack Gasier 71; Bob Kaelin 72; Dan Meldrom 73. Gold tees. Gross: Wayne Self 83; Henry Magill 88; Larry Evans 89; Al Schwartz 90. Net: Bill Smith 64; Jack Bernardo 69; Paul Blackwell 70; George Dominello 72; Tom Stocum 73. Closest to pin Jim Wilson #6; Curt Miel #14.

Island Green

Rockys Rowdies - Dogwood/Holly. Individual low net: Sal Amato 85/70, Jim Starr 98/74, Charles Kniffin 93/74, Bill Hamberger 98/75, Tom Bradley 100/75.

Island Green Men - Two of four low net on off holes, one low net, one low gross even holes. Holly/Oaks: William Cottrell/ Sam Lapierre/ Carmen Hagelgans/ Ed Barnes 126; Lowell Wells/ Bob Sapack/ Bill Northey/ Jim Oyer 130; Leroy Phillips/ Dick Betterini/ Vern Merlin/ John Hughes 133. Dogwood/Holly: Bob Selig/ Ron Mcconnell/ Terry Claney/ Jim Green 116; Barid Couch/ Bill Boyd/ John Carrick/ Mitch Jordan 125; John Lawson/ Mike Gilvary/ Eric Haddon/ Roger Cigol 125. Low gross: John Lawson 77. Low net: Ron Mcconnell 62.

Legends

Legends Men's Association - Heathland. Three low net. Tom Martin/ Terry Gehring/ Elliot Popper/ Bob Dwyer-14; Jerry Chiolero/ Al Cabose/ Chuck Willett-9; Jim Kemmerling/ John Echemach/ Henk Schilthuis 1.

Legends Men's Association - Moorland. Three low net. Jim Kemmerling/ George Quinn/ Bob Miller/ Dan Heisey-16; Jerry Chiolero/ Rich Cundiff/ Robert Johnson/ Blind-7; Al Cabose/ Henk Schilthuis/ Chuck Willett/ Bob Dwyer-4.

Legends Men's Association - Moorland. Team low net. Jerry Chiolero/ Bob Miller/ Elliot Popper 4; Al Cabose/ Henk Schilthuis/ Bob Dwyer 5; Jim Kemmerling/ Dan Heisey/ Chuck Willett 16.

Long Bay Club

Ya-Ya's - Closest to the pin on all par 3s. Kim Cooke #5; Dana Weiss #8; Karolyn Stokely #13; Joann Piwowski #17.

Sandblasters: - Individual modified stabelford. Roy Betsill +13; John Barnes +7; Ernie Dionne, +7; Jim Oakes +7; Hap Herkloz +5; Joe Ferlauto +4; Sam Angilella +3; Uley Taylor +2; Bill Comerford +2; Bob Longo +1; John Stokley +1; Dave Murray even; Pete Scofide, even; Rus Brown-1; Dick Howell-1; Bill Keckley-2; Bob Chlebnikow-4. Closest to the pin: Hap Herkloz #17.

Meadowlands

Players Golf Association (PGA) - Two best nets each hole all four scores on holes 9 and 18. Will Garvin/ Willy Steeb/ Dick Malatesta/ Ernie Schobar 137; Ray O'Donnell/ Chuck Schusta/ Ken Schafer/ Ron Weatheron 140; Carl Price/ Alex

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Olmstead/ Rich Reinecke/ John Healy 144. Closest to pin: Ken Schafer; Ray O'Donnell (2); Carl Price.

Beachcombers - Modified Stableford. Bob Byrne/ Nils Burgeson/ Paul Hourigan +23. Low gross: Bob Leonard 82; Paul Hourigan 82. Low net: Vince Kraznievich 65. Closest to pin: Jack Goin; Bob Brownley; Jim Beirsto; Dennis Mccann.

Myrtle Beach National

Myrtle Beach National Ladies - Southcreek. Crossover, 1/2 handicap. Flight A. Low gross: Pat Gurley 38. Low net: Maryann Crowe 30.5. Flight B. Low gross: Anita McDonald 38. Low net: Kathy Parodi 27. Flight C. Low gross: Judy Spjut 39. Low net: Antoinette Wolfgang 30.5. Birdies: Maryann Crowe #6, 14; Anita McDonald #3, #11. Chip-ins: Pat Gurley #15; Anita McDonald #3; Wilma Sturm #18.

Myrtlewood

Myrtlewood Ladies - Low-low-low Palmetto. First flight. Gross: Mary Gover 89. Net: Carol Geiger 71. Putts: Jackie Smith 35. Second flight. Gross: Helen Mastic 97. Net: Ethel Hirsch 70. Putts: Evelyn O'Connor 34. Third flight. Gross: Lala Lewis 97. Net: Betty Dye 62. Putts: Ann Sala 28. Fourth flight. Gross: Alice Kotalik 103. Net: Jackie Matthews 70. Putts: Terri Stonefield 37. Chip-ins: Mary Gover #5, #11; Ann Sala #11, #14; Jan Kuhfahl #14; Alice Kotalik #5. Birdies: Jan Kuhfahl #17; Mary Gover #5, #11.

Myrtlewood Senior Men - First flight. Low gross: Brian Pool 81. Low net: Ray Colbath 71; Albie Tkacz 72 m/c; Ralph Moose 72; Bill Hinkel 74. Second flight. Low gross: Paul Kopack 91. Low net: Herb Phelps 70 m/c; Bill Witter 70; Gerry Miller 72; John Kuhfahl 73.

Ocean Ridge

Ocean Ridge Ladies Golf Association - Panther's Run. Two best nets. Karen McCloskey/ Eleanor Butler/ Nancy Branflick/ Skip Lindstrom 116; Sherri Brown/ Sue Kane/ Mickie Underhill/ BD Ginny Ward 118; Michelle Sherwood/ Doris Fairchild/ Sandy Siddle/ Ruth Ray 122; Erma Krah/ Mary Lou Larson/ Lorraine Crosby/ Reggie Harrington 122. Low gross: Michelle Sherwood 81. Low net: Sherri Brown 59.

Ocean Ridge Men - Farmstead. Two best net scores, plus additional under-par nets. Ed McCloskey/ Jim McCombs/ Joe Neal/ Carl Schuster-32; Doug MacDonald/ Ed Gruver/ Mike Hetrick/ Bob Ludman-18; Bernie Powers/ Joe Benedetto/ John Powers/ Milt Bailey-16; Stan Mays/ Dave Cowan/ Dick Keefer/ Emil Gnam-13.

Ocean Ridge Men - Lion's Paw. Gross scores, no HCP. Paul Berta/ Bob Larkin/ Steve Mathews/ Kurt Lindstrom 201, tiebreaker; George Brooks/ John Olio/ Ted Pounds/ Bob Ludman 201; Dave Janowski/ Mike Sullivan/ Don Rowland/ Jack Anderson 204, tiebreaker; Alex Brooker/ Dave Higinbotham/ Dave Powers/ EdChatfield 204.

Ocean Ridge Men - Panther's Run. two net scores, A/D player and B/C player. Bill Johnston/ Bob Larkin/ Steve Mathews/ Bob Fatzinger-21, tiebreaker; Paul Berta/ Dick Ernst/ Ted Pounds/ George Woodard-21; Jack Siddle/ Phil Harrington/ Jim Crosby/ Bill Sasser-17, tiebreaker; Steve Westfall/ Phil Larson/ Dick Sherwood/ Carl Schuster-17; Rick O'Connor/ Dave Maxon/ Doc Boyle/ Dick Keefer-17; Doug MacDonald/ Ed Sandidge/ Clyde Crowl/ Kurt Lindstrom-16.

Pawleys Plantation

Pawleys Plantation Ladies Association - 18 and 9 holers combined, Texas Scramble. 9 holes played because of rain. Front nine. Low gross: Nancy Boyle/ Jerry Ford/ Ceal Neally/ Nancy Rogers 42. Low net: Kathy Judge/ Diane Kwiatkowski/ Cindy Russ/ Ruth Strock 25. Back nine. Low gross: Nancy Arkin/ Cindy Lapworth/ Shirley Mayhew/ Penny Schiappa 39. Low net: Carol Finley/ Bev Stikas/ Kathy Sullivan/ Judy Taylor 25. Chip-in: Bev Stikas #17.

Quail Creek

Burning Ridge Tracers - Individual low net: Mike Gudanowski 54; Jim Delaney 58; Al Robertson 60; Ed Fultz 60; Dom Starace 60; Bill Millard 61; Mike Ciraco 61.

Raccoon Run

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Markeys Marauders - Low net: Lew Esposito 68; John Sause 69; Marlin Evans 70; George Jurik 71; Jack Anderson 71; Gene Mulligan 72; Ed Bonifer 73.

Markeys Marauders - Low net: Gene Mulligan 65; John Sause 66; Walt Tully 67; George Jurik 67; Chuck Wilford 68; Bill Burkert 69; Andy Demeglio 69.

Reserve

Reserve Women's Golf League - One best ball on par 5, two best ball on par 4 and three best ball on par 3. Ruth Farb/Brenda Flythe/ GG Michaels/ Patrice Hardee. Low net: Jeannette Godwin 88. Low gross: Ruth Farb 69.

River Hills

River Hills (Men) - Four-man low net. Jim Olin/ Dick Schwarz/ Jim Blalock/ Jerry Wright (blind).

River Oaks

Executive Women's Golf Association - Blind nine. Mary Jane Duryee 34.5; Pat McDaniels 35.5; Peg Lawrence 37; Judy Melton 37.5; Marie Boyles 37.5.

Sea Gull

Woodham's Warriors - Best two of four. Guy Baker/Dick Wardman/John Benson/John Locascio-25; Bill Hajec/Keith Ketchem/Rich Dorn/Bacil Dickert-20; Dick Viele/Mike Iannelli/Peter Allen/Rand Bailey-17; Jack Corrado/Bob King/Phil McKean/Mike Coppola-17. Low gross: Guy Baker 76; Dick Viele 76. Low net: John Benson 65; Rich Dorn 67; Charles Holland 69; Gene Nemeth 69. Closest to pin: Jack Corrado #5; Bob King #16.

Sea Gull Men's League - A Flight. Low gross: Roger Byrne 78. Low net: Terry Odonnell 68; Herb Herrman 69; Tom Banks 72. B Flight. Low gross: Dave Atkinson 84. Low net: Al Keller 61; Rich Campbell 69; Don Schruhl 71. C Flight. Low gross: Lew Stallworth 95. Low net: John DeMauro 69; Don Walsh 69; Ed Meadow 74. Closest to pin: Bob Descoteaux #3; Terry Odonnell #5; John DeMauro #11; Herb Herrman #16.

Sea Trail Plantation

Sea Trail Mens Golf Association - Byrd and Jones. STMGA annual member/ member tournament, best net ball of two. Overall, playoff among flight winners: Jim Cech/ Ron Cybyske. Augusta National flight: Lou DeVita/ Jim Foley. Baltusrol flight: Jim Cech/ Ron Cybyske. Congressional flight: Jim Paterson/ Jim Gooding. Doral flight: Rich Chamberlain/ Ed Seidel. Muirfield flight: Dennis Ferguson/ Larry Tedesco. Winged Foot flight: Ralph Gardner/ Jim Libby.

St. James Founders Club

Brunswick Club 25 Ladies League -

First flight: Judy Nicoletti; Patsy Mays; Zippy Zeip; Erma Krahl; Billie Ellwanger; Jeanne Fleming; Shari Hodson; Judy Hughes. Second flight: Marie Strickler; Mary Barclay; Nancy Geiser; Sherry Marsh; Fay Vancott; Sandy Hullberg; Marlene Wollney. Third flight: Helen Gervais; Camille Hochreiter; Judy Myers; Susan Crean; Margot Sloup; Mary Ann Stiles.

Closest to the pin: Helen Gervais #3; Carol Byrne #13. Skins: Mary Barclay 2; Carol Byrne; Susan Crean; Judy Nicoletti; Marie Strickler 2; Betty Taylor.

Tidewater

Tidewater Tides - Individual progressive. Dalton Riggsbee +5; Ernie McAteer +3; Peter Delich even; Howie Slason-1; Andy Bruce-2.

Tradition Club

Tradition Men's Club - Reverse 3-2-1. Vinnie Esposito/ Larry Barksdale/ Roy MacSorley/ Tom Flecker-21; Wes Benefield/ Bill Renault/ Phil Fleiss/ Dave Toekles-17; Bud Knittel/ Jerry Bucello/ Jack Ross/ Tom Maquire-17; Dave Gould/ Len Vercellotti/ Marion Culpepper/ Vince Franco-16; Rudy Schwarz/ Ed Sheldon/ Jack Seibert/ Jim Davis-15. Low gross: Vinnie Esposito 77. Low net: Ernie Sementilli 65.

Tradition Golf Club - One net, two nets, three nets. Front tees: Dodson Elliot/ Fossi Lou/ Hunt Harry/ MacDonald Allan 66; Fliess Phil/ MacDonald Mac/ Patterson Gene/ Sturm Jeff 66. Back tees: Delaney Dave/ Albright Dick/ Kendall Bill/ Blind 58; Eaglin Tom/ Rice Ed/ Ronan Ed/ Blind 59. Closest to pin: Alan MacDonald #5; Ernie Sementilli #15.

Wachesaw

Wachesaw Ladies - Interclub. Bernice Robbins/ Joanne Meli/ Mary Salvatore/ Priscilla Brown/ Nancy Townsend (Wachesaw); Richardson/ Neally/ Kraft/ Arkin/ Holland (Pawley's Island); Dumistra/ Sebak/ Learn/ King/ Renkey (Prestwick); Brown/ Clary/ Cox/ Murphy/ McCann (Debordieu); Flythe/ Godwin/ Thomas/ Barbeiz/ Whelchel (Reserve). Match play: Nancy Townsend; Evelyn Todd.

Wedgfield Plantation

Murrells Inlet Elks #2797 - Low net. A flight: Warren Bassett 63; Jim Pearson 64; Craig Monaghan 67; Ron Crooks 69; Len Schmidt 69. B flight: Don Taylor 67; Tom Luckman 68; Robert Martin 68; Ed Bart 69; Paul Webster 71. C flight: Gene Whitcomb 63; Leo Flynn Jr. 67; Dick Lavoie 70; Paul Battistoni 70; Ed Rice 71. D flight: Liam Honan 58; Rich Paretto 62; Leo Flynn Sr. 65; Larry Miller 66; Cliff White 71; Howard Magill 71. Pin shots: Bill Morris #3, 1'2"; Warren Bassett #6, 1'3"; Ed Wharton #13, 1'10"; Warren Siegmund #16, 5'10". Low gross: Bill Hutchison 74; Warren Bassett 75; Jim Pearson 76; Craig Monaghan 76; Bob Donaldson 81.

Whispering Pines

Whispering Pines Women - Nine blind holes, drawn by pro, 1/2 handicap. Peggy Robinson 33; Carolyn Makely 34; Judy Wood 38. Birdies: Peggy Robinson #1; Sandra Cristofaro #2. Chip-in: Sandra Cristofaro #2.

Whispering Pines Mens Group - A flight: Charles Cinelli 66; Rob Dixon 67; John Wilson 68. B flight: Ed Bart 65; Ed Wharton 65; John Pallini 66. C flight: Gary Myers 60; Turk Lefever 66; Bill Mulligan 68. Pin shots: Fred Petruzzello #2, 12'11"; Jim Holsinger #2, 13'6"; Vince Martello #6, 6'7"; Don Mims #6, 9'10".

Wild Wing

Woodstorker's Wednesday League - Hummingbird. Two-man teams. Low team net. Front: Jack Barnum/ Dave Williams 70; Don Samsel/ Dan Hayes 71. Back: Joe Martin/ Len Rodwell 76; George Treanor/ Bill Thorp 78. Low individual net: Jack Barnum 72; Dan Hayes 72; Dave Williams 74. Low gross: Jack Barnum 85; Bob Budner 87. Closest to pin: Ken Van Slaars; Bob Budner; Joe Martin; Dave Williams. Skins: Dan Hayes 2; Stan May 2; Dave William; Bob Budner; Ken Van Slaars; Don Samsel.

Executive Women's Golf Association - Falcon. Ts and Fs. Diane Keiser 33.5; Marlene Goddu 34; Sue Trythall 36.

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The New York Times

May 5, 2005 Thursday
Late Edition - Final

SECTION: Section E; Column 3; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Bridge; Pg. 8

LENGTH: 315 words

HEADLINE: Where's the Really Big Money? Where Else? It's in Las Vegas

BYLINE: By Phillip Alder

BODY:

What is the biggest money bridge tournament of the year? That is an easy question for aficionados: the Cavendish Invitational. This year's contest began yesterday at the Rio Hotel in Las Vegas, with the start of the team competition.

The main event, the Cavendish Invitational Pairs, runs from tomorrow through Sunday. Each of the 52 pairs will be auctioned. Last year, this auction raised nearly \$1.4 million, which was distributed to the buyers of the top 10 pairs in the final standings. But a pair can also win money by doing well in any of the five sessions of play.

The diagramed deal arose during last year's Cavendish. In the bidding East's one spade was equivalent to a forcing one-no-trump response. He was hoping to show a weak single raise of hearts. But South's leap to four spades pre-empted that plan. Still, there was compensation: West happily doubled.

How should East signal under West's club-ace lead?

Most defenders in Vegas encouraged. So West tried to cash the club king, but South ruffed, drew trumps, and knocked out the heart ace, getting home with an overtrick for plus 690.

At the table under our spotlight, though, East, Roy Welland of Manhattan, discouraged by dropping the club four at Trick 1. This told West, Bjorn Fallenius, also of New York City, that he could safely shift to a diamond, which he immediately did. (If you discourage when partner leads a high honor at Trick 1, you are normally saying that you are happy for him to make the logical shift, the one that he is most likely to produce based on the dummy.) When declarer ducked East's diamond queen, he returned the diamond eight — the top of two remaining cards. South took his ace, drew trumps, and played a heart, but West knew exactly what to do, winning with the ace and cashing the diamond king for plus 100.

Fallenius and Welland will be trying to improve on last year's seventh-place finish.

URL: <http://www.nytimes.com>

GRAPHIC: Diagram

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The New York Post

May 5, 2005 Thursday

SECTION: All Editions; Pg. 10

LENGTH: 1538 words

HEADLINE: SKAKEL LAWYER LEFT SPEECHLESS

BODY:

THE verdict is in for celebrity lawyer Mickey Sherman - he's been judged unfit to speak at this year's graduation of his alma mater, Greenwich High School.

The tony Connecticut school rescinded its earlier invitation to Sherman after some parents and students objected because he has represented clients who victimized local girls. Sherman, who often appears as a TV legal analyst, is best known for defending Michael Skakel, the disgraced Kennedy cousin who was convicted in 2002 of killing Greenwich HS student Martha Moxley in 1975, when they were 15-year-old neighbors.

Sherman also represented Alex Kelly, who was convicted of raping two Darien High School girls after he lived for nine years on the lam as a ski bum in Europe.

"Unfortunately, regardless of what Mr. Sherman chooses as his theme on the occasion, his life's advocacy represents the quest for personal celebrity and the complete disregard for the importance of taking responsibility for the choices in one's life," wrote Kathy Stewart, the mother of a high-school senior, in a letter to the Greenwich Time newspaper.

Sherman, a 1964 graduate, told PAGE SIX that Jackie Striano, Greenwich High School activities director, said he was being disinvited because he had defended several students from the school against drunk-driving charges over the years.

"The reason they gave me was, 'It's about the drunk driving,' " Sherman told us. "They said, 'Haven't you represented kids from the high school for drunk driving? Well, that's a problem.' I said, 'You're disinviting me for helping students for the past 25 years? Hmmm . . .' There's no hard feelings. I'm not bitter, and I wish the kids well."

Greenwich High headmaster Alan Capasso insisted that Sherman had not been officially invited as a commencement speaker in any event.

"I know his name has come up as a possible speaker, but nothing is finalized," Capasso said. "I had some parents give me a call because they were concerned, and I've had some students talk to me as well. Apparently there has been some internal miscommunication."

But Sherman says he has an April 25 e-mail from Striano confirming his appearance. On Monday, she called him to deliver the bad news. "I'm not upset about it," Sherman said. "But I am a little disappointed."

Just asking

WHICH one of People magazine's "50 Most Beautiful" is notorious for returning expensive dresses to DKNY in Soho after wearing them to parties - sometimes several a week? She basically uses the store as a walk-in closet . . . WHICH prominent plastic surgeon was spotted smooching an attractive female doctor at a cosmetics convention in New Orleans while his wife minded their kids in Manhattan?

Lunch magnet

IT'S not often that Barbara Walters and former Secretary of State Colin Powell get upstaged. But yesterday at The Four Seasons, more heads swiveled in the direction of embattled AIG chairman Hank Greenberg, who was lunching on the Grill Room balcony with lawyers Kenneth Bialkin and Robert Morvillo (of Martha Stewart fame). After coffee,

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Greenberg made the rounds, saying hi to Tom Brokaw, Howard Stringer and even Richard Grasso, the greedy former chairman of the New York Stock Exchange.

We hear . . .

THAT celeb photographer Patrick McMullan won a lunch date with Jane Fonda auctioned off at the Candie's benefit at Gotham Hall . . . THAT CBGB owner Hilly Krystal - who's about to lose his lease on The Bowery - was in Las Vegas last week scouting for a potential Sin City locale with restaurant and club consultant Michael Politz. They found a spot near where the new Vegas branch of Hogs & Heifers may land . . . THAT Campagnola owner Murray Wilson will be at Foxwoods tomorrow night cheering on the unbeaten fighter he manages, Yuri Foreman, who has won 17 straight. No fried calamari until after the fight for the youngster from Israel by way of Belarus.

Power struggle at hot club

PARTY boy Noel Ashman is being pushed out of his nightclub NA by his lesser-known partners, Tommy Frayne and Jason Krystal, although he claims they're not legally entitled to do so. NA promotional director Chris Anthony learned of the conflict yesterday and spoke to PAGE SIX after quitting his job over it: "Tommy and Jason called me in to tell me Noel was done. I think they're making a huge mistake. Noel is the connection to the scene. I told them I was leaving and taking my team and events with me." The 14th Street hotspot draws a steady flow of bold-facers, mostly through Ashman's personal connections and NA's celebrity investors like supermodel Petra Nemcova, hip-hop mogul Damon Dash and actor Chris Noth. Ashman told PAGE SIX's Fernando Gil, "I'm still president, owner and managing partner of NA. Tommy and Jason are junior investors who have some issues. It's like a little investor in one of Donald Trump's businesses trying to kick Trump out of his own company. This whole thing is ridiculous."

Parking power

OH, the irony! Hollywood's favorite fashion plate, Nicole Kidman, was upstaged at a dinner for Karl Lagerfeld by skanky-chic icon Mariah Carey. It happened when Kidman's driver tried to slip an attendant \$20 to park in front of the Maritime Hotel, but was told the space was reserved for Carey, who eventually arrived in a Maybach with Vogue's jolly giant, Andre Leon Talley. Our spy spotted poor Kidman tottering down the street in high heels to the hotel's Matsuri restaurant the other night, where she nibbled sushi with Sean Penn, Naomi Watts, Clive Owen, Miuccia Prada and Allegra Versace.

Unfair to Star

STAR Jones (above) got blamed unfairly yesterday by Goldie Hawn on "The View." Hawn accused Jones of spreading rumors on the air last year that Hawn and companion Kurt Russell had broken up. Jones vehemently denied the charge, but Hawn snipped back: "Yes you did. I know you did it." The producers scrambled to find the offensive footage, but the culprit turned out to be Barbara Walters. "The View" plans to air the footage today to clear Star's tarnished name. A rep for Goldie tells PAGE SIX she'll call in today to apologize to Star.

Tubby Toby

JESSICA Alba (above) and her pals were hanging out at the Coldplay concert at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas the other night when Toby Maguire, who looks a lot bigger than he did in "Spider-Man" or "Seabiscuit," approached. The two exchanged pleasantries. But after the lardy leading man left, Alba said to one girlfriend, "He's [bleep]ing huge!" - sending both of them into hysterical laughter.

70, she shoots down Colin

LUSTY leprechaun Colin Farrell believes in bedding all his co-stars, no matter their age. He spent more than two hours trying to seduce his married, 70-year-old "Ask the Dust" co-star, Dame Eileen Atkins (right), she revealed this week. During the movie shoot Farrell barged into her hotel room demanding sex. Atkins, who was a mere 69 at the time, told British TV show "Loose Women" that she was tempted but told him, "This is deeply inappropriate . . . I spent two and a half hours saying 'No.' But it was pure bliss and made me sail through my 70th birthday without a care in the world." Atkins said Farrell tried to seduce her by saying, "The reason you won't do it is because your body isn't as good as when you were young, isn't it? That's why you're saying no. I don't care about that." She was having none of it. "My body is still the same weight [as when I was younger]," Atkins said, "but it's all distributed in a different way."

DeVito embraces his dark side

The New York Post May 5, 2005 Thursday

DANNY DeVito, closet indie rocker? The actor/producer, 60, confessed an unlikely affection for goth legends Bauhaus and a slew of other edgy acts at the Coachella Music Festival in Indio, Calif. DeVito happily shared his festival highlights with Spin magazine editrix Sia Michel inside the VIP tent: "Snow Patrol. Keane. Bauhaus - that was a cool set. They are so dark. And Fantomas blew me away. They are super out of this world beyond! Mike Patton is a genius. You know he was in Faith No More and Mr. Bungle, right? Fantomas are experimental and just crazy." Rock on, Danny! Fresh-out-of-rehab Pat O'Brien, chugging a bottle of water, was the second-most surreal sighting at the festival, co-headlined by Coldplay and Nine Inch Nails. More predictable attendees included Cameron Diaz, Justin Timberlake, Gwyneth Paltrow, Chloe Sevigny and Nicole Richie, who, just like fellow demi-celeb J.C. Chasez, was accompanied by a beefy bodyguard.

Sightings . . .

EX-Tyco chief Dennis Kozlowski strolling alone on Third Avenue at 56th Street on the day his defense rested with a Faconable shopping bag in his hand . . . JIMMY Buffett, Walter Cronkite and Ed Bradley lunching together at Michael's . . . DON Cheadle going backstage after "Glengarry Glen Ross" to open a bottle of champagne with Alan Alda . . . CHAD Michael Murray at the Ben Sherman showroom in Union Square picking out a "Beaver Hunting" T-shirt and some tailored jackets . . . SEAN Penn and Julian Schnabel sharing a sidewalk table at Nello's on Madison Avenue . . . LIEV Schreiber smoking and making notes on a pad in the garden while Billy Crystal, Kathleen Turner, Christina Applegate and Jeff Goldblum partied to celebrate the Drama Desk nominations at Arte Café.

GRAPHIC:-LINDA EVANGELISTA MANAGES TO LOOK SEXY, EVEN WHILE STROLLING DOWN THE STREET IN SOHO. [SANTIAGO BAEZ/© RAMEY PHOTO] (m ,s)-WE BET BEAUTIFUL BEYONCÉ DOESN'T EAT A LOT OF MCDONALD'S, BUT SHE ANNOUNCED HER NEW TOUR DATES THERE IN TIMES SQUARE YESTERDAY. [THEO WARGO/WIREIMAGE] (m, s)-Leggy, lovely Halle Berry strides into the Garden for MTV's third annual "upfront" presentation. Also there: Jessica Simpson, Mariah Carey and Don Cheadle. [JUDIE BURSTEIN/GLOBE PHOTOS] (lcf)-Shutter-bugged Bruce Springsteen is none too pleased that our lensman has snapped him out with an unidentified friend in L.A. yesterday. [STARTRAKSPHOTO] (lcf)-Star Jones; Jessica Alba-LINDA EVANGELISTA MANAGES TO LOOK SEXY, EVEN WHILE STROLLING DOWN THE STREET IN SOHO. [SANTIAGO BAEZ/© RAMEY PHOTO] (m ,s)-WE BET BEAUTIFUL BEYONCÉ DOESN'T EAT A LOT OF MCDONALD'S, BUT SHE ANNOUNCED HER NEW TOUR DATES THERE IN TIMES SQUARE YESTERDAY. [THEO WARGO/WIREIMAGE] (m, s)-Leggy, lovely Halle Berry strides into the Garden for MTV's third annual "upfront" presentation. Also there: Jessica Simpson, Mariah Carey and Don Cheadle. [JUDIE BURSTEIN/GLOBE PHOTOS] (lcf)-Shutter-bugged Bruce Springsteen is none too pleased that our lensman has snapped him out with an unidentified friend in L.A. yesterday. [STARTRAKSPHOTO] (lcf)

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2005

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Copyright 2005 The News and Observer
The News & Observer (Raleigh, North Carolina)May 5, 2005 Thursday
Final Edition**SECTION:** NEWS; Pg. A1**LENGTH:** 1827 words**HEADLINE:** Is the lottery a big deal?
Age-old lure of betting has already hooked thousands in the state**BYLINE:** Jim Nesbitt, Staff Writer**BODY:**

CARY — From the hard brown counter of a Waffle House next to the Walnut Street exit from U.S. 1, you can see the Third Wave of legalized gambling in America at daybreak on Thursdays.

That's when Wayne Johnson, a 58-year-old roofing contractor, gets together with four or five buddies for coffee, eggs and a dawn-patrol strategy session. For eight months, Johnson and the 19 other members of what's known as the Waffle House Mafia have been pooling their money, picking someone to make the 216-mile round-trip to Emporia, Va., and plunking down \$400 to buy Mega-Million and Lotto South tickets.

But playing the Virginia lottery isn't the only curl of the American gambling wave that Johnson rides. Twice a month, he and his wife, Janet, board a charter jet to Tunica, Miss., to play the slots at the Grand Casino. They also take an occasional trip to Myrtle Beach, S.C., to gamble on a cruise ship casino.

The Johnsons pocket a roll of \$500 to \$1,000 each trip. Sometimes they win, sometimes they lose. Each time, they have fun and can't wait to go back.

"Everybody's got a habit they enjoy, and that's ours," he said. "Some people prefer boats, some prefer fishing, some prefer other hobbies, but I prefer the slots — me and my wife both."

In a country awash in virtual and live gambling, the lottery debate in North Carolina seems almost quaint — a bow to the lingering power of Bible Belt conservatism and the curious Southern tradition of private sin and public salvation.

Consider this: Americans made more than \$892 billion in legal wagers in 2002. That figure is a sevenfold increase since 1982, according to Christiansen Capital Advisors, LLC, a marketing analysis firm that produces an authoritative annual survey on legalized gambling revenue.

In a left-handed way, the notion of North Carolina finally legalizing a lottery is a testament to the staying power of what gambling expert Nelson I. Rose calls the Third Wave of legalized gaming in this country. Gambling has had a historic rise and fall since colonial times, with two earlier eras of legalization ended by scandal, revulsion and prohibition.

The latest era of legalization started when 21 states allowed parimutuel betting at race tracks at the height of the Great Depression. But since New Hampshire established a lottery in 1964, the Third Wave has been on a roll.

Now, every state except Utah and Hawaii has some form of legalized gambling — from lotteries and horsetracks to tribal casinos.

Lotteries are in 42 states, including Tennessee, Georgia, South Carolina and Virginia, which share borders with North Carolina. Commercial casinos, riverboats and so-called racinos — horse and dog tracks with Vegas-style slot machines — are open in 16 states, where bettors plunked down more than \$31 billion last year, according to a report by the American Gaming Association, the trade group for commercial casinos.

There's also online gambling, which attracted \$5.7 billion in wagers in 2003 and is expected to take in \$18.4 billion in

2009 according to a projection by Christiansen Capital.

To put it in tidal terms, North Carolina — which has a tribal casino in Cherokee, video poker and charity bingo — is finally being swayed by the same wave of legalization that has made gambling an attractive revenue option for other state governments.

Baptized by lotteries, governments have become increasingly comfortable with harder forms of gambling as substitutes for taxes, said William Eadington, director of the Institute for the Study of Gambling and Commercial Gaming at the University of Nevada at Reno.

"Lotteries have made gambling more palatable," Eadington said. "They've proven gambling can be fun, can be run honestly and can be good revenue generators. The biggest concern about lotteries is whether they lead to more serious forms of gambling down the road."

At ease with betting

As the Third Wave continues to crest, there has been discovery of the truth that shocked Claude Rains' character in "Casablanca" — people like to gamble. This is particularly true of Southerners, including North Carolinians who buy an estimated \$100 million worth of Virginia lottery tickets, about 10 percent of annual sales, and about \$114 million worth of South Carolina lottery tickets, about 12 percent of sales, lottery officials in both states said.

"It's like Will Rogers said about drinking in Mississippi — Mississippians will vote 'dry' as long as they can stagger to the polls," said William Ferris, senior associate director of the Center for the Study of the American South at UNC-Chapel Hill.

"There's a deep love of gambling in the South. Southerners have been famous for their willingness to place a bet, whether it's a cockfight, a dogfight, a horse race or a football game. Very few Southerners haven't made a bet."

A Southerner's fever for gambling, Ferris said, is rooted in the region's frontier mind-set, a cultural group-think that also puts a high premium on good bourbon and violence as a ready answer for an affront to a person's sense of honor. Frontier hedonism has been restrained by the region's deep religious convictions, a clash that has resulted in the classic contradiction between Saturday night sin and Sunday's saving grace.

The Southern tradition of sin privately co-existing with salvation has been diluted by transplants to North Carolina. A census study of migration among states from 1995 to 2000 showed that for every 1,000 North Carolinians, more than 48 came here within that five-year span.

Gail Bartley came to Cary from Connecticut 18 years ago. Her son, Aaron, has parlayed online poker skills into a lucrative career as a professional player. She has little patience with the folkways of her adopted home.

"There's so many other types of gambling out there that are accessible online, why are we worrying about a lottery?" said Bartley, 53. "It's almost a nonissue. If the money's truly going to be used for education, I don't know why there's even a debate about it."

Gaming in N.C.

The signs that gambling is alive and well in North Carolina are scattered and anecdotal. But they can't be missed.

They include the more than \$100,000 in campaign contributions during the 2002 election cycle made by donors with ties to the video-poker industry and the more than \$100 million a year in reported revenue from more than 10,000 machines throughout the state. Those numbers are from a report on video poker and political corruption made by Democracy North Carolina, a watchdog organization based in Carrboro that monitors money and ethics in politics.

M.G. Bobbitt, a former Durham radio personality who has filled casino-bound charter jets with North Carolina gamblers for more than 30 years, is witness to more direct evidence of Tar Heels' long-running love affair with gambling. He has a customer roster of 35,000 people, including Wayne Johnson. Bobbitt considers Raleigh, Fayetteville, Jacksonville, Wilmington, Rocky Mount and Goldsboro to be hothouses for gamblers.

"Lottery or no, they're going to gamble in the state of North Carolina," said Bobbitt, 72, who is licensed in New Jersey, Nevada, Mississippi, Louisiana and the Bahamas to run gambling charters. "It's just like drugs — it's all over the state. You have people gambling every day. You have people gambling on the golf course. You have slot machines all over North Carolina. People are going to do what they want with the money they work for as long as it doesn't hurt their family."

Bobbitt points to the pace of his March schedule. His charters flew 900 North Carolina gamblers to Atlantic City, N.J.; Tunica; and Las Vegas and Laughlin, Nev. As of last week, he had been on the road with gambling junkets for nine weekends straight.

"I believe North Carolina should worry more about drugs and alcohol than gambling," he said.

Poker is drawing a younger crowd to gambling. This classic game of skill and chance has exploded into faddish mania fueled by fast-paced cable TV programs.

Its appeal can be seen every Tuesday night at The Point, a restaurant and bar in Raleigh's Five Points neighborhood.

Owner Frank Winslow runs an Internet-based poker tournament that draws up to 40 players in their 20s and 30s. They play Texas Hold 'Em for points in a tavern league popular in Chapel Hill, Raleigh and Durham, as well as bragging rights and the occasional free meal.

Ian Blanchard, 27, supervisor of a photo lab, is a tavern league regular who plays poker three times a week — for points, not money. He grew up near the Turning Stone casino of the Oneida tribe in upstate New York and saves his betting money for the casinos.

Although the tavern league is cash-free, Blanchard said players study the game, watch the poker shows and see themselves winning a big-money tournament.

"Poker is giving them an acceptable excuse for gambling," he said. "It inspires them to try their skills in Vegas for money."

The addicted

North Carolina already has its share of gambling addicts and problem gamblers, said Keith Whyte, executive director of the National Council on Problem Gambling, based in Washington. In 2004, his organization got 2,406 calls from North Carolinians seeking help for a gambling problem.

"What you can expect [with a lottery] is not a rise in the rate of problem gambling, but an increase in the severity — people having problems sooner with increased accessibility to gambling," Whyte said.

By the cold, breaking light of a Thursday dawn, Johnson and his Waffle House crew gather for another briefing. They decide to scrub the week's run for the border to let the jackpots build.

The stand down leaves them with little to do except sip coffee, smoke cigarettes and grouse about North Carolina not having a lottery.

Today, they plan to again hit the Red Barn convenience store in Emporia, Va. It's a favorite target, said Johnson, because it seems to spin out a lot of winning tickets.

"The bottom line is, if people want to gamble, they're going to find somewhere to gamble — a lottery, sports, a casino, bingo," he said. "People gamble."

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Gambling fever

Scattered and sometimes anecdotal, the signs of gambling fever in North Carolina and nationwide include:

Internet gambling revenue is expected to triple, from \$5.7 billion in 2003 to \$18.4 billion in 2009, according to Christiansen Capital Advisors, LLC, a marketing analysis firm that does an annual survey on gambling.

The tribal casino in Cherokee drew 3.5 million visitors in 2004, 35 percent from North Carolina. In 2001, the casino drew 3.1 million visitors.

M.G. Bobbitt, a Durham-based casino charter operator, has a customer base of 35,000 North Carolina gamblers who regularly board jets to Atlantic City, N.J.; Las Vegas; Tunica, Miss., and other gambling centers.

North Carolina residents purchase an estimated \$100 million worth of Virginia lottery tickets, or about 10 percent of annual sales, and about \$114 million worth of South Carolina lottery tickets, or about 12 percent of sales, lottery officials

in both states said.

GRAPHIC: Ian Blanchard, 27, checks his cards during poker night at The Point in Raleigh. The game is for points, not money. Poker has become a fad among young adults, fueled by fast-paced cable TV programs. Staff Photos by Chuck Liddy

Tonia Jackson, 25, center, watches fellow poker players make wagers at The Point, a restaurant and bar in Raleigh. Owner Frank Winslow says poker tournaments draw up to 40 players in their 20s and 30s.

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Orange County Register
The Orange County Register (California)

May 5, 2005 Thursday

SECTION: IRVINENEWSBR

LENGTH: 215 words

HEADLINE: He came home from Vegas a winner;
Scott Jackson wins \$25,000 in raffle.

BYLINE: By NAOMI ULICI, Irvine World News

BODY:

Giving Scott Jackson of Newport Beach his \$25,000 may just add to his gambling habit.

The winner of the Irvine Public Schools Foundation's early-bird drawing was notified Tuesday, after returning from a weekend of golfing and gaming in Las Vegas.

"I just spent the weekend at the Wynn Hotel," said the real estate attorney. His firm, Jackson, DeMarco & Peckenpaugh, is in the Wells Fargo building near Main Street and MacArthur Boulevard.

He learned of the raffle through his membership in the Newport-Irvine Rotary Club, which has joined with the foundation to raise money for the schools. He purchased two tickets in last year's raffle, and one ticket this January for this year's condo giveaway.

Some of his winnings may go to the Rotary Club to support charities he said, though he hasn't yet decided on just how he'll spend it.

His name was drawn from 9,111 other eligible entries, all of whom purchased their tickets early.

Jackson is still in the running to win the grand prize, a brand new condominium built by William Lyon Homes in the new Irvine Co. neighborhood of Woodbury.

The three-story, three-bedroom, two-bath home is valued at \$468,990.

Raffle tickets are \$200 and will be on sale from the Irvine Public Schools Foundation until May 13. Information: www.ipsf.net or (714) 876-2946.

GRAPHIC: Irvine Public Schools Foundation CEO Tim Shaw , above, made a happy phone call to Scott Jackson, who won \$25,000 in the early-bird drawing.

LOAD-DATE: May 17, 2005

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PC-01396

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Copyright 2005 P.G. Publishing Co.
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

May 5, 2005 Thursday SOONER EDITION

SECTION: SPORTS, Pg.D-1

LENGTH: 910 words

HEADLINE: UNLIKELY SCENARIO;
BAY, WARD HOMER IN 9TH TO LIFT PIRATES, 6-4

BYLINE: Dejan Kovacevic, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

DATELINE: HOUSTON

BODY:

The Pirates first pulled off the unlikely.

They made Roger Clemens sweat.

Then, they pulled off the unthinkable and won on a night he was spotted a three-run lead.

To boot, they finished it off by smacking around Houston's sensational closer, Brad Lidge.

Daryle Ward and Jason Bay homered off Lidge in a three-run ninth to propel the Pirates to a 6-4 victory against the Astros at Minute Maid Park that unquestionably was their most satisfying of the season.

"I don't think anybody gave us a chance in hell of winning this game," manager Lloyd McClendon said. "I don't know what the odds were in Vegas, but ... that's baseball."

The score was tied, 3-3, entering the ninth, but not for long.

Ward led off by pulling a 1-0 fastball that was up in the zone deep into the right-field seats. It was his team-best fifth home run.

"Lidge throws sliders that are so nasty. That's the pitch you want to stay away from," Ward said. "I said to myself, 'If I see a fastball up high, I'm going up after it.' I was swinging even if it came in over my head."

Matt Lawton was hit by a pitch and stole second. One out later, Bay slammed the first pitch he saw, another high fastball, off the arched facade above left-center for his fourth home run.

Suddenly, the Pirates, who had a paltry total of 10 home runs Friday, have nine in their past five games, one in each. They have two in each of the past four games.

"I said in April that we weren't as bad as our numbers showed," McClendon said. "It was just impossible to be that bad."

Despite a matchup of the game's least productive offense and the game's most dominant pitcher, the Pirates were persistent all night.

Clemens produced a line of two runs on four hits and eight strikeouts in seven innings that, in the box score, looks nearly as sizzling as those from his first five starts. But he also walked five and threw 45 of his 116 pitches for balls. The Pirates put nine men on base against him.

"We wanted to keep working Clemens, make him throw," Tike Redman said. "That's a future Hall of Famer. You need to be patient."

Clemens, who had been an emphatic 3-0 against the Pirates, said he and catcher Brad Ausmus had communication

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problems early on. But he also credited the opponents.

"Lloyd's team over there ... I have a lot of respect for that man," Clemens said. "He gets those kids ready to play, and they come at you."

Houston took a 3-0 lead off Mark Redman. But Redman, as he has all season, stayed cool. He kept the Astros off the board in his final three innings and lasted six.

"I just wanted to give my team a chance," he said. "We battled."

The Pirates scored off Clemens on David Ross' double in the fourth, and they benefited from another Ross double in the seventh. Lawton singled to bring him home with two outs.

They tied the score, 3-3, in the eighth. Houston reliever Chad Qualls gave up leadoff singles to Bay and Rob Mackowiak. With bases loaded and one out, Lidge came in. Ross' sacrifice fly brought home Bay.

Salomon Torres, who had not pitched since Saturday because of neck pain, held the Astros scoreless in the seventh and eighth and earned the victory.

Jose Mesa came on in the ninth for his 10th save, allowing one run.

Some Pirates predicted that the victory, their second in a row and fourth in five games against Houston, would have a long-lasting effect. Especially with the offensive outburst.

"Look around," Lawton said. "Everything's starting to shape up. The guys who are supposed to be hitting the ball are hitting the ball."

PIRATES SCOUTING REPORT

* Opponent: Arizona Diamondbacks (17-11).

* Site: Bank One Ballpark, Phoenix.

* Times: 9:40 p.m. today, tomorrow and Saturday, 4:40 p.m. Sunday.

* TV, radio: All games on FSN Pittsburgh, KDKA-AM (1020) and Pirates Radio Network.

* Starting matchups: LHP Dave Williams (1-3, 4.76 ERA) vs. LHP Shawn Estes (2-3, 3.88), LHP Oliver Perez (1-3, 7.11) vs. RHP Javier Vazquez (3-2, 5.11), RHP Josh Fogg (1-2, 5.24) vs. RHP Russ Ortiz (2-1, 5.08), RHP Kip Wells (2-3, 4.91) vs. LHP Brad Halsey (2-0, 3.09).

* Season series: First meeting. The Pirates won the series last year, 4-2.

* Three things you should know about the Diamondbacks: 1. Not many find Arizona's hangar-looking stadium to be charming, but the home team appreciates it. The Diamondbacks are 11-4 in Phoenix, a mark that is among the best in the majors. They are coming off a 2-1 series with the Giants. 2. No one is swinging a bigger bat than cleanup-hitting 3B Troy Glaus, a free-agent signing. He has eight home runs and 20 RBIs. He also has struck out 23 times, though. 3. Closer Brandon Lyon, acquired by the Pirates in 2003 but returned to the Red Sox because of an injury, leads the majors with 11 saves in 12 chances.

* The Pirates' key to success: Keep Luis Gonzalez quiet. When he makes things happen from the No. 3 spot, the Diamondbacks will roll. An encouraging statistic: Gonzalez has a career average of .230 against the Pirates' current 12 pitchers, with only two home runs in 87 at-bats.

* The intangible: Two more left-handers, Estes and the promising Halsey, will face the Pirates. That does not bode well. The Pirates are 2-6 when a left-hander starts this season. Overall against left-handed pitching, they are hitting .226 with four home runs.

* On deck: The 10-game road trip concludes with three in San Francisco.

— By Dejan Kovacevic

NOTES:

Dejan Kovacevic can be reached at dkovacevic@post-gazette.com or 412-263-1938.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO: Pat Sullivan/Associated Press: David Ross hits a run-scoring double in the fourth inning against the Astros last night in Houston.

PHOTO: Pat Sullivan/Associated Press: Astros' Roger Clemens pitches in the first inning against the Pirates last night in Houston.

LOAD-DATE: May 7, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Plain Dealer Publishing Co.
Plain Dealer (Cleveland)

May 5, 2005 Thursday
Final Edition; All Editions

SECTION: ARTS & LIFE; Pg. F2

LENGTH: 556 words

HEADLINE: History Channel gives a hand to late local card counter

BYLINE: Sarah Crump, Plain Dealer Columnist

BODY:

SARAH'S WORLD

The History Channel takes a close look at "Black Jack Man," part of its series on "Breaking Vegas." Its subject? Former Cleveland Heights resident Ken Uston, who literally wrote the book on gambling. His "Ken Uston On Blackjack" remains a best-selling tutorial on how to beat the bank.

The late Uston, who died in 1987, was a weekday Pacific Stock Exchange executive who terrorized the casinos of Las Vegas and the world on weekends as a genius card counter. His daughters, Beth and Katie Uston, Beaumont School For Girls graduates who live in Mason Neck, Va., spoke about their father's double life for the show, which premieres at 9 p.m. Tuesday.

Vito's Place: It was leave the gun, lift the cannoli at Tuesday's Ohio Humanities Council reception for Mark Winegardner, former Clevelander and author of "The Godfather Returns." The scene of the reception before Winegardner's Cuyahoga County Library talk? Corleone's, the Parma restaurant.

Frequent fliers: U.S. Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton flew on Cleveland lawyer Michael Kelley's private jet Saturday when she came from Milwaukee to the Legal Aid Society gala. Democrat Kelley has lent his jet on other occasions to Hillary and Bill Clinton so they can travel in comfort.

Sweet dream: SRO Entertainment President Jeffrey Mannies fetched violinist Itzhak Perlman from the airport for his concert for Alta House last week at Severance Hall. They caught a sugary whiff of the Cinnabun stand on their way out of Cleveland Hopkins. "Ummmm, Cinnabun," said Perlman. "Dam, it's Passover. I wonder if they have Cinnamatzo!"

Family fight: Shaker Heights resident Mitzie Verne has a photo of herself and grandson, actor James Franco, getting ready to duke it out, gloves and all, in the full-size boxing ring he installed on his Los Angeles terrace. Franco learned to box for "Annapolis," his upcoming movie about a longshoreman who gets into the academy because of his boxing prowess.

Franco is in London now, flying in open-cockpit planes while filming "Flyboys," about pre-World War I American pilots who joined the French Air Corps to fight the Germans. Meanwhile, Verne and her son, Michael, hold a public demonstration by master Japanese engraver Takuji Kubo at 1 p.m. Sunday at Little Italy's Verne Gallery. It took Kubo one year to finish his detailed engraving of the Cathedral of Notre Dame. Mitzie Verne says he watches sumo wrestling on TV while he works.

Eats fest: Only tickets at the \$500 level and above are still available for the Five Star Sensation, the June 18 University Hospitals of Cleveland chef benefit that never has to advertise. Once again, celebrity chef Wolfgang Puck will be the honorary chair of the event that raises money for the Ireland Cancer Center. He recruits the chefs that cook for partygoers. Among them, Frank Ostini, chef and owner of the Hitching Post in Buellton, Calif., a setting for the Oscar-nominated film "Sideways."

Shelf life: Some people travel to see the sights. According to

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PC-01400

Plain Dealer (Cleveland) May 5, 2005 Thursday

TravelSmart, the newsletter, others want to see shelves. The newsletter, published in Dobbs Ferry, N.Y., has hooked up with the Americans for Libraries Council to focus on libraries as destinations. It chose Cleveland Public Library as one of 15 libraries with exceptional architecture highlighted in its April issue.

To reach this Plain Dealer columnist:

scrump@plaind.com, 216-999-5478

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Providence Publications, LLC
The Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

May 5, 2005 Thursday
All Editions

SECTION: LIFEBEAT; Pg. G-01

LENGTH: 574 words

HEADLINE: Why did the bride run? Why did the groom stay?

BYLINE: MARK PATINKIN

BODY:

Today, two mini-columns on the Georgia bride.

* I have just figured out why the runaway bride ran away.

Ladies, put yourself in her shoes.

You jilt your fiancé days before the wedding, humiliate him nationally, and turn him for days into Scott Peterson.

It comes out that you stopped in Vegas, had a good time gambling and flirted in a casino.

Meanwhile, your hometown goes looking for your body and your family is traumatized.

You stretch the mess further by telling 911 you were kidnapped. In so doing, you insult a whole ethnic group by saying a Hispanic did it.

Finally, just when everyone is thanking the lord for your return, you admit it was just cold feet — the implication being that you freaked out at the prospect of marrying your fiancé, in this case John Mason.

How does Mason respond to this?

Does he tell you to get lost forever and then head off to a strip bar with his groomsmen?

Not hardly.

He puts the ring back on your finger.

I'm not sure the word "wimp" does him justice.

My point: Is there a woman alive who would want to put up with a man who let's himself be walked on like that?

Jennifer Wilbanks is an imbecile, of course, but it's clear now why she ran.

If you were about to get stuck with John Mason, wouldn't you have?

"Haven't we all made mistakes?" Mason told a TV interviewer by way of forgiving Jennifer Wilbanks. I saw that interview. Mason definitely looked like he'd been drinking the Kool-Aid.

Jennifer Wilbanks must really be desperate at this point. She went to historic extremes to crater her marriage, and Mason still won't let go.

If I were her, I'd run again, even farther.

On the other hand, if he does marry her, he deserves the woman.

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PC-01402

It's the male who is afraid of captivity. It's grooms who skip town and leave the heartbroken bride behind.

Not true.

Rachel Safier wrote a book called *There Goes the Bride*. It's billed as a guide on how to call off your wedding and is filled with 62 stories of brides who have done so. Not grooms. That would be brides.

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It was about divorce. There was - still is - an assumption that it's the husband who most often dumps his loyal wife to marry some young cookie. But it turns out that a stunning 75 percent of all divorces are requested by women. I got that statistic from an advocacy group called the Children's Rights Council, and confirmed it with Rhode Island Family Court Judge Jeremiah Jeremiah.

After I wrote this, I was attacked on all sides by furious divorced females saying their awful husbands drove them to it.

The attacks were so relentless I decided to surrender. I wrote another column insisting that based on the response I got, divorce is never, ever the woman's fault.

Even though they initiate 75 percent of them.

Now we find that runaway brides are more common than runaway grooms.

And yet men are still seen as cads.

We need a new PR firm.

Mark Patinkin can be reached at mpatinkin@projo.com.

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Rochester Democrat and Chronicle
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 Rochester Democrat and Chronicle (New York)

May 5, 2005 Thursday Metro Edition

SECTION: ROCHESTER LIVING; Pg. 1C

LENGTH: 572 words

HEADLINE: theater review

BYLINE: Marcia Morphy

BODY:

'Movin' Out' a thrilling, moving delight

Marcia Morphy

Words pale when describing the sheer physical exuberance of a musical like *Movin' Out*.

Complemented by a hit parade of Billy Joel's music and lyrics - "Uptown Girl," "Big Shot," "We Didn't Start the Fire," "Captain Jack" and "Keeping the Faith" - the production opened like a Fourth of July spectacle last night at the Auditorium Theatre.

While the songs exuded the same kind of forbidden, anarchic sexuality that the Piano Man was famous for, it was the dancing that gave it passion. Under the masterful choreography of Twyla Tharp, dance numbers crisscrossed from classical ballet to acrobatic duets to doo-wop and rock and roll - and never, not once, missed a beat.

Movin' Out is a series of vignettes told in dance, and its plot is simultaneously featherweight and profound. Spanning the 1960s, '70s and '80s, it chronicles the lives of five Long Island teens: buddies Tony (Corbin Popp), Eddie (Rasta Thomas) and James (Matthew Dibble) and their girlfriends Brenda (Laurie Kanyok) and Judy (Julieta Gros). (The actors you see may be different, though. Because the roles are so physically demanding, each of the three starring roles has two actors who alternate between shows.)

Their lives change when Judy and James become engaged, Brenda exchanges boyfriend Eddie for Tony, and the three men are drafted to serve in Vietnam.

One dies ("Only the Good Die Young"), his lover pines in agony, the other two vets return home radically changed and time eventually heals all wounds.

Joel's music is reborn through a live onstage rock band and the vocal mastery of Darren Holden, whose top-notch musicianship and distinctive style capture Joel's personality without impersonating him.

But the heart of this production is the dancing, with the hyperkinetic athleticism that takes your breath away - often resembling physical feats you might expect from a Cirque du Soleil performance in Vegas. Kanyok is hot and explosively sexy, with flexibility resembling Elastigirl of *The Incredibles*. And the Argentina-born Gros' portrayal of the grieving Judy is remarkably beautiful to watch, a ballet dancer at her finest.

Dibble and Popp were equally first-rate as dancers, but it was Thomas who was the leader of the pack.

He's so good, we don't question the fact that a car mechanic is capable of a grande pirouette and powerful leaps that defy gravity.

Nor do we question when he drops to the floor and turns five revolutions upside down using the base of his left shoulder. That, too, seems appropriate.

It's easy to think that every generation has its own version of Joel, a talented artist whose music seeps into ordinary

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lives and seems more precious now than it ever was at the time. While this musical is a tribute to American life, it also carries deeper meaning, those flashback moments when we can say, yes, that's exactly right.

And *Movin' Out* is exactly right, so absorbing and overwhelming to the eyes and ears that it moved me in a way I never expected. I didn't want it to stop.

Freelancer Marcia Morphy writes about theater

If you go

What: *'Movin' Out,'* a touring show by rocker Billy Joel and choreographer Twyla Tharp.

Where: Auditorium Theatre, 875 E. Main St.

When: 7:30 tonight and Thursday, 8 p.m. Friday, 2 and 8 p.m. Saturday, and 2 and 7 p.m. Sunday.

Admission: \$27 to \$62.

Call: (585) 232-1900 or go to www.ticketmaster.com.

GRAPHIC: Corbin Popp and Laurie Kanyok are among the cast of first-rate dancers. Joan Morris

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Copyright 2005 Scripps Howard, Inc.
Scripps Howard News Service

May 05, 2005, Thursday

SECTION: COMMENTARY

LENGTH: 598 words

HEADLINE: How about that runaway bride's fiance? ... Maligned men

SOURCE: The Providence Journal

BYLINE: MARK PATINKIN

BODY:

Today, two mini-columns on the Georgia bride ...

I have just figured out why the runaway bride ran away.

Ladies, put yourself in her shoes.

You jilt your fiance days before the wedding, humiliate him nationally and turn him for days into Scott Peterson.

It comes out that you stopped in Vegas, had a good time gambling and flirted in a casino.

Meanwhile, your hometown goes looking for your body and your family is traumatized.

You stretch the mess further by telling 911 you were kidnapped. In so doing, you insult a whole ethnic group by saying a Hispanic did it.

Finally, just when everyone is thanking the Lord for your return, you admit it was just cold feet - the implication being that you freaked out at the prospect of marrying your fiance, in this case John Mason.

How does Mason respond to this?

Does he tell you to get lost forever and then head off to a strip bar with his groomsmen?

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If I were her, I'd run again, even farther.

On the other hand, if he does marry her, he deserves the woman.

X...X...X

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The runaway-bride case is another example to me of why the male gender needs a new public-relations firm.

I saw several commentators say that it's atypical to see a bride take off. Usually, of course, it's the guy. We're the cads. It's the male who is afraid of captivity. It's grooms who skip town and leave the heartbroken bride behind.

Not true.

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(Mark Patinkin can be reached at [mpatinkin\(at\)projo.com](mailto:mpatinkin(at)projo.com))

(Distributed by Scripps Howard News Service, <http://www.shns.com>.)

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Copyright 2005 Computer Information Network Inc.
The Sports Network

May 5, 2005 Thursday

SECTION: Daily Racing Form - DRF (News Story)**LENGTH:** 1045 words**HEADLINE:** Sometimes, beating one horse is enough**BODY:**

By DAVE TULEY (DRF) - On a recent appearance on ESPN News, Daily Racing Form's pedigree handicapper, Lauren Stich, said, "This is not your father's Kentucky Derby."

Stich was referring to the recent success of what were once considered sprint sires, as well as wins by a New York-bred (2003's Funny Cide, who was also a gelding) and a Pennsylvania-bred (2004's Smarty Jones), but she could have been talking about the betting options now available as opposed to previous generations.

It's rather quaint to think about the days when win-place-show was the only way to go for the dough, as now we try to figure out the quinella, exacta, trifecta, and superfecta, as well as linking races in the pick three, four, or six.

But while those wagers are offered coast to coast, Las Vegas takes it a step - and, in many cases, several steps - further.

The most common extra wagers available on Derby Day, or any major race day for that matter, are head-to-head matchups in which the horse you bet doesn't have to win the race, it just has to beat the other horse it is paired up with. John Avello, who sets horse racing odds for all of the Caesars Entertainment properties from his office at Bally's, has matched up the entire field.

A rundown of the 10 matchups starts with Bellamy Road at-150 (risk \$1.50 for every \$1 you want to win) vs. Afleet Alex, who is +120 (win \$1.20 for every \$1 wagered). Bandini is the same price (-150/+120) with High Fly. The rest of Avello's matchups are High Limit/Sun King (-125/-105), Noble Causeway/Greeley's Galaxy (-125/-105), Wilko/Andromeda's Hero (-160/+130), Coin Silver/Flower Alley (-135/+105), Greater Good/Giacomo (-140/+110), Buzzards Bay/Sort It Out (-155/+125), Don't Get Mad/Closing Argument (-140/+110), and Spanish Chestnut/Going Wild (-160/+130).

Lou D'Amico, race and sports book director at the Plaza in downtown Vegas, has 15 matchups, opting to use the top contenders in several matchups apiece. For instance, Bellamy Road is -165/+135 vs. Afleet Alex, -180/+160 vs. Bandini, and -170/+140 vs. the "entry" of High Fly and Noble Causeway.

Noble Causeway is used in three other matchups, ranging from a -150 favorite vs. Sun King to a slight-120 favorite vs. High Limit and a +110 underdog to High Fly.

Just as with any major sporting event these days, there are proposition wagers available on just about anything associated with the action.

One that D'Amico has put up is whether a Zito trainee (he has five in the field of 20) will win the Run for the Roses, with the "no" at -140 and the "yes" at +110.

The Plaza also has the odds on the winning margin being over/under 2 1/2 lengths (over is at -135 with the under at +105) as well as prop bets asking bettors to pick the exact margin of victory, from nose (12-1) to six-plus lengths (9-1), with margins falling every quarter-length in between. There is even a prop on whether the time of the winning horse will be over/under 2:02 (over is -135 with the under at +105).

Avello has the over/under at 2:02.20, with the under at -160 and the over at +130.

In looking at multi-horse exotic wagers, several race books offer the uniquely Vegas bet of the twin quinella, aka the

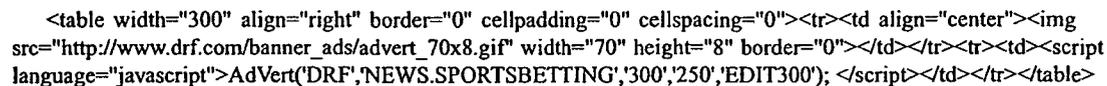
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PC-01408

twin Q, which involves trying to hit the quinella in two separate races. Bettors pay based on the number of combinations on their ticket times the \$2 base bet, so if a bettor keys a horse in the first race with three other horses, and then boxes three horses in the second leg, that would be 3x3x2, or \$18. All of the winning tickets split up the prize pool that the casino offers. At the Stratosphere, there is a \$3,000 guaranteed pool, with a carryover to two races on Sunday if it's not hit.

The Station Casinos offer a \$5,000 twin Q every Wednesday through Sunday, but on big race days in the past, Stations has offered a \$10,000 guaranteed payout. No word on if that will be offered was available by Wednesday evening.

The betting action doesn't end with the result of Saturday's main event. Both Bally's and the Plaza have odds on whether the Derby winner will go on to win the Preakness. Bally's has the "yes" at +250 (the same as 5-2) with bettors going against the Derby winner laying-330. The Plaza has the odds at-400/+300.


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As for a Triple Crown winner, the odds have been coming down (a likely result of people thinking Bellamy Road might be "the one") with the Plaza offering-1,100 on the "no" and +800 on the "yes" and Bally's offering-850/+600.

But Avello goes even further, with individual odds on each Derby entrant to win the Triple Crown. Bellamy Road has been lowered from 20-1 to 12-1, with Afléet Alex the second choice at 20-1; Bandini and High Fly at 25-1; High Limit at 40-1; Wilko and Noble Causeway at 60-1; Greeley's Galaxy and Sun King at 75-1; Don't Get Mad at 100-1 (down from 300-1); Andromeda's Hero at 125-1; Closing Argument, Greater Good, and Flower Alley at 150-1; Buzzards Bay at 200-1; Coin Silver, Sort It Out, and Spanish Chestnut at 250-1; Going Wild at 300-1; and Giacomo at 400-1.

Non-Derby action available as always

If you're looking to bet more sports this weekend, there's plenty of other action going on besides the Derby.

* First and foremost, the NBA playoffs continue (as of Thursday, the Spurs-Sonics was the only second-round matchup set in stone).

* The Nextel Cup's Dodge Charger 500 will be run under the lights Saturday at Darlington Raceway in South Carolina, starting at 4:45 p.m. Pacific time. Series points leader Jimmie Johnson is the 7-1 favorite, with Jeff Gordon and Ryan Newman at 8-1.

* On Saturday night, Diego Corrales is a-160 favorite vs. Jose Luis Castillo in a 135-pound title fight at the Mandalay Bay Events Center.

* Also in Vegas on Saturday night, the Arena Football League's Las Vegas Gladiators host the Dallas Desperadoes at 7 p.m. at the Thomas and Mack Center. The Gladiators are a 3-point favorite.

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Copyright 2005 Star News
Star News (Wilmington NC)

May 5, 2005, Thursday

SECTION: Currents; Pg. 13

LENGTH: 540 words

HEADLINE: Velvet Revolver wants you to go to Electric Wonderland

BYLINE: Kristi Singer, Star News Correspondent

BODY:

Critics were skeptical. Music fans, hopeful. Could two of rock's biggest bands, Stone Temple Pilots and Guns N' Roses, successfully merge?

With a No. 1 debuting album, more than three million discs sold and a Grammy Award in hand, Velvet Revolver has proved that yes, they can.

In support of its heavy-hitting rock success Contraband, Velvet Revolver - lead vocalist Scott Weiland, guitarist Slash, bassist Duff McKagan, drummer Matt Sorum and guitarist Dave Kushner - is headlining its Electric Wonderland tour, which stops tonight at the Alltel Pavilion at Walnut Creek in Raleigh.

Currents caught up with Mr. Kushner, who played with Wasted Youth and Electric Love Hogs before Velvet Revolver, to shoot the breeze on all things Revolver related. Here's what he had to say:

How did you first get involved with Velvet Revolver? I had been playing in a band with Duff (McKagan) before the band started. After they tried working for a month with the singer and guitarist from Buckcherry, they decided to part ways. Duff called me; I came down and never left.

Does Scott do anything crazy on stage? Does he still dress up like he did in Stone Temple Pilots, or is he more toned down? I think with this band he's definitely more ... toned down I guess, only as far as he's not wearing wigs and dresses and stuff like that. But not really toned down in any other way.

'Contraband' debuted at No. 1 and has sold millions. Did it surprise you, or did you know that you were going to unleash something powerful? The only part that wasn't a surprise was the fact that we knew a week before it came out that that was going to happen because people kept telling us. People kept saying, "I think it's going to debut at No. 1." I remember Clive Davis calling us on a conference call while we were in Vegas, telling us on a Saturday or Sunday that it was going to debut at No. 1 on Tuesday ... So it wasn't an actual surprise.

But, it was a surprise in the sense that we didn't expect it to happen. We just didn't know. The record-buying public is so fickle. It's not a guaranteed thing, ever. You don't know how they're going to view it, if they're going to be ultra-critical.

How did you avoid negative assumptions from critics and fans? I don't think we did avoid it. We got a lot of that. From the beginning of the first show we played we had a press conference and people were saying, "What can guarantee that you guys are even going to be able to make a record?" There's never been a point where we've gotten away from that. It still happens. People call it "supergroup" or this or that. We've got some bad reviews and we've had people saying they think it will fall apart tomorrow. So we haven't avoided it.

The only thing we've done to dissuade it in a sense is persevere. When people thought Scott wouldn't stay out of jail, he did. When people thought we wouldn't get a record deal, we did. When people thought we wouldn't make a record, we did. And when people thought we wouldn't be able to tour, we did. And when people thought we wouldn't even get to a second record - that's what we're getting ready to do after this touring is done in a couple months. You lead by example, not by vain attempts.

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GRAPHIC: courtesy alltel pavilion. happiness is a warm, fuzzy gun: From left, Duff McKagan, Slash, Scott Weiland, Matt Sorum and Dave Kushner of Velvet Revolver.

LOAD-DATE: May 18, 2005

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Copyright 2005 The Times-Picayune Publishing Company
Times-Picayune (New Orleans)

May 5, 2005 Thursday

SECTION: LIVING; Pg. 1

LENGTH: 1450 words

HEADLINE: White shoes, cold feet;
It's hard to say 'I don't' when a church full of wedding guests is expecting 'I do'

BYLINE: By Chris Bynum , Staff writer

BODY:

Aug. 1, 1970. The temperature was 104 degrees, and I had cold feet.

Ten months before I had said, "Yes, I'll marry you," to a tall guy with a cleft in his chin and the most gorgeous hazel eyes I had ever seen. I was safe in the cocoon of my senior year in college. A summer wedding and a church altar seemed a long way off.

Now, here I was, standing in the aisle that led to it.

The church's stained-glass window and a peripheral view of my future mother-in-law were before me. It was the latter that kept me on course. This was her oldest son. She had been a divorced mother. She liked me, maybe even loved me. Besides, runaway brides were not in vogue in the '70s.

I had come of age in the heyday of "love-ins" and communes. Yet flowers in my hair and Birkenstocks on my feet could not detour me from being a traditional bride, in every sense of the two words.

The only rebellious thing I did was to plan a wedding using the balcony as the altar simply because I preferred that particular stained-glass window. Turning the church around was minor, considering that a rite of passage turns one's life around.

I had kept any thoughts of bolting to myself. When I awoke that day as Ms. (yes, Gloria Steinem, I was among the early converts to embrace the title), I knew I would go to bed as Mrs. (tradition is tradition; at least it was 35 years ago). I knew that at 2:30 p.m. I would slip into the wedding dress that my mother had decided was the blight, not on the wedding, but on my reputation.

The gown was not pure white, but had a wide pale pink ribbon woven into the lace that went down the front of the dress. I had spotted it in an issue of Vogue magazine and had searched two cities to find it. My mother thought it was a statement of my virtue, not of fashion. For me, a Mary Quant devotee, cutting edge was an exultation of tradition, not a deviation from it.

I'm not sure if it was the thought my mother had of seeing me in that dress, but she took more tranquilizers than she should have. Let's just say that on my wedding day, my mother didn't have a care in the world, not even a concern about the palest of pink.

My father deviated from his usual behavior on festive days and came to the wedding stone sober. Perhaps if he had had just one drink, he wouldn't have uttered the words he did just as we stepped into the aisle.

"It's not too late to change your mind. Don't worry about the expense or anything," he said, just as I slipped my arm through the crook of his. I could so easily withdraw my hand and make my getaway through the double doors behind me. But a veiled bride running from a church alone is about as eye-catching as a robber in a ski mask running from a 7-Eleven.

A commitment is a commitment. At what point had I committed myself? When I said "yes" to a ringless proposal?

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Times-Picayune (New Orleans) May 5, 2005 Thursday

At the point he slipped the ring on my finger two weeks later? When we told his parents? When we told my parents? When I ordered my wedding gown? When I booked the church? Perhaps the point of no return was when I put the stamp on the last invitation and handed the bundles of off-white envelopes with the engraved invitations over to the U.S. Postal Service. That act alone was binding. I had just gotten the government involved. Postmarks are legal markers, aren't they? If I had bolted, would I have committed mail fraud?

I only know that I wasn't the only one who said "yes." Other people, known as guests, were saying "yes" to my wedding. Every incoming RSVP was like a boomerang coming back.

Allow me to spare you the suspense. Before the sun set on Aug. 1, 1970, I became a married woman.

Fast forward to April 26, 2005. In Duluth, Ga., Jennifer Wilbanks went to Plan B. She became the real-life runaway bride, the woman with whom any bride (no matter how much she loves her groom and desires their union) can identify. The tie that binds us? Cold feet. Most often attributed to men, women get them, too. Thank you, Ms. Wilbanks, for illustrating that, even at the expense of prosecution for a false kidnapping claim.

I stood the course and wore the white illusion veil as crowds gathered. Wilbanks bolted and wore a striped blanket over her head as news photographers swarmed her at the Albuquerque, N.M., airport. She made global news. I made the local wedding announcements.

Let's just say that any bride who has seen her future life pass before her eyes can sympathize with a woman whose immediate future was 14 bridesmaids and 600 wedding guests. The size of the wedding doesn't matter. The gravity of what it symbolizes does.

Why Wilbanks stopped in her tracks just in time to hop a bus to Las Vegas (ironically the marrying capital of the country) is anyone's guess. And, yes, that element of selfishness cannot be disputed. But no one can walk in another's *peau de soie* shoes. I can tell you only why I chose to keep walking, and how I lived to tell about it.

Flashback to Aug. 3, 1970. At 21, I had been a married lady for two days. I was the happy newlywed, but the seriousness of what I had done had begun to hit me. I was now a responsible adult. That revelation necessitated a walk down the beach — alone.

The waves were silver in the night, and they licked my toes as they lapped gently against the shore. Cold feet. But too late.

There was a campfire ahead of me, and as I got closer, I caught sight of the lone person enjoying it.

"Hey!" he said. Too many years have gone by for me to remember how he got my attention, but we shared the campfire for a few minutes. I sat on a washed-up log on the other side of the flames. He was young, a teenager, probably 15, a few pimples to prove it.

After talking about the beach and the weather and summer vacation, I got up to leave.

"Where are your parents staying?" he called behind me.

I swallowed hard.

"Up the beach," I said. I decided to let the darkness, my hair in braids, and the fact that I wore braces allow the myth to live on. For that fleeting moment, I was a carefree teenager again.

"Do you like to walk the beach?" he asked.

"I do," I said.

The echo of those two words and the last time I had spoken them weakened my knees a bit as I walked away.

I never asked my husband if he had cold feet on our wedding day, and who knows, Wilbanks' groom may have been relieved that his bride's feet were the first to feel the chill.

But what if I could do it all over again and hop a bus to Vegas?

The Albuquerque police chief told reporters that the runaway bride had "become scared and concerned about her pending marriage and decided she needed some time alone."

Times-Picayune (New Orleans) May 5, 2005 Thursday

Thirty-five years ago that could have been the case. But unannounced "time alone" in today's world secured by 24-hour news networks and parking lot security videos?

When a bride goes AWOL in 2005, there are fliers, yellow ribbons on mailboxes (much more dramatic than pale pink on a wedding dress), CNN and Jay Leno.

Life was simpler in the '70s.

Wilbanks will have to live with the hometown cafe owner's comments that her action was "one of the most selfish and self-centered acts I've ever seen," and she will sweat out the possible legal repercussions. But odds are, Julia Roberts, the "Runaway Bride" of the 1999 movie, is probably already being asked to play Wilbanks in a sequel.

I, on the other hand, didn't make international news with my fleeting hours of cold feet. I did, however, make the legal notices in the state newspaper when I got a divorce two years later.

My mother blamed it on the pink ribbon on my otherwise white wedding dress. My father said nothing. He had given me the option as we stood in the aisle at the Baptist church.

I can't speak for Wilbanks. (And I can't help but wonder if she saw the face of her future mother-in-law as the bus crossed the Nevada line.) But a picture — whether it's in your mind or on the front page of the newspaper — is worth a thousand words. And timing is everything. When the preacher says, "Speak now or forever hold your peace," he has a point. The Rev. Alan Jones of the Peachtree Corners Baptist Church, who was to have performed the ceremony, never got the chance to utter those profound words.

What he did say, when the prodigal daughter returned, was that Wilbanks' fiance had told him, "Everybody has a right to make a mistake."

Probably so. But the timing of the mistake can make the difference in how that mistake goes down in history.

I can live with the yellowed bridal portrait of me, the short-term bride, in the white veil. Wilbanks, the runaway bride, will have to live with the front page photos of her face veiled under the striped blanket.

Who's to say which picture speaks the thousand words when "I do" should or shouldn't be two of them?

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Staff writer Chris Bynum can be reached at cbynum@timespicayune.com or at (504) 826-3458.

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2005

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Copyright 2005 The Tulsa World
Tulsa World (Oklahoma)May 5, 2005 Thursday
Final Home Edition**SECTION:** Obituaries, Deaths; Pg. A12**LENGTH:** 568 words**HEADLINE:** David**BYLINE:** Staff Reports**BODY:**

DAVID — Roy Burdett. In celebration of the life of Roy Burdett David. Roy was born in Galveston, TX, on September 7, 1909. His family moved to Fort Smith where he lettered in football as a Fort Smith Grizzly Bear. After working a few years he was admitted to the University of Oklahoma where he received a Law Degree from the University of Oklahoma School of Law. He practiced for over 72 years and at one point Mr. David was the oldest member of the Oklahoma Bar Association, actually practicing. He married Lorrene Bowman in 1938 and they moved from Oklahoma City to New Orleans, LA. In 1942 they had a daughter, Patricia Lee David. While in New Orleans, Mr. David branched out his law practice to include the aviation business. He started a company called Skytrain where he purchased DC3 and DC6 aircraft and hauled freight. He and a partner flew cattle from Cuba to Kings Ranch in Texas. Howard Hughes and TWA bought him out so he immediately jumped into the helicopter business. He pioneered agricultural spraying by helicopters. Soon his company was spraying banana and sugar cane plantations in Central America for United Fruit Company. In 1950, his second daughter, Carolyn Suzanne, was born. At that time, Allied Helicopter Service grew larger and a decision to move to a more central part of the United States had to be made. Mr. David packed up "his girls" and they moved to Tulsa, OK.

Here he established his law practice and his helicopter business. His daughter Patty became a very talented golfer. She was Oklahoma Jr. Champion in golf. While attending the University of Arkansas she was driving back to Tulsa and was killed by a drunk driver in 1962. In 1964 Mr. David branched out and became a partner in a Las Vegas Hotel, partnered with Shirley MacLaine and Steve Parker. Things did not work out and they sold the hotel to Wayne Newton, which became the Aladdin Hotel on the Vegas Strip. Soon after this he became a member of Lloyds of London and helped broker aviation deals. His wife, Lorrene, died in 1972. Mr. David continued his law practice and helicopter business until 2004 when he retired to St. Simeon's retirement home. He is survived by: his daughter, Carolyn Suzanne Stephens; his grandchildren, David Heath and Lauren Elizabeth Stephens; his son-in-law, Jim T. Hatfield, Jim's daughters, Kelley, Sonya, son-in-law, Morgan, and granddaughter, Sophie Morgan, who all live in Fayetteville, AR. His sister, Helen Rullman still lives in Oklahoma City, and his dear friend, Mary Pierre resides in Tulsa. Mr. David's life was full and exciting. He traveled all over the world discovering new things that he would utilize in his business practices. He was extremely pleased that his granddaughter, Lauren, was following in his footsteps. She is a law student at the University of Virginia. He was an amazing lawyer and tenacious businessman. His wife always told him that "no problem is insurmountable if you can find humor in it!" He knew that there would be life after death and that was definitely something to smile about. We will miss him. Go in Peace. In lieu of flowers memorials may be made to the Lady Razorback Golf program and the Roy B. David "For the love of golf" scholarship endowment at the University of Arkansas, 131 Barnhill Arena, Arkansas 72701. A memorial service will be held for Mr. David on Saturday, May 7, 2005, at Moore's Memory Chapel. Moore's, 583-6148.

LOAD-DATE: May 6, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Badger Herald via U-Wire
University Wire

May 5, 2005 Thursday

SECTION: COLUMN**LENGTH:** 684 words**HEADLINE:** Runaway bride story overdone by media**BYLINE:** By Adam Smith, Badger Herald; **SOURCE:** U. Wisconsin**DATELINE:** MADISON, Wis.**BODY:**

Jennifer Wilbanks got a case of cold feet last week, a few nights before her wedding. Wilbanks said she was going jogging and instead cut her hair and took a cross-country road trip. It didn't take long after her fiance, John Mason, filed a missing-persons report for the media feeding frenzy to get wind of the case. Twenty-four-hour news networks, with 23 hours of extra space to fill every day, interviewed criminologists and detectives who speculated on where Wilbanks was, who had abducted her and whether or not she was still alive. It is unlikely that a single person who tuned in to cable news at any point between the disappearance and the time this paper reaches newsstands didn't see "an undated photo" of Jennifer Wilbanks. In fact, as of May 5, the term "runaway bride" appears in the top five headlines on the Web sites of all three cable news networks.

Isn't enough enough already? Is there anyone out there who could actually care less about Jennifer Wilbanks? The poor woman freaked out over her 500-guest wedding and skipped town for a couple of days. She wasn't on a lavish vacation. Most of her time in Vegas was spent hanging around the Greyhound station. Wilbanks is an adult. She doesn't need to ask permission to buy a bus ticket and take a ride. Admittedly, when she saw that everyone was looking for her and that the case had become a national circus, she probably should have at least phoned home.

When police found her, she shouldn't have said she had been abducted. However, a woman who was in a state of mind that caused her to run away from her wedding probably wasn't capable of acting rationally. In fact, realizing that Greta Van Susteren, who has been in desperate need of material ever since Scott Peterson was sentenced, had preemptively turned her into the next Laci probably didn't help her mental condition.

Can we get a little forgiveness here, please? It's not like Wilbanks pulled an Audrey Seiler, staging her own abduction and letting heavily armed cops spend an afternoon sweeping a field. Her fiance, who was the prime suspect for any foul play involved in the disappearance, has already publicly said that he still plans to go through with the marriage. No one is a bigger victim here than the man whose fiancée disappeared and was the prime suspect in the murder case.

Regardless, Wilbanks is still front-page material. Does anyone actually care whether or not she is charged with a crime? Actually, it appears they do. The Gwinnett County District Attorney's office has been flooded with phone calls and correspondence demanding that Wilbanks be punished for her actions. The cable news networks' panels of experts are currently fiercely debating the merits of a criminal case.

Meanwhile, the alleged BTK killer, a suspect in 10 murders, pleaded not guilty Tuesday morning and the headline only appeared on the front page of one of the three networks' Web sites Tuesday evening. In other news, protesters have planned 60-straight hours of vigils for convicted serial killer Michael Ross, who has admitted to killing eight women and whose time on death row is coming very close to its end. Thankfully, the media and public have their priorities straight.

On a lighter note, next Saturday I will walk down the aisle and end my tenure as a student at the University of Wisconsin, and consequently this will be my last piece as a member of the Badger Herald's staff. I have enjoyed writing and hope that you have enjoyed reading. I appreciate all of the feedback and e-mails that I received in response to my

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University Wire May 5, 2005 Thursday

columns this last year, favorable or otherwise. I want to thank all of the people who have made the last four years the best four years of my life as well as the entire staff of the Badger Herald, who work tirelessly to produce the best damn student paper in the country every single day. And most of all, I want to wish everyone who is graduating next weekend good luck in all of your future endeavors, and I hope that everyone who still has some time left at this fine university makes the most of it. Thanks for reading.

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LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2005

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The Associated Press State & Local Wire

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May 4, 2005, Wednesday, BC cycle

SECTION: State and Regional

LENGTH: 484 words

HEADLINE: Warm up your mouse and plan a trip for Las Vegas' 100th birthday

BYLINE: By ROGER PETTERSON, Associated Press Writer

BODY:

You'd hardly know it to look at the place, but Las Vegas claims to be 100 years old this year. Why not plan a little vacation trip to help them celebrate?

The big day is May 15, and you can learn more by going to the city's official Web site - <http://www.visitlasvegas.com/> - and clicking on the red Centennial button. Next, go back to the main page and hit "Special Offers" to see what sort of hotel deal you can put together for the dates of your stay. If nothing grabs your fancy there, go to "Stay" for links to all the hotels, and check the maps to see where everything is located.

Once you've got the preliminaries out of the way, you need to click on "Play" for guides to the casinos, golf courses, shows, nightclubs and dining. Celine Dion is at Caesars Palace, Cirque du Soleil has a couple of shows around town, Reba McEntire and Kenny Chesney have dates coming up in June at the Mandalay Bay and Elton John is on the calendar in July at Caesars Palace.

Shop around to see if you can find any other hotel deals that fit your schedule and budget at Vegas.com - <http://www.vegas.com/> - which also advertises airline-plus-hotel combo packages. They'd like to have your business for booking everything from limos to Grand Canyon tours to golf course tee times. And yes, you can get married in Vegas; click on "Weddings" for links to chapels, caterers, florists, photographers and jewelers.

About Las Vegas - <http://aboutlv.com/> - claims to be the "guide to everything you should know" about the city, so take a look at their guide to The Strip, transportation around the city and local attractions, including day trips, thrill rides and free things to do. For travelers thinking of taking the underage crowd, be sure to consult their "Las Vegas for Kids."

If you can tear yourself away from the casinos, a trip to Vegas isn't complete without seeing the Hoover Dam - <http://www.usbr.gov/lc/hooverdam/> - the giant plug in the Colorado River that supplies electricity to the city and holds back Lake Mead. Check out "Tour Information" for essentials, including directions. The Lake Mead National Recreation Area - <http://www.nps.gov/lame/index.htm> - has information on what you do on and around all that water behind the dam.

For something a little more unusual than a big lake, point your rental car westward to Death Valley National Park - <http://www.nps.gov/deva/> - but be sure to click on "Plan Your Visit" to get an idea of what the weather extremes are like.

If you need any more details on things to do outside the casinos, the Chamber of Commerce - <http://www.lvchamber.com/visit/index.h> has links to helicopter tour companies, restaurants (who knew Vegas had a Hofbrauhaus?), and other points of interest including Valley of Fire State Park.

The state Commission on Tourism - <http://www.travelnevada.com/> - has more ideas for extended trips around the region.

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GRAPHIC: AP Graphic With CYBERTRIPS Logo

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2005

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Copyright 2005 The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

May 4, 2005 Wednesday Home Edition

SECTION: Living; Pg. 2E; PEACH BUZZ

LENGTH: 710 words

HEADLINE: Runaway bride now a 'Battle' cry

BYLINE: RICHARD L. ELDREDGE

BODY:

It's official: Duluth's runaway bride, Jennifer Wilbanks, is now an indelible item of pop culture trivia. Her scenic bus trip last week to Las Vegas and Albuquerque, N.M., has inspired a brand-new punch line in the city's longest-running play, "Peachtree Battle," at Ansley Park Playhouse.

"Peachtree" playwrights Anthony Morris and John Gibson added the bit into the first act last weekend after it was reported that Wilbanks was safe.

As most fans know, in the comedy, "Battle" matriarch Trudy Habersham offers her son a payoff to ditch his Hooters waitress bride-to-be. Now the snooty Buckhead socialite quips, "We'll just tell everyone she got cold feet and took a bus to New Mexico."

"It's been getting a huge reaction," Ansley Park Playhouse rep Amy Triandiflou told Buzz Tuesday. "As long as people are laughing, it'll stay in."

And FYI to Wilbanks and maybe-husband-to-be John Mason: For a change of pace, Triandiflou tells Buzz that Ansley Park Playhouse would love to treat you to an evening of some fictitious family dysfunction featuring "Battle's" battling Habersham and Wieuca clans plus dinner at the adjacent Mid-City Cuisine.

"It's an open invitation," said Triandiflou. "We'd love to have them join us."

Star 94's Steve McCoy, Vikki Locke and Tom Sullivan have also found the runaway soap opera irresistible. On Friday at 8 a.m., the station will sponsor a runaway bride contest where participants will line up at Riverside Park in Roswell, soak their feet in ice water and then see who can run the fastest, all while wearing a veil.

The winner will receive bus fare for two to Vegas and Albuquerque.

"We were originally only going to spring for bus fare for one," admits Star 94's J.R. Ammons. "But I only know of one person who would be interested in that deal."

One last thing. Friday morning's contest is BYOV: Bring Your Own Veil.

Spears' reality: 'Chaotic'

The upcoming UPN television atrocity finally has a name. The Britney Spears and Kevin Federline reality series is now going by "Britney and Kevin: Chaotic."

Featuring what UPN bills as "exclusive, never-before-seen private home videos they shot themselves during their courtship, engagement and wedding," the six-episode series will premiere with a special one-hour episode at 9 p.m. May 17. A video clip is available on UPN's Web site.

Spears, 23, announced last month that she is pregnant with the couple's first child. Spears and Federline were married in September, which, for those keeping score, was her second trip down the aisle last year.

Cher's final farewell

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution May 4, 2005 Wednesday

Belly dancers, a dancing elephant and a video montage of her lengthy career marked the end of Cher's three-year farewell tour.

Cher, 58, played to a sold-out crowd over the weekend at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles and insisted this final concert on her 325-stop tour really was the end.

"I'm approaching 80," she joked to the crowd, "and if I did that thing everyone does, come back in five years, I'd be driving around in one of those carts, you know, the ones with the joysticks you see in Costco.

"There are two reasons people come back. Because, like the Stones, they're broke. Again. Or they're old divas who can't wait to be out among their adoring fans. But this, this truly is it."

Video clips broadcast on four giant screens showed the Sonny Bono years, shots from her solo career and clips of Cher with Carol Burnett, Ray Charles, Elton John, David Bowie and the Muppets.

Her final show was vintage Cher. She made her entrance from above decked out in a silver coat and hood, kicked off the evening with her standard opening song, a cover of U2's "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For," and ditched the coat as she hit the stage to reveal a skimpy G-string outfit.

The show, which included about a dozen costume changes, ended with fireworks.

Celebrity birthdays

Surf guitarist Dick Dale is 68. Singer-songwriter Nick Ashford of Ashford and Simpson is 63. Country singer Randy Travis is 46. Comedian Ana Gasteyer ("Saturday Night Live") is 38. Bassist Mike Dirnt of Green Day is 33. Singer Lance Bass of 'N Sync is 26.

Contributing: news services. If you have a tip, call 404-526-2749. Or fax 404-526-5509. Or e-mail: buzz@ajc.com.

GRAPHIC: Mark Liddell Singer Britney Spears and husband Kevin Federline are featured in the reality series "Britney and Kevin: Chaotic," premiering May 17 on UPN.

LOAD-DATE: May 4, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Nationwide News Pty Limited
The Australian

May 4, 2005 Wednesday All-round Country Edition

SECTION: WORLD; Pg. 12

LENGTH: 421 words

HEADLINE: Groom gives his runaway bride a second chance

SOURCE: AP

BODY:

DULUTH, Georgia: The jilted groom whose bride ran away four days before their wedding still wants to marry fiancée Jennifer Wilbanks, saying: "Haven't we all made mistakes?"

"Just because we haven't walked down the aisle, just because we haven't stood in front of 500 people and said our 'I dos', my commitment before God to her was the day I bought that ring and put it on her finger, and I'm not backing down from that," John Mason said yesterday.

It was Mr Mason's first public statement since he learned on the morning of his scheduled wedding day that Ms Wilbanks had cold feet.

The sequence of events that led to a major kidnapping scare that captivated the US was described yesterday by Duluth's police chief Randy Belcher.

He said Ms Wilbanks had bought a Greyhound bus ticket to Austin, Texas, a week before running away on April 26. That day, she had a taxi pick her up at the local library and take her to the bus terminal in Atlanta.

She never made it to Austin, instead getting off in Dallas and buying a ticket to Las Vegas. She spent some time in Vegas, mostly hanging out at the bus station, before going to Albuquerque, New Mexico.

It was in Albuquerque where she called Mr Mason and police from a pay phone at a convenience store, saying she had been kidnapped. She later said it simply was a case of having jitters ahead of the lavish, 600-guest wedding planned for Saturday.

Mr Mason said he had given the 32-year-old Ms Wilbanks her ring back — she had left it at the house — and said they still planned to marry.

"Some things need to happen first, and we need to talk about a few things and ... she needs some treatment, for lack of a better word," he said.

Mr Mason and his fiancée's father, Harris Wilbanks, said Ms Wilbanks was working on releasing a written statement. "She just needs some space and some time," Mr Mason said. "She just wants the whole world to know she's very, very sorry."

But if Mr Mason and the family are ready to forgive the jittery bride, authorities are still peeved. They are exploring the possibility of suing Ms Wilbanks for the estimated \$US40,000 (\$51,394) to \$US60,000 cost of searching for her. That option would have to be approved by the city council — and the groom's father, Claude Mason, is a former mayor of Duluth and a local judge.

The local prosecutor said on Monday he would conduct a thorough investigation, taking several weeks, before deciding whether to charge Ms Wilbanks for falsely claiming she had been kidnapped.

LOAD-DATE: May 3, 2005

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Copyright 2005 The Baltimore Sun Company
The Baltimore Sun

May 4, 2005 Wednesday
FINAL EDITION

SECTION: TODAY; Pg. 6C

LENGTH: 547 words

HEADLINE: Give couple a useful gift: a tracking device

BYLINE: Dan Thanh Dang, SUN STAFF

BODY:

Our cold, cynical hearts melted just a little yesterday when we heard that hopeless romantic John Mason - aka America's most famous jilted groom - declare that the wedding will go on after all.

"Just because we haven't walked down the aisle, just because we haven't stood in front of 500 people and said our 'I dos,' my commitment before God to her was the day I bought that ring and put it on her finger, and I'm not backing down from that," Mason told Fox News.

We were also delighted to hear that his 32-year-old runaway bride, Jennifer Wilbanks, is wearing her engagement ring, which she'd left behind in her haste to hop a bus to Dallas, then Las Vegas and then Albuquerque, N.M., just four days before the big day.

Whether the state of Georgia will pardon Wilbanks for disappearing, sparking a nationwide manhunt and falsely claiming she was kidnapped remains to be seen, but Mason forgives her and still wants to marry her.

There's hope for those kids yet.

So what better way to celebrate all that joy than to toast the impending nuptials with a wedding gift?

Oh, yes, they're registered, and for some lovely things, too. But instead of that \$250 Waterford Lismore Ice Bucket from Macy's or a \$59.99 Panasonic Cordless Electric Steam Iron from Target's Club Wedd, we've got a few suggestions for gifts that might be more appropriate:

A Global Positioning System Pet Tracker: Forgo the ankle bracelet (domestic diva Martha Stewart declared them uncomfortable). These locating devices are attachable to a wristband. For \$350 and monthly service fee, Mason will never lose track of his wayward wife-to-be again.

A \$100 phone card with the number 1-888-MARSVENUS written on the back: Instead of dialing 911 from a pay phone in Albuquerque, Wilbanks can use the card to call Ask Mars Venus to talk to a 24-hour marriage counseling coach. For \$1.99 a minute, they'll talk her through salient topics like "miscommunication with your partner or spouse" or "learning how to create and follow through with your goals" or "learning how we unknowingly sabotage our success in relationships."

An F+R Hugs shirt: For about \$378, she can wear a soft Lycra shirt embedded with sensors and electronics that allows her to feel a hugging sensation from a loved one far away. The hug shirt works via mobile phone networks to transmit the heartbeat, touch and body temperature of a remote companion in real-time, generating the sensation of a real hug. Wilbanks could have used some affection while hanging out at the Las Vegas bus station.

Greyhound Discovery Pass: There's no version of frequent flier miles on this line, but you can present her with a \$219 seven-day pass, or if you're feeling really generous, a \$589 60-day pass to hop a bus to anywhere in the continental United States. Alas, there's no deal on companion tickets.

Honeymoon in Vegas: Why not help her do it right this time? Buy her and her adoring husband a proper visit to

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PC-01423

Nevada with a one-bedroom penthouse suite in The Mirage luxury hotel for \$725 a night.

A \$25 wide-brim raffia hat and dark Jackie O-style sunglasses by Gucci for \$180: If she's going to hide from the press in the future, a striped afghan just won't do.

And last, but not least, nickel-plated handcuffs: At \$16, nothing else says love and trust in exactly the same way.

GRAPHIC: Photo(s)

You could give the happy couple a stay in a one-bedroom penthouse suite in The Mirage luxury hotel in Las Vegas for \$725 a night.

BLOOMBERG NEWS

LOAD-DATE: May 4, 2005

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Copyright 2005 The Charlotte Observer
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Charlotte Observer (North Carolina)

May 4, 2005 Wednesday ONE-THREE EDITION

SECTION: METRO; Commentary * Tommy Tomlinson; Pg. 1B

LENGTH: 462 words

HEADLINE: A FORGIVING FIANCE SAYS 'I DO' TO LOVE

BYLINE: TOMMY TOMLINSON, Staff Writer

BODY:

The heck with the runaway bride. I'm more interested in the groom.

The bottom line on the bride is simple. She went a little psycho.

Jennifer Wilbanks ran away from her upcoming wedding in suburban Atlanta. While her family grieved and police searched, she took a Greyhound to Vegas and ended up on a pay phone at a 7-Eleven in Albuquerque.

To explain it away, she claimed she was kidnapped.

Criminal? Maybe. Temporarily insane? Undoubtedly.

But people freak out all the time. Wilbanks did it on a grand scale, but what she did was a common thing.

The uncommon part of this story is her fiance, John Mason.

Wilbanks had left her engagement ring behind. When she finally came back home, here is what Mason did: He gave her back the ring, and watched her put it on her finger.

And then he said: "Haven't we all made mistakes?"

I know what some of you are thinking. You're thinking that Mason should start running, too, as fast as he can, in the opposite direction, stopping only once: to take that ring to the jewelry store and see if he can get his money back.

You think he's just as crazy as she is.

Probably so.

He's in love.

There's no telling what you'll do when you're in love. You might paint a water tower or hire a skywriter or fall to your knees and sing "Unchained Melody" in front of a full house on karaoke night.

You might max out the credit card for a new dress or pretend to like a movie with Russian subtitles or agree to try squid.

You might spend all night on the phone, long distance, just listening to each other breathe.

When I hear a story like this I always think of the Coral Castle.

A young man from Latvia named Ed Leedskalnins fell in love with a girl named Agnes. They were engaged. The day before the wedding, she called it off.

Ed never forgot. He eventually landed in Florida and set about building a monument to his lost love. Ed was just 5 feet tall and 100 pounds, so his project took awhile. He worked on it for 28 years.

By the time he was done he had carved more than 1,100 tons of coral into a sculpture park.

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PC-01425

Charlotte Observer (North Carolina) May 4, 2005 Wednesday ONE-THREE EDIT

All of it for Agnes.

Love makes us do crazy things because once you've had a taste of it, love is the only thing that makes sense.

And if the love is real you will do any fool thing to keep it.

John Mason is like one of those cartoon characters who walks into a room of TNT with a lit match.

Of course she could run away. Of course she could freak out.

Of course she could make him look like the biggest sucker in three states.

And of course he could still back away.

But for now, he's taking a risk for love.

I say that makes him the sanest man in the room.

*

Reach Tommy: (704) 358-5227; P.O. Box 30308, Charlotte, NC 28230; ttomlinson@charlotteobserver.com

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Cleveland Scene, LLC
Cleveland Scene (Ohio)

May 4, 2005 Wednesday

SECTION: Music/Preview

LENGTH: 190 words

HEADLINE: The Crystal Method
With Evil Nine. Thursday, May 5, at the House of Blues.

BYLINE: By Dan Leroy

BODY:

Ever since debuting in the mid-'90s, Ken Jordan and Scott Kirkland have been a raucous but reassuring constant in the trend-happy world of electronica. As the Crystal Method, the Los Angeles duo emphasized the "rock" in their block-rockin' beats early on, and they've never really let up on the stompbox. The glammy big beat of Vegas and Tweekend — aided by the likes of Tom Morello and Scott Weiland — helped make the group recognizable among the legions of faceless dance acts, and the Method men even scored a Grammy nomination for last year's album, Legion of Boom. Jordan and Kirkland's latest is a second installment of their Community Service mixtape series, an offshoot of a weekly radio show they host in L.A. Spotlighted on the duo's current DJ tour, the disc features old breakbeat favorites alongside brand-new Method mixes of New Order's "Bizarre Love Triangle" and Smashing Pumpkins' "1979." Most ambitious is "The Crystal Method vs. The Doors," which gives Mr. Mojo Risin's roadhouse yelp electroshock. If that sounds vaguely sacrilegious to you, well . . . the Doors of the 21st century got there first, right?

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2005

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CNN

SHOW: SHOWBIZ TONIGHT 7:00 PM EST

May 4, 2005 Wednesday

TRANSCRIPT: 050401cb.h00

SECTION: NEWS; Domestic

LENGTH: 7600 words

HEADLINE: SHOWBIZ TONIGHT for May 4, 2005

BYLINE: Karyn Bryant, AJ Hammer, David Haffenreffer, Brooke Anderson

GUESTS: Rocco Dispirito, Tyler Florence, Todd English, Orlando Bloom, Andrew Fleischmann, Paul Dergarabedian, Ludacris

HIGHLIGHT:

ABC's "Primetime Live" gets set to air its special on allegations of backstage shenanigans at "American Idol." At Disneyland's 50th anniversary festivities, Julie Andrews and Steve Martin help celebrate, and Kelsey Grammer falls off the stage. Orlando Bloom stars in "Kingdom of Heaven," Ridley Scott's new movie about the Crusades. One movie theater chain in Connecticut pledges to announce the real start times of movies. Will the practice spread? Rapper Ludacris adds actor to his resume with a starring role in a new movie about race relations, "Crash."

BODY:

KARYN BRYANT, CO-HOST: Tonight's the night. A "Primetime" "American Idol" showdown.

A.J. HAMMER, CO-HOST: And a new kingdom for Orlando Bloom. I'm A.J. Hammer.

BRYANT: And I'm Karyn Bryant. This is SHOWBIZ TONIGHT.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: That's a slap in the face.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HAMMER: "American Idol" expose. We've got a first look tonight.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOHN QUINONES, "PRIMETIME LIVE": I have no idea what the repercussions might be.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HAMMER: And what everyone will be talking about tomorrow.

BRYANT: Frasier falls.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KELSEY GRAMMER, "FRASIER": Oh, good Lord!

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CNN May 4, 2005 Wednesday

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BRYANT: What happened to Kelsey Grammer? Is he OK?

HAMMER: Plus, the times are a-changin'. The way you plan to go to the movies is about to change, coming soon to a theater near you.

BRYANT: Kingdom come.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ORLANDO BLOOM, "KINGDOM OF HEAVEN": It has fallen to us to defend Jerusalem.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BRYANT: Orlando Bloom is on a crusade — a "SHOWBIZ Sitdown."

HAMMER: Hot "Wax." Paris Hilton sees double in her new movie. And you'll never guess what this hot star's cold hobby is. She'll tell us.

BRYANT: And...

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

LUDACRIS, "CRASH": Look at us, Dog. Are we dressed like gang-bangers?

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BRYANT: 'Cris crashes. Hip-hop star Ludacris, live.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

LUDACRIS, "CRASH": (INAUDIBLE) This is Ludacris. And if it happened today, it's on SHOWBIZ TONIGHT.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BRYANT: Hello. I'm Karyn Bryant, and you are at the top of the show.

HAMMER: I'm A.J. Hammer. We are live with you from Headline Prime studios in New York City for the next hour.

BRYANT: Tonight is "American Idol" night, but not just on Fox.

HAMMER: A half-hour after "American Idol" sends one of its contestants packing tonight, ABC's "Primetime Live" will air an "American Idol" expose that could threaten the credibility of the show and one of its judges. SHOWBIZ TONIGHT's David Haffenreffer is here with the latest.

DAVID HAFFENREFFER, SHOWBIZ TONIGHT: So much hype about all this, Karyn and A.J. Tonight, the Fox network is facing charges of backstage shenanigans at "American Idol," while some are accusing ABC of throwing rotten tomatoes at a rival network's hit show. Both networks risk fall-out from tonight's report. This afternoon, I sat down with "Primetime Live's" John Quinones and talked to him about this potentially explosive story.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

(voice-over): John Quinones is not the only one shocked by the attention his story on "American Idol" is getting. The report, airing tonight on ABC's "Primetime Live," features allegations of behind-the-scenes favoritism and sex on "American Idol," one of America's most-watched shows.

JOHN QUINONES, "PRIMETIME LIVE": If there are allegations like these that turn out to be true, it really can raise a lot of questions about the fairness of it all.

HAFFENREFFER: Quinones sits down with 2003 "American Idol" contestant Corey Clark. Clark was booted off the show in a flap over a previous arrest he didn't tell producers about. In the ABC News story, he makes several claims about a relationship with "American Idol" judge Paula Abdul, among them, that she coached him on song selection, that she gave him money for expensive clothes, that their relationship eventually turned sexual, and that she asked him to keep it a secret. In tonight's report, Quinones discusses the allegations with other former "American Idol" contestants.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: It makes you upset because you see those 12 spots, and we all were fighting for one of those

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12 spots. You know, my life will go on. My career will go on. I'll continue to go forward. But you know, that's a slap in the face.

HAFENREFFER: Fox and its parent company are fighting back. In a statement last week, Fox asked the public to, quote, "examine Mr. Clark's motives, given his apparent desire to exploit his prior involvement with 'American Idol' for profit and publicity." Abdul herself says Clark is making up lies to generate interest in a book deal. One expert says ABC could benefit from this high-profile story.

ROBERT J. THOMPSON, SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY: When you have a juggernaut like "American Idol," any crumbs you can get from the table are going to be valuable. And I think on a business level, ABC is just figuring, if we can put the name "American Idol" onto any of our shows, we can use all that promotional equity that that big hit has been.

HAFENREFFER: This whole "American Idol" controversy resembles the 1950s scandal depicted in the movie "Quiz Show," where a super-popular game show was rocked by allegations that producers helped a contestant.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP - "QUIZ SHOW")

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: It's not like anybody has to know, just us three.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HAFENREFFER: But Thompson doesn't think we are looking at a repeat.

THOMPSON: Is this going to hurt "American Idol"? I think, in the long run, probably not. The only thing that could really blow up in "American Idol's" face is if somebody could find evidence that this was fixed from the get-go.

HAFENREFFER: While the story may not hurt "American Idol," it could hurt ABC. The Associated Press says Abdul's attorneys have threatened the network with legal action. But Quinones is at peace about the story.

QUINONES: We're confident that we've done as much as we can to look into this. And in the end, you be the judge.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

HAFENREFFER: Of course, this is not the first time "American Idol" has found itself judged. The criminal pasts of current and former contestants have become publicized. And earlier this season, a phone snafu mixed up the votes for the contestants, angering many viewers. As for the players in this latest drama, Paula Abdul is scheduled to continue her role on "American Idol." As for Corey, he's appearing on ABC's "Good Morning America" tomorrow — A.J.

HAMMER: All right, David. We'll all be watching tonight and talking about it tomorrow.

Now, you'll remember, last night, we asked you to weigh in, and thousands of you did, on our question of the day, which was, "American Idol": Do you think it's fixed? Well, when all was said and done, 67 percent of you said, Yes, we think "American Idol" is fixed; 33 percent of you said, No, we don't think "American Idol" is fixed.

And this just in to SHOWBIZ TONIGHT. A big and baffling mystery tonight surrounding Comedy Central's \$50 million-man. Dave Chappelle's new season is now on hold, and no one is saying why. Just a short time ago, the network said it has suspended production on David Chappelle's wildly popular sketch comedy show. Last August, Comedy Central signed him to a contract extension worth a reported \$50 million. The third season of Chappelle's show was supposed to kick off on May 31. We called David Chappelle's people, and they aren't talking.

BRYANT: Tonight, it's a magical night in the Magic Kingdom. The stars are out to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Disneyland. SHOWBIZ TONIGHT's Brooke Anderson is live in Anaheim, California. Hey, there, Brooke, we heard Kelsey Grammer took a fall. Is he doing OK?

BROOKE ANDERSON, SHOWBIZ TONIGHT: He absolutely did take quite a spill, Karyn. He was here last night as master of ceremonies for a kickoff event for this anniversary celebration — Grammer, of course, the voice of the 50th anniversary commercials. He was on stage and apparently so engrossed in what he was saying that he walked right off, fell right off the stage. Take a look.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KELSEY GRAMMER, "FRASIER": Taking my 400th trip through It's a Small World, pretending I was a U.N. interpreter — oh, good Lord! Oh (DELETED). Oh, damn! I think I — wow! That was really very bad.

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(END VIDEO CLIP)

ANDERSON: ...uttered a word that would have made poor Mickey blush. But Kelsey Grammer is OK, just a few bumps and bruises. He got up and finished what he was there to do. And he was actually here earlier today, enjoying the festivities.

Also here today, Steve Martin. He was here to unveil a new historical exhibit highlighting Disneyland's past five decades. It includes a film that stars Steve Martin, and also a Disney favorite, Donald Duck. Donald Duck was actually here to help Steve Martin do the unveiling. You see him there. And for those of you who don't know, Steve Martin got his show biz start right here at Disneyland. He worked in the park's Magic Shop at the tender age of 10, so he got an early start on that show biz career.

Also in Mickey's house today, Julie Andrews, AKA Mary Poppins. She's the voice of the fireworks show, as well as the voice at the beginning of the Parade of Dreams. I spoke with her earlier, and she told me she is thrilled to be a part of this celebration.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

JULIE ANDREWS, "MARY POPPINS": Well, you know, I've been a cast member of Disney for something like 40 years now. And I'm so glad they asked me because I'm delighted.

ANDERSON: How do you think — what do you think this world would be like without a Disneyland?

ANDREWS: Well, it's sort of a — I was going to say a national treasure, but it's really an international treasure, if you think about all the other parks and resorts. And I think we'd be a sadder place without it. It's a place where you can be a child again and indulge your fantasies a little bit, and bring your family. You can be a grandparent or a grandchild, and you'll still have a great time.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

ANDERSON: Disneyland is calling this event "the happiest homecoming on earth." And I'll tell you, Oprah Winfrey's got nothing on Disneyland when it comes to 50th birthday parties. This one's going to last for the next 18 months. That's quite a birthday celebration.

A.J., Karyn, I'll be back in just a little while with something totally different. I'll take you behind the scenes of "House of Wax" with one of its stars, the one and the only Paris Hilton.

BRYANT: Thank you very much. SHOWBIZ TONIGHT's Brooke Anderson live from Disneyland — A.J.

HAMMER: All right, Karyn. In our first "SHOWBIZ Sitdown," Orlando Bloom. He is no stranger to playing the hero, whether it be as Will Turner in "Pirates of the Caribbean" or Legolas in "The Lord of the Rings." Well, this time, he's a knight valiant fighting during the Crusades in the new movie "Kingdom of Heaven."

We're going to get to Orlando in just a second, but first let's take a look at "Kingdom of Heaven."

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: On your knees!

ORLANDO BLOOM, "KINGDOM OF HEAVEN": Be without fear in the face of your enemies. Be brave and upright that God may love thee. Speak the truth, even if it leads to your death. Safeguard the helpless. That is your oath.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HAMMER: Orlando Bloom, thanks for joining us today.

BLOOM: Thanks for having me on, A.J.

HAMMER: So amid all of these battles that happen in the film and all the violence that's going on, there's this really terrific story of virtue and idealism and the pursuit of what is right. And from everything I know about you, it seems that this probably appealed to you on a very personal level.

BLOOM: Yes. In many ways, it did. It was — for me, it was fantastic to get to play a character who goes on this journey of spiritual discovery, but it is also very much a coming-of-age story. You know, you meet this man who is — his

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wife has committed suicide at the loss of their child, and he looks to God to say, What God could allow this to happen? And ultimately, he goes to the Holy Lands to find redemption and peace and a sense of forgiveness for his wife and his own sins.

HAMMER: Big pricetag on this. What was it, like, \$140 million or something like that?

BLOOM: Yes, I believe so.

HAMMER: So does that put personal pressure on you? Because now you're finally the leading man. You essentially are carrying the film.

BLOOM: You know, as an actor, the only experience you really have is the journey of making the film. And when you're in the hands of somebody like Ridley Scott, you know, he's — he's the man who brought you "Gladiator." He's the man who knows how to draw an audience into a world, even if it's a historic world. He makes it feel contemporary. It packs a punch. It's sort of relevant and important.

HAMMER: Well, something that you get to do in this movie is living out what many children have as — a boyhood dream of becoming a knight.

BLOOM: Absolutely.

HAMMER: In "Pirates of the Caribbean," you get to live out the boyhood dream of becoming a pirate. Did you ever play act in any of these roles when you were a kid?

BLOOM: You know, I did, actually. I was on school — I was at school, and I did a — "Pirates of Penzance" was one of my — one of my musicals we did at school. So I actually did get to play a pirate. And I used to play, you know, running around with guns, cowboys and Indians, in the garden, like all kids did.

HAMMER: But could you ever have imagined that one day, you'd show up somewhere and thousands of screaming people would come out to see you? Does it ever make you want to run and hide and say, What have I gotten myself into? I know it comes along with the territory, but you know, sometimes, you think you got into it a little too deep and this isn't really what it's about?

BLOOM: You know, in a way, you do want to run and hide at times. But I'm working in far-flung corners of the world so often. And you know, they're really very sweet, the fans. They're very supportive. And they afford me the ability to do what I love, which is the work.

HAMMER: Do you have to bring a bodyguard with you, though, everywhere you go? I mean, you can't just go out to the pizza shop and get a slice.

BLOOM: When you're on a movie, you tend to have — you know, it was my first experience on "Kingdom," when I got really mobbed in Spain, and we'd never experienced that before. And I — that was the first time I got, like, a security guard. And so when you're in a movie, it can be a good idea just because, you know, that's where people expect to see you.

HAMMER: You got to keep you safe, Orlando Bloom.

BLOOM: Thank you.

HAMMER: Thanks for joining us. I appreciate it.

BLOOM: Thanks very much, man. Thanks for having me on.

HAMMER: All right. "Kingdom of Heaven" rides into theaters this Friday — Karyn.

BRYANT: Do you hate rushing to the movie theater, then waiting forever through endless ads and trailers before the movie starts? Well, you are not alone. Stay tuned for "The Show's Biz."

HAMMER: And criss-crossing some paths with some of the big stars in music. Ludacris is going to crash into a theater in a very charged new movie. And he's going through a name change. Ludacris is live.

BRYANT: Now tonight's "Entertainment Weekly Great American Pop Culture Quiz." What animal does Bill Murray battle in the 1980 film "Caddyshack"? Was it a groundhog, a gopher, a badger or a rabbit? We'll be right back with the answer.

BRYANT: Welcome back. So again, tonight's "Entertainment Weekly Great American Pop Culture Quiz." What animal does Bill Murray battle the 1980 film "Caddyshack"? Is it a groundhog, a gopher, a badger or a rabbit? Well, it was, of course, a pesky groundhog. And Chevy Chase was in "Caddyshack," as well. We'll be speaking with him a little bit later.

HAMMER: It's 16 past the hour and time now for "The Show's Biz." Tonight, movie start times. You ever get frustrated when you go to a movie and you have to wait through endless ads and previews? Well, it's even got Regis riled up.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP - "REGIS AND KELLY")

REGIS PHILBIN, CO-HOST: You go to the theater, and all of a sudden, you're sitting there and here comes trailers, coming attractions, commercials. I mean, it just drives you crazy. I've complained about it, complained about it. And finally, they're listening to me!

KELLY RIPA, CO-HOST: Oh!

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HAMMER: Yes, Regis, apparently, Loews Cineplex Theaters is listening, starting next week at theaters in Connecticut, will note in listings that movies will begin 10 to 15 minutes after the published showtime. And they may do the same thing across the country very soon.

Well, joining us live now from Hartford, Connecticut for "The Show's Biz," Andrew Fleischmann. He's the state representative who sponsored a bill that requires theaters to list movies' real start times. And live in Hollywood, our friend, Paul Dergarabedian, who's president of the box office tracking company Exhibitor Relations. Gentlemen, thank you both for joining us tonight.

ANDREW M. FLEISCHMANN (D), CONNECTICUT STATE REPRESENTATIVE: Great to be here.

HAMMER: Representative Fleischmann, I want to start with you. What motivated you to introduce this bill? Is this just a personal pet peeve of yours, or are your constituents actually sounding off on the issue?

FLEISCHMANN: It was constituents, A.J. I was sitting in the theater, a movie ended, a constituent approached me and said, Hey, we just sat through over 25 minutes of ads and previews. Isn't there something you can do? And I realized, of course, there's something we can do. We have truth in advertising laws for lots of industries. We should have it for movie theater operators.

HAMMER: Now, Paul, is this really a problem on a grand scale? I mean, obviously, we hear people grumbling about it while the previews are going on in the theaters. But really, what's the national picture on this?

PAUL DERGARABEDIAN, PRES., EXHIBITOR RELATIONS: Well, I think this is really a result of people resenting commercials, you know, things that are essentially television spots being shown before their movie. I think, in the past, we've seen that people generally like trailers, you know, which are the previews for the coming attractions because they're there to see movies. But it's been — the movie theater has been sort of a sanctuary, a place where you can get away from, you know, generally television-type advertising, and now I think that's why moviegoers have really sounded off on this, not so much because of the trailers, I don't think. I think it's because of these commercials.

HAMMER: Well, Representative Fleischmann, I'm certainly somebody who is annoyed by this problem, as well. I mean, we all really seem to be. But why a law? I mean, it is a private business, after all. So is it really the government's place to step in to say, Hey, this is when your movie should start?

FLEISCHMANN: Absolutely. The movie theater industry is about a century old, and there was no movement whatsoever on this issue until I introduced legislation this January. There was absolutely no sensitivity to customers. There was no concern about all of these ads that they were jamming in there to increase their revenues, while people who had come to the theaters in order to escape that kind of commercialism were getting upset. So I think it was a very helpful start of the dialogue that I got the legislation introduced. I'm pleased that Loews Cineplex is hearing what their concerns are from their customers, and I'm hoping that other theater operators will now follow their lead. If all the theater companies follow the lead of Loews...

HAMMER: Right.

FLEISCHMANN: ...then there will be no need for legislation.

HAMMER: The bill will go away. OK.

FLEISCHMANN: But on the other hand, Loews only operates two theaters in my state...

HAMMER: OK.

FLEISCHMANN: ... and there are hundreds of others. So I think there will be a need for legislation...

HAMMER: Well, certainly...

(CROSSTALK)

HAMMER: Certainly, it was good news about Loews. Do you think other movie companies — theater companies will follow suit, Paul?

DERGARABEDIAN: I think they will, in the sense of — you know, this generates some good will between the patron and the theaters because I think a lot of movie goers are a little disgruntled about it.

HAMMER: Right.

DERGARABEDIAN: And you know, I think people are going to show up whenever they feel like it anyway. This just gives them more information with which to decide when to get to the movie theater.

HAMMER: Exactly.

DERGARABEDIAN: You know, if you have a movie like "Star Wars," you're not necessarily going to want to wait until that absolute showtime...

HAMMER: Right, because you got to get a good seat.

DERGARABEDIAN: ... because you may not get a good seat.

HAMMER: You got to get a good seat.

DERGARABEDIAN: You got to get a good seat.

HAMMER: And we got to wrap it up there. And of course, check your local listings. We'll be watching the story unfold. Representative Fleischmann, thanks for joining us...

FLEISCHMANN: Thank you for having me.

HAMMER: ... and Paul Dergarabedian.

DERGARABEDIAN: Thank you.

HAMMER: And now, of course, we would to know what your thoughts are on all of this. It's our SHOWBIZ TONIGHT question of the day. Movie previews and ads: Are there simply too many? You can vote at cnn.com/showbiztonight. Got more to say, e-mail us at showbiztonight@cnn.com. A look at the voting and your e-mail later on in the show.

BRYANT: Up next: Get ready for "Crash." It stars Sandra Bullock, Don Cheadle and Ludacris, who's in our house live.

And then to a "House of Wax." Paris Hilton gets a scare. "The Simple Life" star joins us for a "SHOWBIZ Sitdown."

BRYANT: Tonight, another "SHOWBIZ Sitdown" with Ludacris. As a rapper, he has sold more than 10 million albums. His latest, "Red Light District," has been on the charts for 20 weeks. And now Ludacris is adding actor to his resume. He is co-starring with Sandra Bullock in a new film opening Friday. It is called "Crash," and it deals openly with race relations in America. Luda's here with us live. Thanks for joining us.

LUDACRIS, "CRASH": Thanks for having me.

BRYANT: May I call you Luda?

LUDACRIS: You may call me whatever you like.

BRYANT: OK. Well, here's the thing. I want to start off — there was a quote from Sam Jackson, basically talking

about rappers making movies. He refused to work with 50 Cent. He said, "I refuse to prop some rapper up in some movie. It's almost like I'm sanctioning the fact that I believe they can do this job."

LUDACRIS: Right.

BRYANT: How do you feel about that?

LUDACRIS: You know, I have to, like, agree and disagree with him for people like myself, who take it very serious, and you know, I never want to play Ludacris in any movie. So I don't feel like — I feel like I should be given that opportunity to be taken seriously, you know what I'm saying? And when you see this movie, "Crash," that comes out and other work that I've done, you'll understand that I really do take it serious.

But for those who don't take it as serious, and they're just using it because they're an entertainer and they have, you know, the opportunity just because of who they are, then I do agree with him in that sense. So you know, it just depends on how you look at the situation.

BRYANT: All right. Well, we're going to look at a clip right now. And in this, you are sort of frustrated and exasperated...

LUDACRIS: Exactly.

BRYANT: ... about being judged by the color of your skin. Let's check it out.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP - "CRASH")

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Oh, man, come on. Don't start.

LUDACRIS: Man, look around you, man. You couldn't find a whiter, safer or better-lit part of this city right now. But yet this white woman sees two black guys who look like UCLA students strolling down the sidewalk, and her reaction is blind fear? I mean, look at us, Dog. Are we dressed like gang-bangers? Huh? No. Do we look threatening? No. In fact, if anybody should be scared around here, it's us.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BRYANT: So what do you think the state of race relations is today in America?

LUDACRIS: The state of race relations is exactly like what this movie does. It makes you take a look at yourself in the mirror because there are a lot of different preconceived notions and just judgments that all ethnicities have about one another. So you know, I mean, it's just — it's a brutally honest look at how — and how we talk about one another, you know, in each other's faces or behind closed doors. And I mean, it is crazy. It's something that needs to be talked about, and it's definitely something that needs to be confronted in America today.

BRYANT: The thing is, is that you're a huge rap star. You've sold, like we said, millions of records.

LUDACRIS: Right.

BRYANT: But can you hail a cab? You know what I mean? Is it — is your success in the rap world translating to where you feel like, in your everyday life, white people will just take you as an equal?

LUDACRIS: Do I feel like — I mean, it all depends on the person, you know what I'm saying? And I think that, like this movie says, you can't judge a book by its cover. You have to really understand the person behind who you just see all of a sudden. I mean, with my music, you know, I break all barriers. So I intend to do that with everything that I do. So look — you know, just look over the braids, you know, and just what this hip-hop culture is all about, and you'll realize how much of an intelligent individual that I really am and how focused I am on everything that I do, you know?

BRYANT: Fantastic. All right, Luda. Well, thanks for joining us here. The movie is "Crash," and it opens this Friday.

HAMMER: Food for thought. A special edition of the "Buzz Bench" on our menu with celebrity chefs Tyler Florence, Todd English and Rocco DiSpirito. What would they have cooked up for the runaway bride's meeting?

Plus, we hit the "Holiday Road" and take an environmental vacation at Chevy Chase's house, on the way.

(NEWS BREAK)

HAMMER: Paris Hilton "waxes" poetic. She tells us about her big scene in "House of Wax" and what she has on the

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horizon, coming up in the showbiz sit down.

BRYANT: Chasing the dream, Chevy Chase is on a mission, and it starts at home. He invites us over for a visit.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JEWEL: Hi, I'm Jewel and if it happened today it's on SHOWBIZ TONIGHT.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BRYANT: Welcome back to SHOWBIZ TONIGHT, 31 minutes past the hour. I'm Karyn Bryant.

HAMMER: I'm AJ Hammer. Here are tonight's hot headlines. The prosecution rests. Just a short time ago, the prosecution rested in the Michael Jackson child molestation trial in California, after two months of testimony. First thing tomorrow, the judge will hear a defense motion for the acquittal on the grounds that the prosecution didn't prove its case.

BRYANT: Fallen idol. Former AMERICAN IDOL contestant Corey Clark tells ABC's PRIMETIME LIVE he had a sexual relationship with IDOL judge Paula Abdul. Fox says Clark is trying to exploit his involvement with the show and he never told the network of any concerns.

HAMMER: Coming soon, coming later, Loews theaters announced today they're going to start putting a note in their ads, saying that most movies start 10 minutes to 15 minutes later than the time listed. The company says it's responding to complaints from customers who were sick and tired of all the commercials and previews.

BRYANT: In the SHOWBIZ TONIGHT question of the day, here's what we are asking. Movie previews and ads, are there too many? Keep voting at cnn.com/showbiztonight and send us your e-mails at showbiztonight@cnn.com. We'll share some of what you had to say at 55 past the hour.

HAMMER: Well, Brooke Shields is getting candid about her terrifying struggle with post-partum depression. In an interview on today's OPRAH WINFREY SHOW, Shields said that after the birth of her daughter, she sank into a deep depression, thought about suicide and had disturbing visions of her newborn daughter.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BROOKE SHIELDS: It spiraled into this irrational place of thinking that I — and then I would have visions of her, this little body hitting the wall and sliding down. I wasn't the one throwing her, but I thought it was like an action movie where I would look this way and she would be smashing against the wall and sliding down and I would look this way and—she would be —

OPRAH WINFREY: These were visions you were having?

SHIELDS: Visions like she would be choking — You cannot feed them. They'll just go away. It didn't occur to me to not continue feeding her, because I didn't even have the urge to sort of fight anything.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HAMMER: Brooke says with the help of medication and therapy, she made it through and she wants to have another child. Her book about the ordeal is called "Down Came the Rain" and it is in stores now.

BRYANT: Chevy Chase is chasing a dream to make the planet a better place to live and he's starting with his own home. SHOWBIZ TONIGHT's David Haffenreffer got a look inside the Chase household and he joins us now with the scoop.

DAVID HAFFENREFFER, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Indeed, Karyn. From "Caddyshack" to funny farm to then ecofarm, Chevy Chase took me inside his home to give us some tips on how to live an environmentally sound life.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

HAFFENREFFER (voice-over): Say the word green to Chevy Chase and it means more than just a place he'd like his next golf shot to go. SHOWBIZ TONIGHT was right there as Chase and his wife Janey gave us a private tour of their environmentally friendly home. The 12-acre farm in Bedford, New York, gave us a glimpse into their passion, use less and recycle more and always with Chevy's trademark humor.

CHEVY CHASE: When I want to throw something out around here, there are times when I'll look under a desk for

just, you know, a garbage can or a trash can.

JANEY CHASE: And there are three or four.

HAFENREFFER: She's devoted is what you're saying?

CHASE: She's extremely devoted. I found a lawyer and I'll probably divorce her. I'm going bats.

HAFENREFFER: Janey's green devotion has led to the use of power generating solar panels on the pool house, washing machines that use less water, light bulbs that use less electricity and even a so-called tankless water heater which we found tucked behind a jolly old fella in the Chase's basement.

CHASE: Dad? Dad? Come out of it.

HAFENREFFER: When it comes to getting around, the former SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE actor likes his electric Segway machine, but for longer trips off the compound they choose low emission hybrid cars like the Toyota Prius and Ford Escape. It's a choice they wish more celebrities would make.

JANEY CHASE: Celebrities are trend-setters, so if you're got someone like Leonardo DiCaprio who's a very hot item, who's driving around in a Prius, then I think a lot of other people might say, hey, if he's going to drive that, I want to drive that.

HAFENREFFER: Their love for the environment is what's driving the second annual Chevy Chase earth day auction at charitybuzz.com. Feel like bidding on a VIP tour of the TODAY show with Katie Couric? How about a night out with Dennis Rodman or maybe dinner with Paul Newman?

CHASE: Janey's basically used me —

JANEY CHASE: It's true.

CHASE: And every chip I have left in Hollywood.

JANEY CHASE: Yeah.

CHASE: To, you know, to get the right people.

HAFENREFFER: And she did. They're all chipping in to help raise money for the Center for Environmental Education, which the Chases started 16 years ago, Chevy says it's the simple tips that are music to his ears, like turning off the lights when you leave a room. It's not only good for mother nature, but also your pocketbook.

CHASE: The amount you can save is incredible, by just remembering to do that when you leave a room. It's also makes for a dingy, depressing way to live.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

HAFENREFFER: Another item you can bid on charitybuzz.com, two VIP tickets and backstage passes believe it or not to AMERICAN IDOL. But you'll have to place those bids soon. That auction ends May 10 — Karyn.

BRYANT: David, looks like you guys had a good time.

HAFENREFFER: It was a fun afternoon.

BRYANT: Very nice, over to you, AJ.

HAMMER: All right, guys. Well, it's time now for another showbiz sit down, this time with Paris Hilton, Paris is getting lots of attention for one scene in particular in the horror movie "House of Wax." And SHOWBIZ TONIGHT's Brooke Anderson sat down with her. Brooke joins us once again, live from Anaheim, California. Tell us about Paris, Brooke.

BROOKE ANDERSON, CNN CORRESPONDENT: AJ, Paris and I talked about her starring in her first feature film, her falling out with her SIMPLE LIFE co-star Nicole Ritchie, her love life and one of her secret passions. You may be surprised.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

ANDERSON: When people talk about this movie, they refer to you, "House of Wax," starring Paris Hilton, the movie

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Paris Hilton is in. You're the box office draw. How does it feel?

PARIS HILTON: You know, it's a lot of pressure, but at the same time, I saw the movie and all that pressure is relieved because it is so scary. I was screaming in my seat, I just can't wait for everyone to see it, I'm just so proud. This is a great launching pad for my career.

ANDERSON: No secret that your character dies a pretty horrible death, Paris. Were you intimidated about doing this scene or was it something you were intrigued to do?

HILTON: I love my death scene. I think being in a horror film, it's cool to have a really good death scene and mine is just so creative and so gruesome and scary — it's just, I loved it.

ANDERSON: You say this is a launching pad for your career. You've got a perfume out. You've got the reality show that's successful, this movie, what is your next big challenge?

HILTON: Well, I'm focusing on the acting, I'm going to release my album soon and starting a Paris Hilton brand empire, it's a lot of fun.

ANDERSON: Do you feel like you've gone from Paris Hilton the heiress to Paris Hilton the actress?

HILTON: Yeah, definitely.

ANDERSON: SIMPLE LIFE still very popular. I have to ask, what is up with you and Nicole?

HILTON: You know, I don't really want to talk about it, but I just hope that she's happy and healthy and I've done the past three seasons. It's been great, but for season four, I just want to freshen things up and make it new and it's going to be very exciting and I'm really happy about it.

ANDERSON: Will Kimberly Stewart be with you on the SIMPLE LIFE 4?

HILTON: You know, I can't say yet and I'm not sure, but hopefully.

ANDERSON: You're boyfriend Paris, is it fun going out with somebody with the same name?

HILTON: I love it. It's a lot of fun. It's cool that I got to meet someone with my name.

ANDERSON: Where do you see your relationship with him going in the future?

HILTON: Well, we're very serious. We live together and he's just the best guy in the world and I couldn't be happier.

ANDERSON: Many people perceive you as maybe a hard-partying Hollywood girl. Do you think you're misunderstood?

HILTON: Definitely. You know, when I was 16 years old, I moved to New York City and I was invited to all these clubs and openings and parties and any young girl is going to be like, wow and go. And I did that years ago, so now I'm over it and now I'm just really serious about my relationship and he hates going out, so we just stay at home and I cook and we watch DVDs and go to movies and do normal things.

ANDERSON: So do you have a hobby people would be surprised to hear about?

HILTON: Um, well since tenth grade, I've played ice hockey and I still do and I think people really wouldn't expect that from me, but I'm really good.

ANDERSON: So from high heels to ice hockey gear, interesting.

HILTON: Everyone thinks I'm like this fashionista who never like goes in the dirt, but I'm more like a tomboy. I have ranches. I go fishing. I go hiking. I do normal things like that. It's fun for me.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

ANDERSON: "House of Wax" opens in theaters this Friday. AJ, that's hot.

HAMMER: ... have to say it, I don't really see Paris out on the ice hip checking people personally, so thank you very much.

ANDERSON: Maybe so. She could be an athlete,

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HAMMER: I don't know. Well we are cooking up something different (INAUDIBLE) for "the buzz bench" tonight — oh, there I said it, too. Have you heard about this 15-pound hamburger? Well, we have three of the hottest celebrity chefs and we're going to dish on that and more, coming up.

BRYANT: Plus, it's a party for a cause. We'll tell you what brought the stars out in New York last night. Stay tuned.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JEFF PROBST, SURVIVOR HOST: I'm Jeff Probst and what I'm listening to right now is the new Rob Thomas and it's good.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BRYANT: Time for more show biz shorts. Start spreading the news, Frank Sinatra's mob connections. An unauthorized biography says the legendary singer worked as a courier rather for the mafia and once almost got caught carrying \$3.5 million in a briefcase through customs in New York. That anecdote is attributed to Jerry Lewis and the book comes out May 16th.

HAMMER: And the nominees are, the MTV movie awards were announced today, "Anchorman, the Legend of Ron Burgundy" and "Mean Girls" have the most nominations with four each. Jimmy Fallon set to host the awards show which will air on June 9.

BRYANT: Time now for a special edition of "the buzz bench." We have gathered three of the country's hottest celebrity chefs to dish on today's hottest food topics cooking for the runaway bride, and the 15-pound cheeseburger.

HAMMER: And on that very special buzz bench tonight, Tyler Florence of the Food network and author of — I love this title — "Eat This Book." Todd English is here from COOKING UNDER FIRE on PBS and Rocco DiSpirito, who you know as the host of the radio show FOOD TALK. OK, guys, by now, we've all heard about the runaway bride. You know she ditched her 600 wedding guests. Tonight our question for you is what would you actually serve if she ended up having the wedding? And I'm personally thinking it would be, you know, cold pig's feet or sour grapes. Tyler?

TYLER FLORENCE, CELEBRITY CHEF: I think take-out menus and flossing forks, I think that's what that girl gets, 600 people she left them. What do they have in the first place? What was on the menu?

TODD ENGLISH, CELEBRITY CHEF: I don't even know, but I would say have the party anyway.

FLORENCE: I would have the party anyway, but they never even got to that point, but that's amazing. She ended up in Vegas anyway, right?

ENGLISH: She might have been there.

FLORENCE: Take reservations,

ENGLISH: That's where the cold feet come in.

BRYANT: Any thoughts?

ROCCO DISPIRITO, CELEBRITY CHEF: Obviously fast food, whatever you do, my guess is that this is a really good endorsement deal for her from Crate & Barrel, because every time you hear this story they mention the places she got registered and Crate & Barrel comes up and Macy's and all these places.

HAMMER: There's actually a fair amount of (INAUDIBLE) Greyhound got a lot of mentions.

DISPIRITO: It's the most brilliant marketing thing ever.

BRYANT: There would certainly be a hefty amount of bus boys at the wedding, right? And you guys must have a great recipe for salsa or something, because obviously she's down with the Latinos, and you know, she said that she was kidnapped by a Hispanic man, so what would we serve there?

ENGLISH: I think she should marry that man instead of going back to her husband, not abducted by aliens.

BRYANT: No.

ENGLISH: That would have been a good story for a movie plot.

FLORENCE: I think it was like sideways. I think she had her last big hurrah, you know what I'm talking about? I think she had cold feet and a last big hurrah in Vegas and then she (INAUDIBLE).

ENGLISH: The fact that the woman left, usually it's the guy.

(CROSSTALK)

BRYANT: A restaurant in Pennsylvania, speaking of big things, is selling a 15-pound hamburger. It sells for \$30. It comes with 25 slices of cheese. It's got a head of lettuce, two onions. The restaurant says it's the biggest burger anywhere, Rocco, what are your thoughts?

DISPIRITO: As a kid who was really interested in the "Guinness Book of World Records," I used to go to the empire exhibit all the time and check out the "Guinness Book of World Records," read it. I understand the temptation to want to break records.

BRYANT: Right.

DISPIRITO: And so obviously let's talk about marketing, obviously for a restaurant, making a 15-pound burger is a very smart marketing move.

BRYANT: It's insane.

HAMMER: They say it serves 10 people.

BRYANT: So it's just a marketing ploy? Would you ever really serve this?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: If it's good, why not? If it tastes good.

BRYANT: How long does it take to cook?

FLORENCE: Do you eat that or do you wrestle it? What do you do with a burger that size? It's unbelievable. It's 15 pounds.

ENGLISH: That's the burger that knocked the car over.

BRYANT: And can you super size that? And if so, then what?

ENGLISH: How about this, a 25 pound bowl of pasta,

(CROSSTALK)

ENGLISH: You can just dive in, everybody have a bite.

HAMMER: Now they say this thing has over a cup of mayonnaise and all these other garnishes. Is a cup of mayonnaise too much?

FLORENCE: I don't think I'd want to sit beside anybody who had a 15 pound hamburger. That's like 15 pounds of Pepto (INAUDIBLE)

DISPIRITO: I think that would make a great temptation for the biggest loser.

ENGLISH: They have it's a great place in Texas that has a 72 ounce steak, if they eat it all they pay for it. (INAUDIBLE)

FLORENCE: So again it's the world's largest hamburger, right? 15 pounds. That could feed a small village in Fallujah.

HAMMER: I would like them to do a soy version of the burger.

BRYANT: Oh, with the soy AJ, just not the same. Well, thank you guys. This has been great. This has been a very fun special edition. Tyler Florence, Todd English and Rocco Dispirito. Thanks for joining us on the bench.

Things were cooking at an event in New York last night, Jewel, Jane Fonda and a newly blonde Ashlee Simpson were there and we'll tell you what brought them out. That's coming up.

HAMMER: And there's still time for you to sound off in our SHOWBIZ TONIGHT question of the day — movie previews and ads, are there just too many? Vote by going to cnn.com/showbiztonight or if you got more to say e-mail us

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what's on your mind, showbiztonight@cnn.com is the address. Some of your thoughts live next.

HAMMER: The stars came out for a cause in New York City last night in the name of preventing teen pregnancy. It was definitely not your high school health class at the Candy's (ph) Foundation benefit to educate teens about the consequences of sex. Some of Hollywood's hottest stars are lending their names to the cause and SHOWBIZ TONIGHT was there to talk sex with some of the honored guests.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ASHLEE SIMPSON: I think that it's incredibly important to say you can be sexy and you can be smart and you can make, you know, good, smart decisions. I think everybody should choose you know what they want and what's best for, you know, themselves, but at the same time, think before you do.

JEWEL: A lot of people preach abstinence and that's fine. People should do what they want with their bodies, but if you're going to have sex, you should use a condom. There's no other way about it. I don't care if people have sex but they should have a condom.

ROSIE O'DONNELL: Luckily my oldest is just turning 10, so we haven't really hit the peak years so to speak, but I look forward to what's to come.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HAMMER: Well, the Candy's Foundation campaign featured ads with other celebs including Usher, Tara Reid and Fran Drescher just to name a few. It's a good cause.

BRYANT: I'm laughing because it's time to get your laugh on in laughter dark. I was thinking ahead. Now as we do every night, we bring you the late night laughs you may have missed.

HAMMER: On THE DAILY SHOW, good save, on THE DAILY SHOW with Jon Stewart, Louis Black went on one of his usual rants. This time it was all about Cameron Diaz's new show on MTV.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

LOUIS BLACK: If I can find your American tourist attitude to the United States, you can bring it overseas. That's what Cameron Diaz is doing. Her new MTV show trippin' features the actress and her friends taking eco-friendly journeys across the globe and for a bunch of beautiful people, they sure are some ugly Americans.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I went and took a poo in the woods hunched over like an animal, awesome.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I'm so jealous right now, I'm going, tomorrow I'm going to the woods tomorrow. Awesome.

BLACK: Now, if there's a better metaphor for America's relationship with the world, than a white woman crapping in a native's backyard, I'd like to know what it is.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BRYANT: Oh, I love Louis Black. Well, tonight on THE DAILY SHOW, Jon welcomes Martin Short.

HAMMER: Well, we have been asking you to vote online on our SHOWBIZ TONIGHT question of the day. Movie previews and ads, are there too many? Here's what the vote is saying so far, 81 percent of you say, big surprise yes, too many movie ads and previews, 19 percent of you say no there aren't. You've also been sending us some e-mails on the topic.

We heard from Chris in Birmingham, Alabama who says, I don't mind watching previews. I actually enjoy them. It's the commercials that are really annoying. We also heard from Cathy in Lake Sherwood, Missouri, who writes, I pay to watch the movie, not the commercials. If I want commercials, I'll stay at home. Remember, you can continue to vote, simply by going to cnn.com/showbiztonight.

BRYANT: Time to see what's playing on SHOWBIZ TONIGHT tomorrow.

HAMMER: Here is a look at our show biz marquee with the marquee guy.

ANNOUNCER: He's the king of the new KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. Here's what we want to know. How the heck do

you make an epic? Well, we've got an epic director Ridley Scott, to tell us, live tomorrow on SHOWBIZ TONIGHT.

Also tomorrow, Hollywood makes for strange bedfellows, indeed, Jiminy Glick is taking la la wood by storm, but wait, is that Jiminy Glick or is that Martin Short? Well, it's both, Martin Short joins us live tomorrow on SHOWBIZ TONIGHT. This is the marquee guy, revealing for the first time on national TV, my alter ego is marqueecity Glick.

HAMMER: That is it for SHOWBIZ TONIGHT. I'm AJ Hammer.

BRYANT: I'm Karyn Bryant. Stay tuned for the latest from CNN headline news.

(NEWS BREAK)

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2005

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Cox News Service

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SECTION: Lifestyle**LENGTH:** 1170 words**HEADLINE:** Keeping up with furniture trends is a guessing game**BYLINE:** KATY BARRON**DATELINE:** HIGH POINT, N.C.**BODY:**

Insider tips, long shots and speculation are the stuff of Wall Street, but they also are important elements of a different sort of market.

Just look at Sandy Sieracki's schedule on the opening day of the biannual High Point International Home Furnishings Market, which draws 60,000 to 80,000 people in the furniture industry to this normally small North Carolina town. Sieracki's first browsing priority isn't the hutches or chaise longues, but handbags and jewelry.

She likes to shop at Just the Thing, an Atlanta-based boutique that opens a satellite store in High Point just twice a year during market, to ensure she gets the first pick among the trendy costume jewelry pieces and chic handbags. The trip serves two purposes: Sieracki picks up gifts for the women who work at her Austin showroom while she tunes in to the latest trends in jewelry, which will help inform her home accessories buying. Furniture trends originate on fashion runways, after all, and any clue as to what's hot now is welcomed.

This is Sieracki's 10th trip to the High Point market, and she's exuding the confidence of an old-timer. It wasn't always so. Learning to navigate the more than 11 million square feet of showroom space in High Point takes time. "I followed Mom around like a puppy dog for at least four markets," she remembers.

Mom is Judith Harris, president of Objets Ltd., a Denver-based wholesale showroom now in its 14th year. The mother and daughter have been in business together since 2003, when Sieracki became vice president and opened Objets' second showroom, in Austin. The 3,000-square-foot space is one of five showrooms at Back Door to the Trade, Austin's only wholesale design center and the product of exasperated local designers tired of having to drive to Dallas and Houston to make wholesale purchases.

Sieracki makes the pilgrimage to High Point twice a year to load up on upholstered furniture, case goods and home accessories for her showroom, where local designers will purchase her selections for the well-dressed homes of Austin. Or so she hopes.

Every trip to market is a gamble on the whims of the Austin furniture buyer, who does not fit a neat and trim profile. Sieracki struggles to describe her customers' furniture preferences, which are neither too formal nor too casual.

"When we first opened here we bought what Denver sold and you know what . . . my church just got a really nice donation of stuff that sells great in the Denver market. Austin has a look on its own."

With no formula for what sells well, she's learned to simply trust her instincts and buy things she personally likes. It may seem like an enthusiastic shopper's dream job, but market isn't all fun.

First, there's the getting there, which isn't easy from Austin. Most buyers fly into nearby cities, then rent a car at prices marked up exorbitantly for the market, the largest single event in the state and the economic lifeblood of tiny High Point. Then there's the staying there, also not cheap. Those in the know use a housing reservation system to rent local homes for a minimum of seven days while the locals hightail it out of town to avoid the invasion of the tens of thousands of market

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attendees. Sieracki and her mom are paying \$350 a night for a private residence close to downtown.

Considering all the hustle and hassle High Point requires, Sieracki still wouldn't settle for the much-easier-to-get-to Dallas market. "It's so minuscule compared to this, and I can see all the same things here," she says. But she will be trying out a new furniture market this summer, the one in Las Vegas.

In High Point, conversations about Las Vegas are held in hushed tones and whispers. To High Point market organizers, the Vegas market is akin to an evil empire bent on crushing the historical home of the U.S. furniture industry. Organizers of the Vegas market, debuting July 25, have announced plans to be bigger than High Point by 2015, promising to build 12 million square feet of permanent and temporary showroom space to trump High Point's roughly 11.5 million square feet. It's all conjecture at this point, but the fear is that Vegas' big airport, abundant hotel rooms and unmatched night life will lure away High Point regulars. Sieracki says she's going to Vegas out of curiosity and to seek out smaller vendors who do unique things. She's not interested in the gambling.

Besides, there are plenty of bets to place in High Point. Discovering hidden gems among small vendors is a hit-or-miss pursuit that, more often than not, involves stumbling across a cool product while searching for something else. "You fall on it. And then you hope that nobody around you already found it," she says. On the plane ride from Austin, Sieracki got a jump start by swapping notes with other designers sitting near her.

Their tips paid off. She bought a new line at a recommended lighting showroom, where she instantly fell for classic fixtures and at least one trendy chandelier featuring the same wooden details she spied on her jewelry-buying spree. Harris, meanwhile, was dismayed to learn the products she liked were already carried by another showroom in her Denver design center.

Most design centers have unwritten agreements about not carrying the same lines of furniture or home accessories. Sieracki carries more than 40 lines in her showroom at any given time and can't keep up with what other showrooms at Back Door to the Trade have. Luckily, she doesn't have to. Most vendors protect their relationships by refusing to sell to their clients' direct competitors or interior designers. The vendors almost always greet Sieracki and Harris by name and recall their prior market orders better than they do. Maintaining these crucial relationships is as important a part of attending market as checking out new trends. "It's very political," Sieracki says.

As she walks around pointing out items she wants to order, a sales rep follows on her heels, scanning the items with a specialized Palm Pilot device. There is a minimum order, which Sieracki easily meets. She doesn't carry a calculator or have a set-in-stone budget. Every purchase is a gamble to be tallied on the way home. "I sit on the airplane, add up my purchase orders and get a big ol' pit on my stomach," she says.

One of the biggest risks is that a certain look will lose its trendiness in the six months to a year it takes for market orders to actually reach showroom floors. Sieracki invested in a woven water hyacinth look at this market, one she loves, but one she worries won't be as hot a year from now, when it finally lands in Austin. She also took a risk on a more contemporary furniture line, against her own practice of buying only things that suit her personal taste.

"It's going to be stepping out, but I've passed it up so many markets and wondered how many sales I'm losing because it's not my personal look," she says.

Katy Barron writes for the Austin American-Statesman. E-mail: kbarron(at)statesman.com

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Daily News, L.P.
Daily News (New York)

May 4, 2005 Wednesday
SPORTS FINAL EDITION

SECTION: GOSSIP; Pg. 28

LENGTH: 1026 words

HEADLINE: JESSICA'S SOLO ACT TURNS HEADS AT GALA

BYLINE: BY GEORGE RUSH AND JOANNA MOLLOY With Jo Piazza and Chris Rovzar

BODY:

Hollywood starlets threatened to upstage New York fashionistas at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute gala Monday night.

Jessica Simpson had marital oddsmakers buzzing when she showed up without husband Nick Lachey. Two days before, Vegas spies had claimed that she was looking suspiciously cozy with Limp Bizkit's Fred Durst at the Hard Rock Hotel's 10th-anniversary bash. And on Monday, Met moles saw Johnny Knoxville following her ever so closely out the door at the end of the night.

Simpson's rep says Lachey was in Sweden recording an album, and scoffs at linkages with Durst and Knoxville. Simpson says in the new issue of Cosmo that "everything's great" in her marriage, though she admits it's no "Cinderella story" ... There are good times and there are bad times. There are times when we want to pull each other's hair out, but it's okay."

Meanwhile, Katie Holmes chose to bail out of the Met gala, which drew Liam Neeson, Natasha Richardson, Naomi Watts, Elle Macpherson, Jake Gyllenhaal, Kevin Costner and Christine Baumgartner, Richard Gere, Sean Combs, Selma Blair and Sheryl Crow.

The "Batman Begins" actress was due to sit at designer Carolina Herrera's table, but, a source tells us, "Katie realized she'd be swarmed with reporters and photographers now everyone knows she's dating Tom Cruise."

"Katie loves Mrs. Herrera," Holmes' reps tells us. "But after returning from abroad, she was extremely overwhelmed with what is happening in her life right now."

Organizers were said to be relieved that Holmes didn't overshadow the Institute's Chanel exhibit. Certainly, her absence made life easier for co-chairwoman Nicole Kidman, the former Mrs. Tom Cruise.

"It would have been awkward for both ladies," observes a source.

Co-chairwoman Anna Wintour got through the evening without the usual assault from animal-rights activists, who hate the Vogue editrix for her love of fur. But she wasn't taking any chances.

One of Wintour's bodyguards confided to a source that "there has been a threat on my client - Anna Wintour."

Still, Wintour's spokesman denied security was beefed up, adding: "I'm not aware of any threats."

Monaco-Togo alliance?

Could an African boy be in line for the throne of Monaco?

Stewardess Nicole Coste, who hails from Togo, is claiming that Prince Albert of Monaco is the father of her 20-month-old son, Alexandre.

Coste, 33, says she met Albert on a flight from Paris to Nice in 1997 and that, over the next three years, "I fell very

much in love with him."

Photos in Germany's Bunte magazine show the prince with a beauty identified as Coste. She tells the magazine that a DNA test, set up by Albert's lawyer, confirmed he was Alexandre's father.

She also contends that he has provided financial support, but has never sent her papers confirming his paternity. Coste contends that she's gone public to force Albert to acknowledge Alexandre.

Yesterday, a palace spokesman declined to comment on her claim.

Tamara Rotolo, a former California waitress, also says Albert fathered her 13-year-old daughter, Jazmin Grace Grimaldi. So far, the prince has refused to take a DNA test to disprove that claim.

In other Grimaldi news, Princess Caroline's husband, Prince Ernst of Hanover, has reportedly admitted he has a booze problem.

According to Germany's Bild newspaper, Ernst told a reporter that, having been hospitalized for pancreatitis last month, he's resolved to quit drinking.

Hawn's holiday horror

Goldie Hawn's Yuletide memories aren't all wreathed in holly. The actress is finally talking about the Christmas Eve when, at age 11, she was sexually abused.

In her new memoir, "A Lotus Grows in the Mud," the Oscar winner writes about an unnamed family friend twice her age who fondled her while she was sleeping in bed.

The actress writes that her screams brought help, and thankfully, the incident "never marred me to the point that later I shied away from a man's touch, or had ugly flashbacks of being molested. I never lost my trust in the male sex."

Apparently. As a young actress, she was lured onto the casting couch of lecherous "Li'l Abner" creator Al Capp.

Hawn writes that, when she auditioned for the TV part of Daisy Mae, the cartoonist flashed her and then raged at her for not succumbing to his advances.

"Go back and marry a Jewish dentist!" Capp yelled. "You'll never get anywhere in this business, Goldie Hawn!"

Looking for Mr. Crowe bar

Russell Crowe's veins are bulging again.

The "Gladiator" star is vexed by a new play, "Killing Russell Crowe," in which a fictional bartender gripes that he'd like to murder the Oscar winner because he never pays for his drinks and leaves only an unsigned headshot as a tip.

The drama, which just opened in Burbank, Calif., has provoked Crowe to call playwright Jeremy Kehoe a "desperate [expletive]."

"It is with generosity I offer the author this tip," Crowe told the Sydney Sunday Telegraph. "Take yourself outside and give yourself two uppercuts."

Crowe is also growling at Garth Adam, the bassist for the actor's old rock group, 30 Odd Foot of Grunts. Adam complained in an interview last month that he had to find out in a newspaper that Crowe had dissolved the band. Adam later said his comment was taken out of context - which wasn't enough for Crowe.

"I gave Garth the opportunity to redress the damage," Crowe vents. "I think his apology is scant and clarifies nothing."

Meanwhile, we hear Crowe's agent George Freeman may be the next agent to exit the William Morris Agency. Now that Michelle Bohan has bolted the hobbled 10-percentage to become a partner at Endeavor, Freeman is said to be talking with Crowe about teaming up on a production company.

Rosie stands up for charity

Rosie O'Donnell is exercising those old standup muscles.

The reformed talk-show queen will take the stage at Carolines on Monday at the annual Stand-Up for Madeline benefit for the Ovarian Cancer Research Fund.

Four years ago at the event, the not-quite-out O'Donnell confessed that she had a massive crush on Angelina Jolie. Maybe she'll update us on her lust at the fund-raiser, which remembers beloved "Young Frankenstein" and Broadway star Madeline Kahn.

E-mail: rushmolloy@nydailynews.com

GRAPHIC: RICHARD CORKERY DAILY NEWS LOCO FOR COCO: Kevin Costner and his wife, Christine Baumgartner, hobnobbed with Liam Neeson and his missus, Natasha Richardson, at the Met, where the Costume Institute annual gala - this year a Chanel tribute - was held. **HEAVY HITTERS:** It was a "Sopranos" reunion at Studio Dante, where co-artistic director Michael Imperioli (Christopher Moltisanti, I.) welcomed, from I., Tony Sirico (Paulie Walnuts), James Gandolfini (Tony Soprano), Dan Grimaldi (Patsy Parisi) and Vincent Curatola (Johnny Sack). The wiseguys were at the downtown studio for a reading of "Henry Flamethrowa ," which opens May 11. **PATRICK HANNAWAY PATRICK McMULLAN PHOTOS.COSMOPOLITAN RUMOR CENTRAL:** A report claiming Jessica Simpson dallied with Fred Durst in Vegas followed her to New York, where some Costume Institute gala-goers noticed Johnny Knoxville leaving hot on her heels. But the Newlywed told Cosmo "Everything's great" with her marriage to Nick Lachey, although, "There are times when we want to pull each other's hair out, but it's okay." **EVAN AGOSTINI GETTY IMAGES GOOD AS GOLDIE:** Ms. Hawn recalls a couple of ugly incidents with men in her memoir, "A Lotus Grows in the Mud," but says she never lost faith in fellas.

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SHOW: THE O'REILLY FACTOR 8:55 PM EST

May 4, 2005 Wednesday

TRANSCRIPT: 050407cb.256

SECTION: NEWS; Domestic

LENGTH: 750 words

HEADLINE: Most Ridiculous Item: Purse Snatcher Video

BYLINE: Bill O'Reilly

BODY:

O'REILLY: Time now for "Most Ridiculous Item of the Day." Another dopey car chase, this one around Houston. Some thug stole a woman's purse. There he is. Oh, bang!

He's running away from the cops, first in a car and then he got knocked down. They grabbed him. This is a purse snatcher, OK? He's charged with a whole bunch of stuff, stupidity being one of the things.

The cop didn't run him over on purpose. It was a slick road, so they say. I don't know.

Anyway, it's the most "Most Ridiculous Item of the Day" because it's great video and that's why we picked it and it has no other merit.

Finally tonight, the mail. Wild letters last night, especially on those Minnesota high school girls suspended for wearing a button celebrating their private parts, a segment highly graded by BillOReilly.com premium members. Appreciate you guys.

Dan Terriesi, Arlington, Virginia: "Bill, you sounded like an old lady objecting to the buttons. Could it be that you are out of touch?"

The audience decides that, Dan.

Michelle Schuyler, Madison — Madison, Mississippi: "If the girls were allowed to wear those buttons, then boys could wear slogans like, 'I like breasts.' Where would it end?"

Sara Hammon, Las Vegas: "Bill, your comments set us back 15 years in the effort to move away from shame associated with body parts."

Come on, Sara, stop it. There's no shame in the play. It's simply inappropriate to do that in a high school. In a Vegas casino, no problem.

Greg Oppedziano, Alberta, Canada: "Defying authority is a rite of passage for teens, assuming the role of Henny Penny is usually done by the elderly, right, Bill?"

Well, you try teaching Henny Penny or anybody else wearing sex stuff in class, Greg. Wise up!

Heather Benedin, Lebanon, New Hampshire: "Would it be — would the girls be allowed to wear an 'I love Jesus' button?"

That's a good question, Heather.

Iris Anderson, Palm Desert, California: "O'Reilly, what school did you teach in? In my inner city school, girls were

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abused by family members all the time. That's why Florida and other states don't have parental consent for abortion laws."

As we explained a gazillion times, Ms. Anderson, every state that passes restrictions for minors regarding abortions includes abuse clauses, madam.

Leonard Nicotra, Boca Raton, Florida: "Bill, in many Florida counties, a nurse can't even give a student Tylenol without parental permission."

Melissa Vare, Indianapolis: "As an attorney, I can assure you that the mother of the handcuffed girl will settle for money. If she cared about her daughter, she would have taught her how to behave at school."

Phil Ketterer, Clarksville, Indiana: "O'Reilly are you out of your mind? In all of my life I've never heard of a 5-year-old being handcuffed. Surely, those Nazi cops know how to control a 5-year-old."

Well, I hope you never need help in Florida, Mr. Ketterer.

Robert O'Hara, Hicksville, New York: "Hey, Bill, the police handcuffed me for shoplifting when I was 5! It scared me straight for the rest of my life."

John Rodriguez, West Covina, California: "Bill, please enlighten me. If, as you stated, extremists can't stand you, why is it that the extreme right loves you?"

Well, I will be happy to enlighten you, Mr. Rodriguez, because you need it. If you listen to the hard right radio people, they don't like me at all. Now why is that?

And Frank Bell, Steubenville, Ohio: "Bill, why is your program called 'The O'Reilly Factor'? Are you trying — what are you trying to convey?"

Well, perhaps that a guy named O'Reilly anchors the program and that he's a factor in it, Mr. Bell? That sound logical?

I love the mail. I just love it. "What are you trying to convey"?

How about the Web site, where we convey all kinds of things: www.FOXNews.com/OReilly. All right. "Factor" gear is there, and last chance for my column on the best American broadcaster in the country, still operating, go there. Over to BillOReilly.com and vote on our poll question, should the runaway bride be prosecuted, yes or no? We'll give you the results on Friday.

And then you can email us: OReilly@FOXNews.com, OReilly@FOXNews.com. Name and town, name and town, name and town if you wish to opine from anywhere in the world. No bloviating. That's my job.

That is it for today. As always, thanks for watching "The Factor." Please listen to the "Radio Factor." "Hannity & Colmes" is up next. They'll have Ann Coulter.

I'm Bill O'Reilly. Hope to see you again next time. Remember the spin stops right here, because we are definitely looking out for you.

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2005

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May 4, 2005 Wednesday

LENGTH: 947 words

HEADLINE: A politician's challenge to broadcasters at NAB

BODY:

Posted to the Web: Wednesday, May 04, 2005

EVERY year a number of broadcast programmes are arranged to coincide with the NAB show in Vegas. The intention is for these programmes to take advantage of the heavy attendance at NAB to deliver an audience and impact of their own.

Two of those programmes this year were the Radio-Television News Directors Association, RTDNA programme and the Technology Film Festival. But by far it was the RTDNA programme that had the most profound impact on the attendees because it featured prominent guests who were able to demonstrate that broadcasting is not only about cash but also about programmes that can have positive influence on the immediate society. They were able to demonstrate that government and broadcasters can work together to present deliverables to the society except that government must have to come to the table with a rich bouquet of achievements to be presented to the governed. It is not just a sermonisation or a talk-down on the broadcasters who must do the biddings of government.

This is the lesson Nigeria ought to be able to learn because in speaking about their own environment the Americans would also have sent a message to the rest of the world on how broadcasting ought to be handled.

Two speakers at the RTDNA programme this year were Mr. Bill Richardson, the governor of New Mexico and Mr. Jonathan Prince, the Creator and Executive Producer of American Dream. Both men were of the opinion that broadcasters should encourage the society to put its best foot forward in order to secure the future of its people.

Addressing the RTDNA members in Las Vegas Hilton, Richardson said: 'One of the great things about this group, and in particular about the Foundation, is your focus on education and development for young people. The foundation places a great emphasis on scholarships, internships, and diverse opportunities for young people to develop into tomorrow's news leaders.'

Richardson, described as a potential Democratic presidential candidate come 2008, was also mindful that broadcasters are in business and must have to deliver programmes that can generate that business from the society they operate in except that he didn't also miss the point that local news delivers very terrific stories.

According to him: 'Let me be careful here and not to lecture. Because I know news is a business and you have to deliver what the people want. And I also know local news all over the country has delivered terrific, important and penetrating stories.'

In challenging the broadcasters, Richardson urged them to focus on local news which has more impact on state policies and how they affect the lives of the people. Such issues, in his opinion, include healthcare and education among others, pointing out that in fulfilling your responsibility to help educate and inform people, you also seize the opportunity to hold our leaders responsible.

What followed next was very interesting. Richardson wasn't talking about private wealth or political differences but took to the table the efforts of some governors who have taken it upon themselves to bring development to the people while Washington is in a political gridlock.

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This is just a sample from Richardson's submission. In Illinois, Governor Blagojevich has implemented a prescription drug plan, which provides residents in Illinois, Missouri, and Kansas savings of up to 50 per cent on their medicines.

In Michigan, Governor Granholm has created a new programme that puts family resource and health centres in troubled schools. She also struck a deal with a major auto maker to build a research centre in Michigan that will develop technology for the next generation of automobiles "" creating high-wage jobs.

In New Hampshire, Governor Lynch created a low-interest loan programme for companies that pledge to create jobs.

Governor Henry started a \$500million education bond programme in Oklahoma to fund 140 higher education projects, create an estimated 4,000 jobs and generate nearly \$800million for the state's economy.

Governor Richardson put something on the table by way of achievements and wasn't talking about party differences and political vendetta. This list obviously doesn't include those who take America's money abroad or blame the media for their woes but politicians who are contributing to the quality of life their people lead. He prayed for ties between the media and governments but did not blackmail the media to always be on the side of government.

This is a lesson Nigerian politicians especially those profligate state governors ought to take away from Richardson's submission, that it is more honourable to be on the side of the people than to amass wealth one may never need.

Jonathan Prince's paper gives a lesson in television programming while warning that those who envy Cable TV programmers should endure the wrought of the law. The ace producer said 'I created the American Dream because I wanted to tell a story. A story about two families, black and white, that fight to stay together as many families did during the difficult times of the 1960's"for three seasons, we've done a series that's as epic as the Viet Nam war and the race riots of Philadelphia, as intimate as the prayer a mother whispers as her son undergoes experimental polio surgery, and as heartbreaking as the silent tears of a father who gets the news that his son has gone MIA (missing in action).

How will our home video makers and the numerous TV programmers react to such a poetic rendition and reasoning?

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May 4, 2005, Wednesday

SECTION: SPORTS

KR-ACC-NO: K5944

LENGTH: 734 words

HEADLINE: Florida sports buzz: Loria faces tough decision

BYLINE: By Barry Jackson

BODY:

MIAMI _ Unless the state Senate pulls a big surprise and approves the Marlins' stadium funding package by the end of the legislative session Friday, owner Jeffrey Loria faces the most difficult decision of his professional life.

Does he move the team, likely to Las Vegas? Or does he change his mind and chip in the final \$30 million in funding to keep the team here?

If the state does not deliver by Friday, look for MLB to give the Marlins the go-ahead to speak with other cities.

We have also learned that Las Vegas has emerged as baseball's top choice among markets seeking teams, with Monterrey, Mexico, and Charlotte, N.C., less likely options.

Vegas needs a stadium, and MLB believes there would be adequate funding for one.

MLB president Robert DuPuy and the Marlins declined to discuss relocation. DuPuy said loaning or giving the Marlins the final funding piece "has not been suggested or considered."

Four scenarios to save the \$420 million project:

_ The city or county increasing its contributions. Both say they won't. The county, whose \$138 million contribution includes \$78 million from hotel bed taxes, has had a good year in tourist revenue, but hasn't produced nearly enough above projections to cover the remaining \$30 million.

Is there a way to salvage the deal without state help?

"I'm not a quitter. I never give up," Miami Mayor Manny Diaz, lobbying for state money in Tallahassee this week, said Tuesday. "I'm still convinced we can get state help."

_ Loria increasing his \$192 million piece. President David Samson has said Loria's contribution, the fourth-highest in pro sports, is as far as he will go. Forget a rich businessman buying a piece of the team and covering the final \$30 million _ none has emerged, and the Marlins aren't courting any.

_ Eliminating the dome or the retractable element to save money. The Marlins won't consider either.

_ Reducing the cost of the project from \$420 million to \$390 million by cutting corners. The team, which has vowed to cover cost over-runs, has said that's unrealistic.

The Marlins, contractually bound to Dolphins Stadium through 2006, remain disinterested in forging a new long-term lease with Wayne Huizenga.

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CHATTER

There's no classier local charity event than CBS Sports director Bob Fishman's annual Sports Legends Golf Classic to benefit bone marrow transplant recipients. Fishman, a 12-time Sports Emmy winner who received a transplant in 1990, had an all-star cast at his Delray Beach event this week.

Some snippets:

_ Count former Heat part-owner Billy Cunningham, enjoying retirement in Jupiter, among those rooting for Miami: "I love watching them play. It would be wonderful if they win it. Dwyane Wade has Hall of Fame ability. The advantage they would have on Detroit is the bench." Cunningham speaks occasionally with former part-owner Lewis Schaffel, who lives in Connecticut.

_ Rollie Massimino, 70, on why he accepted the job starting up and coaching a men's NAIA team at Northwood University in West Palm Beach: "Just to be around young people. I miss the excitement."

When CBS' Lesley Visser interviewed Massimino recently, he came rushing out and asked her young Lithuanian driver if he knew any players he could recruit. The team starts play in fall 2006, and expect Chuck Daly, Massimino's buddy, to have an occasional presence.

_ FAU coach and ex-North Carolina coach Matt Doherty said the FAU gig is not a stepping stone: "I was at the top of the mountain, and the view wasn't always better there."

_ Connecticut coach Jim Calhoun raved about UM's Frank Haith: "There's no reason, with the instate players, that Miami can't be consistently good." But ESPN's Jay Bilas said expecting an NCAA tournament team every year at UM "is not a fair expectation."

_ Baseball Hall of Famer Sandy Koufax, who rarely does interviews, said the Marlins' young pitchers "look great."

_ Boca Raton's Chris Evert, who will spend part of June with former President George H.W. Bush and others on a yacht touring Greece, said Serena and Venus Williams won't return to past levels of dominance: "They're less committed than other top players ... Players know their games and have jumped up a level ... Maria Sharapova can be great. Tennis is her No. 1 priority."

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JOURNAL-CODE: MI

LOAD-DATE: May 4, 2005

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Copyright 2005 The News and Observer
The News & Observer (Raleigh, North Carolina)

May 4, 2005 Wednesday
Final Edition

SECTION: SPORTS; Pg. C6

LENGTH: 436 words

HEADLINE: Harrells names Lewis

BYLINE: Tim Stevens, Staff Writer

BODY:

Bob Lewis, a 38-year football coaching veteran who won four state titles at Clinton, will move to Harrells Christian Academy on June 1.

Harrells currently plays eight-man football, but plans to move to 11-man in 2006.

"I've never seen an eight-man football game," Lewis said, "but I figure that's just three less guys on the field to mess up."

Lewis built a 166-30 record at Clinton. He coached at the school from 1988 until resigning in 2001, but then returned for the 2004 season and led the school to a 9-3 record.

Wake Christian athletics director Randy Johnson said his school also will switch to 11-man football in 2006.

"We think playing 11-man will be good for our program," Johnson said. "I know that it will help us in scheduling."

CARY ACADEMY ROLLING: The Cary Academy boys tennis team could make a run in the N.C. Independent Schools Athletic Association playoffs.

Coach Andrew Corcoran's club was 14-1 before Tuesday's Triangle Independent Schools Athletic Conference match against Cardinal Gibbons.

Cary Academy qualified for the NCISAA championships in 2004, but lost to eventual state champ Forsyth Country Day in the first round.

Corcoran has an experienced but young team, led by senior Brandon Byrd (10-1) and undefeated freshman Taylor Meyer.

Freshman Dennis Gugger plays No. 3. Senior Noah Toppe is No. 4, and seventh-grader Mike Kohagen plays No. 5. The sixth singles spot is shared by eighth-grader Zach Sarnoff, ninth-grader Clayton Gladieux and senior Saurabh Aneja.

The team's only loss was to 4-A power Chapel Hill.

Byrd has accepted an academic scholarship to Davidson, where he is expected to play tennis.

BROWN LEADS: Former Southern Durham baseball standout Colin Brown is having a big year at Shepherd University in Shepherdsville, W.Va.

Brown is starting in left field and is hitting .472 with 11 doubles and four home runs.

Shepherd, an NCAA Division II school, is 19-18 this season.

IMP SHINES: Former Cary wrestling standout Rick Brownlee finished fifth in the 84-kilo class (184 pounds) in the FILA Junior Nationals Greco-Roman wrestling championships in Las Vegas on Thursday.

Brownlee, a sophomore at N.C. State, was injured during most of the regular season, but qualified for a berth in the

United States' world championship camp with his performance in Vegas.

TEN SPOT: Clayton and Harnett Central played 10 innings in both of their Big Eight South 3-A baseball games this season.

Harnett Central scored in the bottom of the 10th to win the first game 3-2. Clayton scored in the bottom of the 10th to win last Friday's game 5-4.

Clayton's Steven Denning hit a double to drive in the winning run.

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Copyright 2005 News & Record (Greensboro, NC)
News & Record (Greensboro, NC)

May 4, 2005 Wednesday ALL EDITIONS

SECTION: TRIAD; Pg. B1; LORRAINE AHEARN

LENGTH: 673 words

HEADLINE: BLAME IT ON THE RUNAWAY BRIDE'S MOTHER

BODY:

He still wants to marry her. That in itself should tell us something.

When a jilted groom can be this forgiving to a runaway bride, even after being left holding the bouquet while Geraldo camps out on the front lawn, we know there's more than meets the eye to the story of Jennifer Wilbanks, whose fiance in Georgia said Tuesday that he wants to go ahead with the ceremony.

"He's nuts," opined my mom, who, like everyone else at Hilda's Beauty Salon, has been following this saga for a week. "I think there's a story there nobody knows about."

Well, yes and no. You just have to read between the lines. For instance, the line about the 600 guests they had planned for the reception at the country club. Six bridal showers and 14 bridesmaids. All those dresses — I'm thinking a coral shade — with open-toed sandals to match.

And, of course, there are gift registries to consider. Live music. Monogrammed cocktail napkins and little almond candies. Maybe those darling bottles of bubble-blowing stuff with two turtle doves on top. Because nobody does rice or bird seed anymore ...

You're seeing it now, aren't you? You want to know why Jennifer Wilbanks cut her hair, high tailed it to Vegas and concocted that despicable story about being abducted? She wasn't running away from commitment. Trust me. She was running away from her mother.

"Oh, sure, that's it, blame the mother," my mom complained. "I just don't buy that. Remember what a good time we had planning your wedding? Your sister came with us. We didn't fight at all. Remember?"

It's mostly a buried memory, even for my sister, a middle child used to playing the peacemaker. But I do recall lying down in the back of my mother's station wagon in a fetal position as we drove from one hotel ballroom to another.

This banquet room was too big and airy. That one, too small and closed-in. The next one had a peculiar layout. And this last one, well, it simply looked like all the rest.

"What can I say?" my mom recalled. "It just wasn't what I wanted."

Since my husband-to-be and I had been "dating" since middle school, he hardly needed to get acquainted with his future mother-in-law. In fact, he became the wedding go-between, a shuttle diplomat spending hours with my mom poring over 2-foot-thick issues of Modern Bride, studying china patterns and photo packages, making up deejay playlists.

"He's more interested in this wedding than you are," my mother protested, half-heartedly.

But the truth was, he just didn't want me turning up at the bus station in Albuquerque in a pathetic attempt to escape the inescapable. Somebody had to settle on a florist. Somebody had to write all those thank-you notes. He was saving our marriage before it even started.

So even though the public is ready to raise a posse unless the runaway bride is prosecuted to the full extent of the law, required to pay a \$100,000 fine, do community service at a battered women's shelter and apologize to each and every last bloodhound enlisted in the manhunt during her hoax of a disappearance, there's more than one unanswered question.

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Namely, why would her fiance give Wilbanks her wedding ring back, and profess his full support, after being held up to the blowtorch of national publicity?

And here's something else to ponder. Why would law enforcement in New Mexico, after taking Wilbanks' confession, give her a teddy bear to comfort her, buy her a plane ticket back to Georgia and even give her a blanket to shield her face from photographers as she disembarked?

The fiance's explanation was that the humiliation and guilt Wilbanks has suffered is the worst punishment of all. But what does he know?

He didn't arrange for the three rehearsal dinners, not to mention the champagne brunch send-off the morning after the wedding. He doesn't have to face those 14 bridesmaids with their coral shoes.

And finally, he doesn't have to face the mother of the bride. After all, he's the victim here.

Contact Lorraine Ahearn at 373-7334 or lahearn@news-record.com

LOAD-DATE: May 4, 2005

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Copyright 2005 Philadelphia Daily News
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Philadelphia Daily News

May 4, 2005 Wednesday 4STAR EDITION

SECTION: LOCAL; Pg. 04

LENGTH: 347 words

HEADLINE: Ga. 'bride' had history of flight

BYLINE: By JOHN F. MORRISON; morrisj@phillynews.com

BODY:

Runaway Jenny, the reluctant bride from Georgia, apparently has a serious problem with commitment.

When Jennifer Wilbanks took off last week, rather than face 600 guests and her groom-to-be at an elaborate wedding, she had a history of fleeing.

Friends told the National Enquirer that Jennifer had dumped a boyfriend when she was in her 20s after he started getting serious, and broke up with another when she heard he was about to propose.

It also turns out, the Enquirer found, that Jennifer was having a blast in Las Vegas while her family was frantic with worry and her betrothed, John Mason, 32, was being looked at by the law as another Scott Peterson.

The medical assistant and Sunday-school teacher was reported by sources in Vegas as having blown her money on blackjack and having flirted with male gamblers. She had registered there as Jennifer Mason, the sources told the Enquirer.

She apparently left herself enough money for a bus ride to Albuquerque, N.M., from where she finally called home.

She originally said she had been kidnapped by an Hispanic man, but later said she had gotten cold feet. Authorities went to Albuquerque and brought her back to Georgia.

Not only was her fiance upset, so were both families, and local authorities in the town of Duluth were talking about suing her for the \$60,000 they had spent looking for her. And prosecutors were thinking about criminal charges.

In addition, Hispanics Across America, an advocacy group, was demanding an apology for her insulting an entire ethnic group.

Wilbanks, 32, had told Mason she was going jogging a couple of days before their wedding, and never returned.

Cops were poised to give him a lie-detector test with the examples of Peterson and Mark Hacking - two men who had reported their wives missing only to be charged with killing them - on their minds.

It also turned out that Wilbanks' flight was not a spontaneous decision. She had purchased a bus ticket to Albuquerque a week before.

Family friends said it was unlikely that the two would be married after what happened.

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Philadelphia Inquirer

May 4, 2005 Wednesday CITY-D EDITION

SECTION: FEATURES MAGAZINE; BRIEF; Pg. D01

LENGTH: 1269 words

HEADLINE: ;

BYLINE: By Dianna Marder; Inquirer Staff Writer

BODY:

Six hundred invitations, 14 bridesmaids, eight bridal showers, and she walks away?

Not exactly. Last week, bride-not-to-be Jennifer Wilbanks, 32, got on a Greyhound bus in Georgia bound for Vegas. She cut her hair and, in a 911 call, feigned abduction, sparking an Amber Alert and setting off a media frenzy.

While Wilbanks' now-infamous departure was particularly dramatic, just about any last-minute wedding cancellation can set in motion a cascading chain of emotional - and expensive - consequences.

Notifying out-of-town guests who purchased airline tickets and booked hotels in order to attend the happy event is mortifying enough. But now the wedding and shower gifts have to be returned. And the caterer, wedding hall, florist, limo drivers, baker, disc jockey and officiant still have to be paid.

Then there are the bridesmaids. In addition to the fuchsia (or persimmon or citron) satin dress with the bouffant skirt they will never, ever wear, what are those women going to do now with the matching fuchsia peau de soie shoes and tiny useless handbags?

What do you tell the flower girl (all dressed up in her party frock), who, like all children left in the lurch, will think it's her fault?

And what about the honeymoon?

There's no exact record of how many nuptials are canceled or postponed each year, but local vendors - wedding officiants, caterers and bridal salons - put the figure at perhaps 5 percent.

And even 5 percent can translate into thousands and thousands of dollars.

Jeffrey Miller, who does off-premises catering as well as at the Racquet Club in Center City and Aldie Mansion in Doylestown, says timing is everything.

"If it's two days away, the food is all purchased and is in various stages of prep," he explains. "Since we make everything fresh, we can't put it back in the freezer and use it another time.

"So we'll still deliver the food to them in the state that it's in and charge them for the food and the prep time."

Wedding photographer Cliff Mautner tries to be sympathetic and work on a case-by-case basis. Still, he says, "they don't get their retainer back. They can't. I've just sacrificed thousands and thousands of dollars of my services.

"It's a tough circumstance."

Cold feet happen - infrequently enough to be considered rare, but often enough to warrant several Web sites dedicated to the subject, including www.theregoesthebride.com

Safer, who got cold feet herself four years ago, is also the author of a book by the same name, subtitled Making Up

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Your Mind, Calling It Off and Moving On.

Safier says prenuptial jitters are often caused by what she calls "weddingpalooza" - the manic state of being on the caboose of a runaway wedding.

"It gets to be like a circus pageant," Safier says.

Both brides and grooms (who, of course, get cold feet, too) vent on Safier's site - struggling sometimes to draw the line between jitters and jilting. (It's also a terrific place to shop for a nearly new bridal gown.)

Sometimes there are clear signals, "non-negotiables," Safier calls them, that the relationship should not go all the way to the altar. She cites emotional or physical violence, excessive drinking or gambling, and controlling behavior as obvious signs.

But more often, she says, the bride or groom just gets a gut feeling. That's what happened to Safier, now 32. She canceled her wedding two weeks before the ceremony and is single still.

Next time, she says, she will elope.

To gain clarity, it's best to sit still, away from the noise of the wedding plans, Safier says, "and think about what you need and what you are doing."

Inevitably, "the truth comes to you. And what you find is not that you don't know what you want, but that calling it off seems overwhelming."

Therapist Tracey Ellenbogen of Bala Cynwyd, who offers group counseling for brides-to-be, says jitters can arise when a bride starts to feel that the wedding is surpassing the marriage in importance. In other cases, family squabbles dominate, divorce or loss affects the wedding plans, or childhood issues resurface. All are reasons to at least think about postponing a ceremony, Ellenbogen says.

Unfortunately, there's that nonrefundable deposit.

"Once they've committed to a date and given us a deposit, they're committed for the full amount. The only out they have is if we can resell the date," says Daniel Briones, director of catering at the Four Seasons hotel.

He says cancellations are most common when "the parents make planning the wedding so difficult that the couple decides it's not worth the aggravation. Then they either break up or elope."

This is how couture gowns end up on eBay.

At Suky Rosan, a bridal salon in Ardmore, brides must put down a deposit of 60 percent of a gown's ticket price up front, a not-so-subtle reminder that stuff happens.

All gowns are special-ordered, says Mary Helen Ranieri, who bought the shop this year. "The bride is responsible for the dress, regardless of whether she's canceled the wedding.

"Even if you haven't had the dress altered, we don't take it back," Ranieri says. "They either forfeit the dress and the money, or pay the remainder and sell the dress."

She does recall, however, one clever bride who sued the groom when he called off the wedding with only one week's notice - and got him to repay her family's expenses.

Recouping your losses - emotional or otherwise - is not out of the question, in fact.

There was the case of Nicole Contos, the Manhattan school teacher who made front-page news in 1997 when she opted to go on with the party (for 250 guests, according to newspaper accounts) even after her fiance canceled at the last minute. That won her appearances on Good Morning America, Today, and The Oprah Winfrey Show.

Just last month, the New York Daily News intervened in the case of a bride who canceled seven months before the wedding and got her a refund from the famed Tavern on the Green restaurant.

And right now, on theknot.com, another popular wedding Web site, a bride from Dallas who has canceled her August wedding is pleading with other affianced couples to consider buying out her contracts with a catering hall, a baker, a photographer - even the minister - so she can recoup some of her losses.

"It takes guts to break an engagement," says Marguerite Sexton, who runs Journeys of the Heart, a service providing nondenominational officiants for weddings and who has performed more than 2,000 ceremonies. "We get the message from society that mistakes are fatal. One false move, one wrong turn, and your life is ruined.

"But that's not true. You can always recover."

ONLINE EXTRA

What would you do if you were jilted? Take our poll at <http://go.philly.com/runaway>

Gifts She Jilted

Jennifer Wilbanks skipped out on her betrothed, John Mason, and some fabulous gifts. This (very) partial list is based on her Macys.com bridal registry:

12 Lenox Solitaire 5-piece place settings, \$1,548

12 accent plates, \$432

1 medium platter, \$186

1 gravy boat, \$140

1 sugar bowl, \$121

8 Waterford Lismore tall goblets, \$520

7 iced beverage glasses, \$525

1 glass pitcher, \$225

12 Kate Spade 5-piece stainless-steel place settings, \$660

1 Arthur Court Designs salad bowl, \$110

1 Cuisinart four-slice toaster, \$90

1 Amco Corp. egg slicer, \$14.99

1 Oxo Good Grips meat thermometer, \$14.98

1 Calphalon fish turner, \$9.98

Contact staff writer Dianna Marder at 215-854-4211 or dmarder@phillynews.com

LOAD-DATE: May 4, 2005