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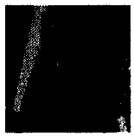

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Empire State Building wears Communist colors this week

← return to Water Cooler (/blog/watercooler/)

By Kerry Picket (/staff/kerry-picket/) *The Washington Times - September 30, 2009, 11:02AM*

The Empire State building is commemorating the 60th anniversary of the People's Republic of China by flooding the upper parts of the city's tallest sky scraper in red and yellow lights (representing the Chinese flag). The lighting for this event will last from tonight until October 1 at 10 a.m. The New York City landmark is owned by Malkin Real Estate Entities (http://www.cityfeet.com/PressRelease/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PartnerPath=&Id=3698).

This particular lighting event is particularly disturbing, though. Why is this New York City skyscraper celebrating the rise of communism in China?Local Republican activists are not impressed with the latest move. New York Young Republican Club (http://nyyrc.com/) president Lynn Krogh told the Washington Times, :

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> "The Chinese communist revolution ushered in a violent and repressive regime that has continued to unapologetically commit a laundry list of human rights violations for decades. To have a New York City landmark honor an event that produced a 20 to 30 million death toll during the cultural revolution is an insult to Americans who value freedom and to the Chinese people who have suffered under Communist rule."

The Tiananmen Square massacre's twenty year anniversary just happened this past June. Did the Empire State Building bother remembering those who were slaughtered by the Chinese Communist regime? No. On June 4, 2009, the 20th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre, the Empire State Building celebrated (http://www.esbnyc.com/tourism/tourism_lightingschedule.cfm?CFID=35469558&CFTOKEN=44910364) the New York Racing Association, Belmont Stakes with the colors green and white instead. Apparently, celebrating death and tyranny is more important than those who die fighting for freedom.

The Washington Times contacted the public relations office of the Empire State building and is waiting for a response.

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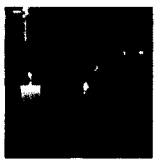

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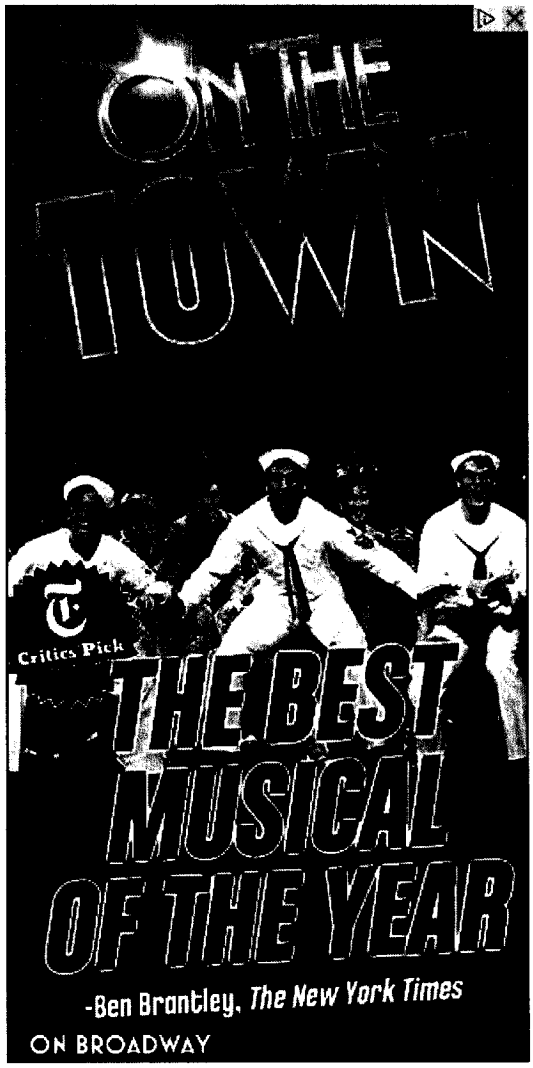

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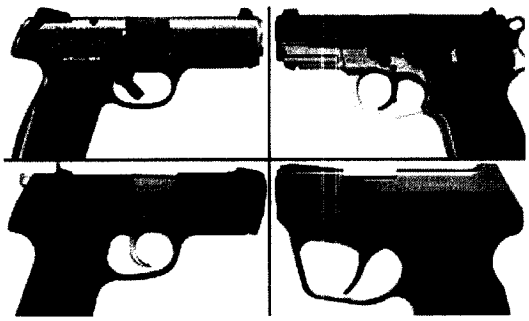

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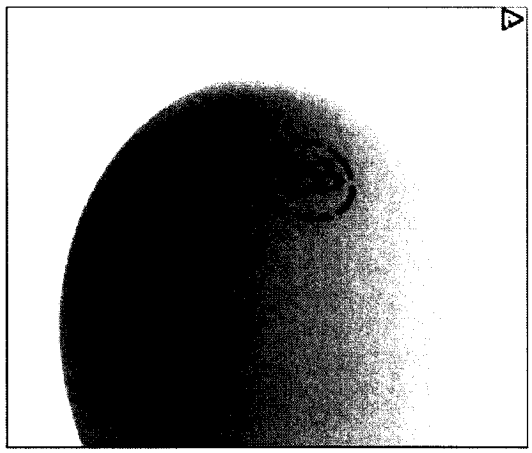

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- ○ NO NEED
- ○ IT'S UNFAIR
- ○ NO ONE SPEAKS PROPER ENGLISH ANYWAY

VOTE View results (/polls/2014/may/28/should-congress-make-english-official-language-us/results/)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kerry Picket (/staff/kerry-picket/)

Kerry Picket, a former Opinion Blogger/Editor of The Watercooler, was associate producer for the Media Research Center, a content producer for Robin Quivers of "The Howard Stern Show" on Sirius satellite radio and a production assistant and copy writer at MTV.

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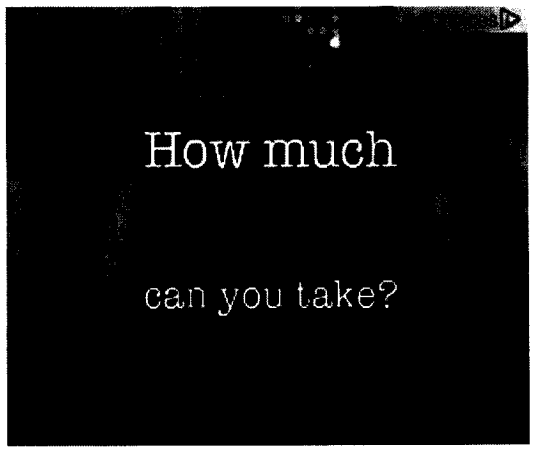

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The Irresistible Sisto

By Librado Romero Dec. 15, 2010 8

"I was doing a handstand on the table when the cops broke the door down."

There's just no resisting a story that starts like that. And that's how Ernie Sisto would hook an audience. He was as good a storyteller as he was a photographer. And, like all good photographers, he was equipped for any situation.

When being introduced to someone, he might say, "We went to different schools together." To an offhand remark, he'd reply, "Well, you don't have to get mad about it." If you were having a conversation with him, he'd glance over your shoulder and wave. Of course, you'd turn to see who was there. No one. Turning back, you'd find Ernie taking a satisfied puff on his stubby cigar.

Entering Yankee Stadium to cover a game, he would leave a paper trail of dollar tips — and that was when a dollar amounted to something. He befriended the greats, like Joe DiMaggio and Phil Rizzuto, with whom he hatched a little conspiracy. When Rizzuto planned to bunt, he

would give his pants a special hitch, the signal for Ernie to position his camera and get a leg up on the competition.

Casey Stengel would not have approved — had he known — but in 1949, he posed for Ernie and The Associated Press with a baseball taking the place of a crystal ball, as if he were predicting the outcome of the season.

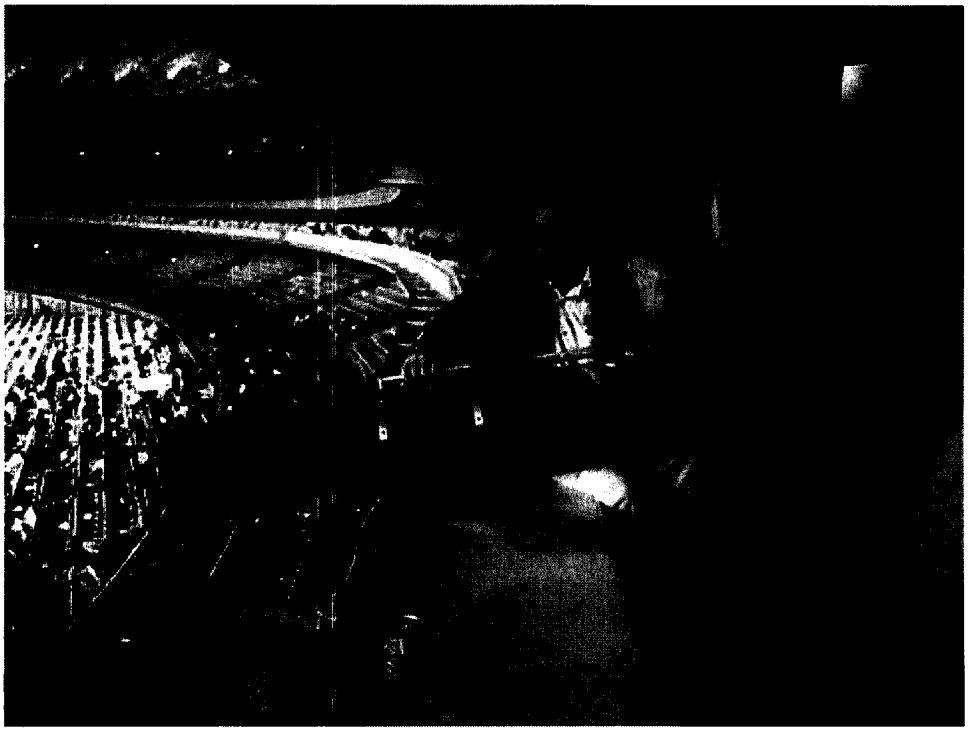
After nearly 50 years with The New York Times, Ernie retired in 1972. He had won a bevy of awards, mentored dozens of photographers and repaired a mountain of colleagues' watches, eyeglasses, radios, televisions and just about any other gadget they would drag in. He invented the Sisto-Gun, the first flash synchronization for the Speed Graphic shutter. And he was a master of Big Bertha, a rapid-fire monster of a camera used mostly at sporting events. He came up with rare photos of a solar eclipse in 1954 that no one else managed to capture.

"I never took a great picture, but I took a lot of good ones," Ernie would often say. It didn't happen to be true. He knew how to hook an audience, taking many great pictures that illuminated the American timeline. He straddled a cable to shoot a bird's-eye view of the Bronx-

Whitestone Bridge. He shot a ceremony taking place at the base of the Statue of Liberty from the torch, with the statue's crown creating a remarkable design. He followed street urchins, in knickers, chasing down a line of elephants walking, nose to tail, toward the old Madison Square Garden.

Ernie's most challenging moment arrived the morning of July 28, 1945, when a B-25 bomber lost in a dense fog crashed into the Empire State Building, tearing a hole into the 78th and 79th floors, killing 14 people. Ernie worked his way through the fire and police lines, boarded an elevator commandeered by emergency workers, exited on the 67th floor and climbed up to the gaping hole, shot some images and then continued higher, to the 86th floor. He persuaded two other photographers to hold onto his legs while he hung out over a parapet on a precarious perch overlooking the gash. From there he snapped his Page 1 trophy.

The other photographers, not interested in repeating Ernie's derring-do, passed him their film holders and he shot an image for each of them. He would say later, "Those guys won a lot of prizes with my picture." He was half joking.



Librado Romero, a staff photographer at The Times, is examining some of the images he cherishes most — ones big and small in scope, but all enormous influences on his work. In some cases, he will revisit the scene of a photo; in others, he'll discuss the story behind the

image and why it proved so affecting to him.

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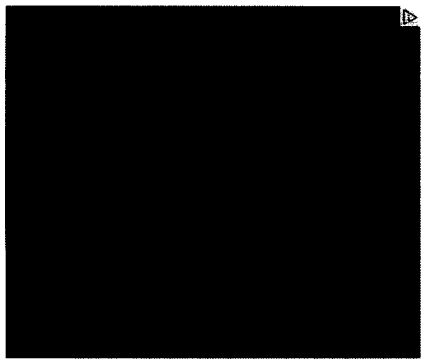
Yale student plunged from Empire State Building

Published 10:36 am, Friday, April 2, 2010



NEW YORK (AP) -- A Yale University junior left a suicide note in his dorm room before heading to New York, where he apparently plunged to his death by jumping from the Empire State Building, police said Wednesday.

Cameron Dabaghi, 21, from Austin, Texas, jumped from the 86th floor observation deck Tuesday during evening rush hour. His note said he was sorry and he would be jumping from either the George Washington Bridge over the Hudson River in upper Manhattan, or the Empire State building, police said.

There were seven other people on the observation deck at the same time, and one person tried to talk to the jumper as he climbed over the barrier, but was unsuccessful.

Dabaghi was dead when rescue workers arrived at the 102-story skyscraper shortly before 6:30 p.m. He was a student in Berkeley College, majoring in East Asian studies. The college dean was meeting with students Wednesday, and counselors were available at the university to anyone who needed them.

"Yale is extending support to Cameron's family, roommates and friends at this most difficult time," the university said in a statement.

The Empire State Building is the third-tallest building in the United States. More than 30 people have committed suicide at the building since it opened in 1931. The most recent one occurred in January 2009, when a 54-year-old woman died after jumping from the 39th floor and landing on the 25th floor.

The skyscraper reaches 1,454 feet to the top of its lightning rod.

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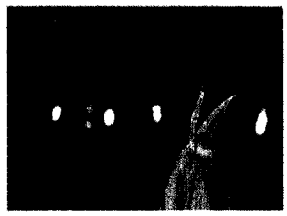

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A Fight on New York's Skyline

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The developer's rendering of 15 Penn Plaza, as seen from the north, shows it and the Empire State building in unimpeded spots on the skyline at sunset.

By CHARLES V. BAGLI
Published: August 23, 2010

To hear the two sides in the skyscraper war tell it, never has so much been at stake.

The owners of the Empire State Building and their supporters say their tower's international status and New York City's skyline are in mortal danger of an assault from a "monstrosity."

Their rival: a proposed tower on 34th Street two avenues to the west that, according to its developers, will help the city grow and prosper, provide thousands of jobs and improve the quality of life for tens of thousands of New Yorkers.

What irks the former is that the latter would rise to be 1,216 feet, almost as tall as the Empire State Building, and would be just 900 feet away, a little too close for a building that has stood apart in the skyline for its entire 79-year life.

"The question here is: How close is too close to one of New York's iconic landmarks," Councilman Daniel R. Garodnick said Monday, after a hearing in which the owners of both properties made their cases, in advance of a City Council vote on Wednesday.

"Is this going to swallow up the Empire State Building," Mr. Garodnick asked, "or are we just talking about another big building a couple of avenues away?"

The owners of the Empire State Building, Anthony E. and Peter L. Malkin, even want a 17-block no-go zone surrounding their 1,250-foot tall tower. This would prevent Vornado Realty Trust, which wants to erect the new building on Seventh Avenue, or any other developer, from putting up a similarly oversize building in the zone.

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The City Planning Commission has already approved Vornado's plan for a tower, called 15 Penn Plaza, opposite Pennsylvania Station. It would be 56 percent larger than what would ordinarily be allowed, in keeping with the city's desire to promote high-density development close to transit hubs. But Community Board 5, whose district includes the area, did not approve. A committee at the board said the developer had not provided a rationale for such a large zoning bonus, especially since it did not have a tenant and might not build for years.

The vote on Wednesday by the Council would be the project's final regulatory hurdle.

Vornado has long wanted to demolish the building that stands there now, the Hotel Pennsylvania, and build a major office tower. In addition to the hotel, a sagging presence across Seventh Avenue from Madison Square Garden, the company owns 10 other buildings in the area, with a total of 11 million square feet.

"The fact is that New York's skyline has never stopped changing, and one hopes it never will," said David R. Greenbaum, president of the New York office division of Vornado Realty Trust.

Vornado would undertake a package of transit improvements for Penn Station, the busiest rail hub in North America and a confusing maze for many commuters, worth more than $100 million, he added.

Each side has produced renderings that it says put the new building in perspective. Vornado prefers a view from the north, which shows 15 Penn Plaza and the Empire State Building carving out their own unimpeded spots on the skyline at sunset.

In a full page advertisement in The New York Times on Monday, the Malkins showed a view of Midtown from New Jersey in which a bulky 15 Penn Plaza nearly muscles the sleeker Empire State Building out of view.

At the hearing on Monday, the Malkins produced a poll they had commissioned showing that two-thirds of the respondents felt that 15 Penn Plaza should be rejected as proposed.

"It's all about the iconography of the New York skyline and whether it matters to people or not," said Anthony Malkin, president of Malkin Properties. He suggested that 15 Penn Plaza be reduced to 825 feet and that developers should be prohibited from building anything comparable nearby.

George Kaufman, another real estate owner and a friend of the Malkins, submitted a letter saying that 15 Penn Plaza "would be an assault on the Empire State Building and the New York City skyline." Henry Stern, a former parks commissioner, testified that the proposed tower "could do irreparable harm" to the city.

But various construction union officials spoke in favor of Vornado's tower, as did Daniel A. Biederman, president of the 34th Street Partnership, a business group that includes his longtime mentor, Peter Malkin, and the biggest property owner, Vornado Realty.

"If there's anywhere a building of this size and bulk should be built, it's at Penn Station," said Mr. Biederman, who also went out of this way to praise "people the quality" of the Malkins.

Completed in 1931, the 102-story Empire State Building was the winner of a fierce three-way race to be the tallest skyscraper in the city. The 927-foot tall tower at 40 Wall Street briefly held the title when it opened in 1930. But it quickly fell to No. 2 when workers raised a spire atop the 1,047-foot tall Chrysler Building. Months later, the Empire State Building topped it at 1,250 feet. It was overtaken by the first World Trade Center, and will again be relegated to No. 2 when the new, 1,776-foot 1 World Trade Center is finished.

Councilman Leroy Comrie posed a final question at the meeting on Monday that seemed to foretell how he would vote: "Is New York City a snapshot taken in 2010 to be held in perpetuity, or is New York City an evolving, dynamic entity?"

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A version of this article appeared in print on August 24, 2010, on page A18 of the New York edition.

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EDITORIAL

New York's Iconic Skyline

Published: August 24, 2010

In the drowsy month of August no less, New York's City Council is poised to make one of the most important decisions in years about Manhattan's skyline. Council members will decide today whether to allow developers to build a skyscraper almost as tall as the Empire State Building — 900 feet west on the site of the current Hotel Pennsylvania, on Seventh Avenue. For many people looking from the western part of Manhattan and New Jersey, the iconic tower would no longer be visible.

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This is no ordinary development issue. The Empire State is central to this city's image. Any decision to alter the skyline so radically deserves more time and more public consideration.

Owners of the Empire State Building, Anthony and Peter Malkin, contend that they realized only recently that Vornado Realty Trust had plans for a building as tall as their 1931 landmark. They want Vornado to lower the tower considerably, and they want the city to provide a 17-block "no go" zone around their building for future skyscrapers as high as theirs. That would be too much.

Change, including change in the city skyline, is inevitable and part of what makes New York City so alive. There will be more such decisions to come in this central stretch of Manhattan, especially if plans to replace today's grim Pennsylvania Station with the new Moynihan Station move ahead and remake the area. The giant towers replacing th Trade Center will someday change the entire scope of Manhattan's skyline.

The real issue for the city is this: Whatever skyscrapers come next, they should be fi icons.

Right now, we know too little about what the Vornado building would really look like. The present design by Pelli Clarke Pelli — which seems so thick and bulky beside the elegant Empire State — might not be final. Vornado does not have a main tenant, and without that anchor, it cannot afford to build immediately. With a tenant could come new adjustments to the design.

Like the local Community Board, which opposed this development, we are also concerned about moving forward without seeing the city's larger development plan for the entire area. Such important issues demand more than a late-summer review by the City Council.

A version of this editorial appeared in print on August 25, 2010, on page A20 of the New York edition.

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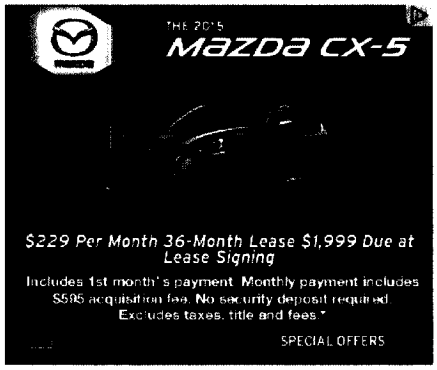

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Greenwich's Malkin fights off Empire State Building challenger

Neil Vigdor, Staff Writer
Published 10:10 pm, Tuesday, August 24, 2010

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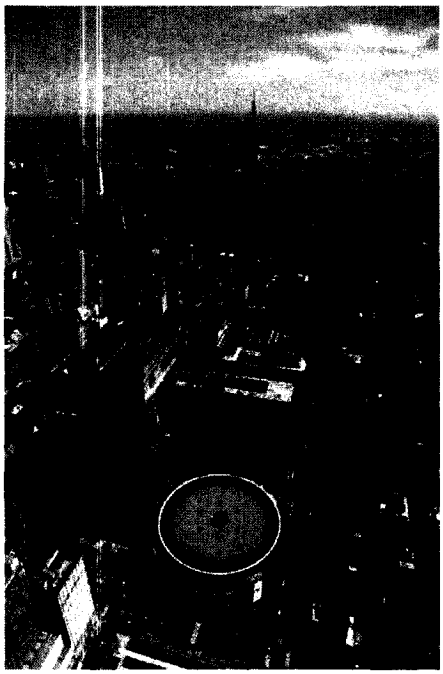
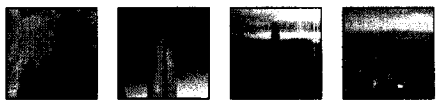


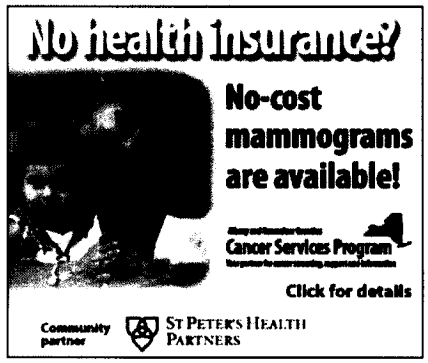
In this Sept. 8, 2008 file photo, Madison Square Garden, lower center, and midtown Manhattan are shown in this aerial photo in New York, as the Empire State Building is seen at top. The owner of the Empire State Building says the height of a proposed tower near the iconic skyscraper would forever alter the skyline of New York City. The 67-story tower would rise only 34 feet less than the Empire State Building. (AP Photo/Mark Lennihan, File)



Think of it as King Kong and Godzilla.

Not only is the owner of the Empire State Building trying to fend off a rival skyscraper that he claims will cast a shadow over the landmark, he's contending with a protest over his management company's apparent snub of Mother Teresa.

Peter Malkin, 76, the Greenwich real estate



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magnate whose family's stake in the Manhattan landmark dates back half a century, let his antipathy toward a rival developer's skyscraper project in the backyard of the city's tallest building be known Tuesday during an exclusive interview.

Soaring to 1,216 feet in the air, just 34 feet lower than the 102nd-floor observatory of the Empire State Building about two blocks away, the glass tower at 15 Penn Plaza could be voted on as early as this week by the City Council.

"It would cast a shadow all the way to the Empire State Building," Malkin said. "If you were to lay the building down on its side, it would hit the Empire State Building."

Malkin said the Vornado Realty Trust project, which already received zoning approval, but is overwhelmingly opposed by the Community Board for Midtown Manhattan, blatantly flies in the face of the city's regulations on building setbacks, volume and height.

The thrust of Malkin's argument is that current zoning regulations, which he said allow for a maximum building height of 800 feet, were relaxed in return for promised improvements by Vornado such as new subway entrances and an underground passageway.

And then came this description of the rival tower from Malkin, managing partner of Empire State Building Associates and a principal of Malkin Holdings, the management company that operates the skyscraper.

"I use the phrase a large pickle," Malkin said. "I'd say cucumber or a zucchini. That's even more accurate. That's what it would look like, a lighted zucchini."

The public relations firm handling media inquiries for Vornado on the project declined to respond directly to Malkin's comments, but referred to testimony from a City Council subcommittee hearing Monday by David Greenbaum, president of the company's New York office division.

"The fact is that New York's skyline has never stopped changing, and one hopes it never will," Greenbaum said. "Look how the skyline in Grand Central, surrounding the landmarked Chrysler Building has evolved over the years and continues to evolve. A similar statement could be made for the iconic landmarked Woolworth Building in Lower Manhattan and the commercial district that surrounds it."

Greenbaum argued that 60 percent of the city's commercial buildings are over 50 years old, putting New York at a competitive disadvantage with Hong Kong or Shanghai.

"There are few remaining areas of Manhattan in which this kind of vertical development can still take place," Greenbaum said.

Malkin said he doesn't begrudge commercial development.

"The Empire State Building agrees that this is a site where there should be a major building," he said.

Malkin bought his stake in the Empire State Building with his father-in-law in 1961. Malkin is also father-in-law of Senate candidate and Attorney General Richard Blumenthal.

What started as a $66 million investment for Malkin has matured quite handsomely over the

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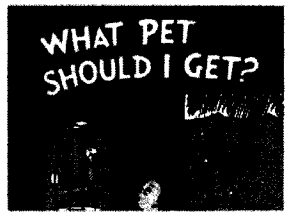

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past four decades. Some estimates of the building's value exceed $1 billion.

"We know that taller buildings will be built," Malkin said.

"It's just the combination how close this site is, the bulk of the building and the height."

In addition to casting a shadow on the landmark, Malkin said ambient light from the neighboring glass tower will spill onto the Empire State Building at night, having a negative effect the rainbow of colors bathing its facade.

Malkin's comments come with tensions at an all-time high over what many Catholics say is the building's snub of Mother Teresa.

The Catholic League lobbied to have the skyscraper lit up blue and white for what would have been the Nobel Peace Prize laureate's 100th birthday on Thursday, a request that the New York City-based religious and civil rights group said was rejected.

An explanation of the building's policy regarding requests like the one from the Catholic League is on the application form that the building management requires prospective "lighting partners" to fill out.

"The Empire State Building celebrates many cultures and causes in the world community with iconic lightings," the policy states. "Outside of its tradition of lightings for the religious holidays of Easter, Eid al Fitr (the end of Ramadan), Hanukkah and Christmas, the Empire State Building has a specific policy against lighting for religious figures, religious organizations and additional religious holidays."

The building will instead be lit up Thursday in red, white and blue in honor of Women's Equality Day, which marks the 90th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote.

Malkin said that Mother Teresa would have frowned on such a display.

"Mother Teresa left explicit instructions that she not be honored in any way or used in anyway after her death except by her own organization," Malkin said. "So we think that we're honoring her wishes."

A spokesman for the Catholic League, which is organizing a protest outside the Empire State Building Thursday night featuring comedian Jackie Mason, Guardian Angel founder Curtis Sliwa and quadriplegic police detective Steven McDonald, rejected the explanation.

"They know that they already lost the PR debate and we've won," said Jeff Field of the Catholic League. "So now they're just grasping at straws for an explanation."

Staff writer Neil Vigdor can be reached at neil.vigdor@scni.com or at 203-625-4436.

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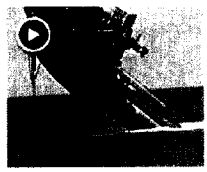

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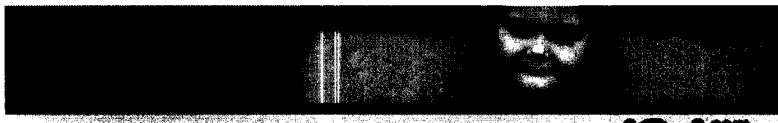

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Local residents may be seeing a change to the iconic New York skyline, but not if the owners of the Empire State Building have their say. A proposed tower on 34th Street, would stand at 1,216 feet, just two avenues west and a few feet shy of the city landmark.

Doug Kanter/AFP/Getty Images

The iconic New York skyline may be changing if plans for a new skyscraper, blocks away from the Empire State Building, are implemented

Owners of the Empire State Building say the new tower would overshadow the historical skyscraper and are petitioning for a 17-block no-building zone for all developers who want to construct oversized buildings.

Developers say their proposal adjacent to Pennsylvania Station will provide thousands of New Yorkers with jobs. The City Planning Commission has already approved plans for the new plaza.

For more information and renderings of the evolved skyline:
Will a tower block the Empire State Building? A fight for New York's skyline. (The New York Times)

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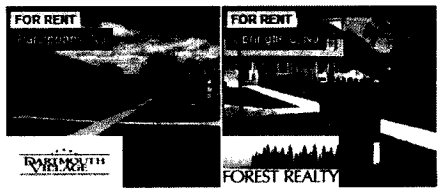

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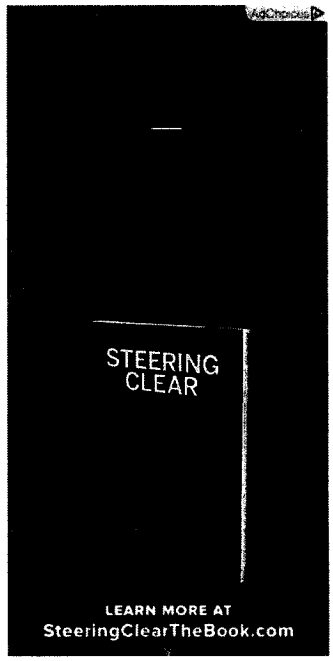

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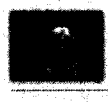

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Andrea Dealmagro

Wrong. Preservation of the dominance of historical structures makes the difference between a charming and soulful city and a conglomerate of concrete towers devoid of personality. That is why Paris has an ordinance banning buildings taller than the Eiffel Tower in the core arrondissements of the French capital. I believe the same goes for the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin.

dsdan

I'm amused how "prevent competition for office leases" is presented as "protect the historic skyline."

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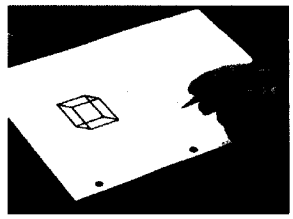

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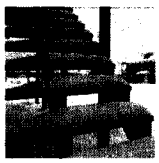

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LENS; Timeless

By LIBRADO ROMERO
Published: December 15, 2010

Ernie Sisto was as good a storyteller as he was a photographer. A tale would typically begin, "I was doing a handstand on the table when the cops broke the door down." After nearly 50 years with The New York Times, Ernie retired in 1972, having won a bevy of awards and mentored dozens of photographers. He took many great pictures. But his most challenging moment was on July 28, 1945, when a B-25 bomber lost in a dense fog crashed into the Empire State Building, tearing a hole between the 78th and 80th floors and killing 14 people. The photograph above was taken when Ernie persuaded two other photographers to hold his legs while he hung over a parapet overlooking the gash. The others, not interested in repeating Ernie's derring-do, passed Ernie their film holders, and he shot an image for each of them. Later, he said, half-joking, "Those guys won a lot of prizes with my picture." Earlier photographs in the series are at nytimes.com/lens.

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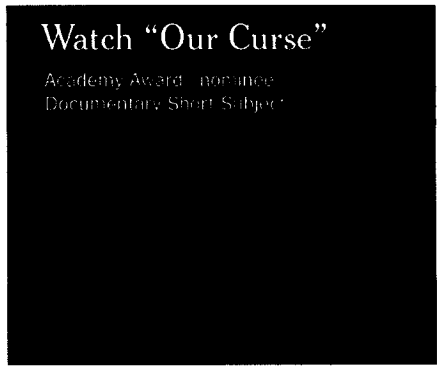

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1,576 Steps (Heaven Help Me) to Clarity

Hanan Tabbara

A NEW VIEW Andy Martin, a participant in the Empire State Building Run-Up, in the 86th-floor observatory.

By ANDY MARTIN
Published: February 5, 2010

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If only King Kong had known about the Empire State Building Run-Up, where for one miraculous if masochistic morning each year people are allowed to climb *the inside* of the landmark building, he and Fay might have lived happily — if asymmetrically — ever after.

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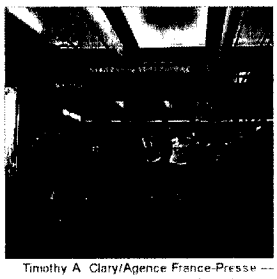

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The 33rd running of the Empire State Building Run-Up drew 324 runners from 17 countries

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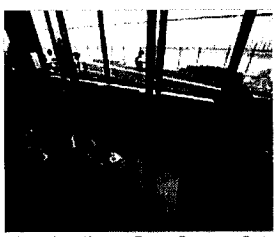

Justin Lane/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

That's what I was thinking as I stood on Fifth Avenue at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, staring up at the Empire State in all its glory, waiting for the 33rd annual running of New York's famous vertical marathon. Panicking. Like a surfer about to paddle out on a big day at Waimea Bay, I was filled with a mix of ecstasy and terror. At least horizontal-marathon runners don't have to look at the whole course from the starting line.

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I would never have been there if I wasn't too cheap to take out a decent gym membership. One freezing morning a few months ago, I was headed outside for a run but chickened out at the door. Rather than ride the elevator back up to my 16th-floor apartment, near Washington Square, I headed for the stairs. It nearly killed me. But I was hooked. Soon it was up and down twice, 32 floors, then 48. I could never get quite high enough.

Still, every morning, I would walk out the front door of my building and see the Empire State Building. If I looked out the windows of the New York Public Library, there it was again. Like a beautiful woman I could not force from my

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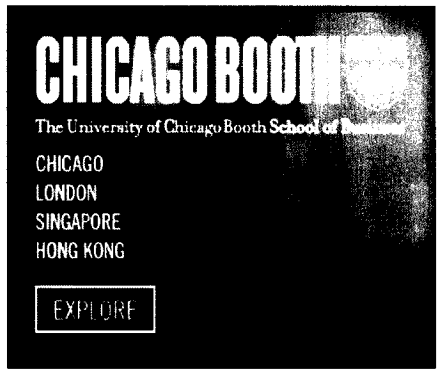

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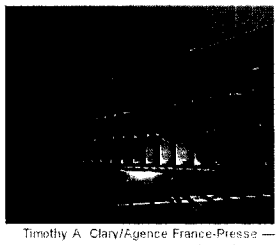

Timothy A. Clary/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

mind — an extremely tall, rather dominant beautiful woman — the 102-story Empire State Building became an obsession. I was haunted by the vision of all those stairs.

I flirted with a 45-story building on the Upper East Side equipped with a pool and hot tub where my friend lives and where I would occasionally work out. His health club was like something out of Playboy. But from the window of his 40th-floor apartment, I could still see her — mocking me, a perpetual temptation. I realized that there was only one place in the city from which I could be sure not to have to gaze upon this accursed object of desire: inside the Empire State itself.

I once mentioned my secret yearning to a woman at a party. "I get it," she said. "It's a sort of hamster thing, isn't it?" No, to us vertical runners stretching in the bowels of the Empire State last week, it was not a hamster thing. It was grand and epic and heroic. I wore a T-shirt inscribed with a variant of my father's old motto from his days in the Royal Air Force: "Through Adversity to the Stairs."

I had been warned about the firefighters in the race. There are times when you really want a firefighter, times when nothing is finer than the sight of a firefighter, or indeed several firefighters, in extremely tight shorts. When you are about to run up the stairs of the Empire State is not one of those times. Let them stick to their pinup calendars and keep out of my way.

With the cry "God be with you!" from a woman in an emerald-green running vest, 324 runners from 19 states and 17 countries were off, jockeying for position as we stormed through the lobby door to the stairs. It got pretty brutal; Ben Hur without the chariots.

I had two basic rules. Rule No. 1: keep running. Or at least jogging. I passed a few sluggards who were under the impression it was the Empire State Walk-Up. And then there were those who had ceased any semblance of locomotion altogether. Rule No. 2: don't trample on the bodies. Go around (ruthlessly ignoring any cries of distress).

The surprising thing about the stairwell of the Empire State Building is that it looks like any other stairwell — only with more stairs. A lot more; 1,576 of them to the race's finish line on the 86th floor. But it might as well be double or triple that. There is a sense of infinity to the stairwell, as if you were running around one of those Escher drawings for ever and ever amen.

In the first phase of the race, you forget all about death, taxes and unrequited love. You are totally focused. In the second phase, starting around the 60th floor, you begin to feel that perhaps death, taxes and unrequited love are not so bad, and definitely preferable to running up any more stairs.

When I hit the top, 21 minutes 20 seconds after I started (a bit under half the pace of Thomas Dold, the German who picked up his fifth straight title in 10 minutes 16 seconds), I was half expecting something like a King Kong statuette. Instead, an angelic blonde in a pink leotard — there to root on another runner — came over, as if in a dream, and leaned on me. It was a stairway to heaven. I was emperor of New York for the day and anything could happen. Turned out she had a fear of heights, but still.

It was in this empire state of mind, as I gazed out on the great city spinning a thousand feet below, that I finally figured it out. It isn't because it feels so good when you stop. Or because it's there. The thing about the Empire State Run-Up is that although it makes absolutely no sense in itself, it makes complete sense of everything else in the world, which divides up into lovely tall buildings with loads of stairs — and all the others.

One thing worries me. Is it all downstairs for me from now on? I wonder if they have run-ups in Kuala Lumpur or Dubai.

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BACKHAND CITY

Andy Martin, a fellow of the Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers, lives in Greenwich Village, where he regularly runs up to his 16th-floor apartment as many as five times at a stretch, but takes the elevator down in between.

A version of this article appeared in print on February 7, 2010, on page MB6 of the New York edition.

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Love in a Hard Place

By KIM SEVERSON
Published: February 14, 2010

'An Affair to Remember,' with Changes in the Plot

I've done a lot of things I'm reluctant to admit in public. Near the top of the list is proposing to the woman I wanted to marry atop the Empire State Building.

To understand why, there are a few things you need to know. First, I work around smart, stylish people who make a living knocking down clich? My friends, open-hearted as they are, do not traffic in overt acts of cheesiness or cloying displays of anything. And I am a reluctant citizen of New York, a city I find thrilling to visit but tough to live in.

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Also, I'm a woman. My marriage proposal was, inherently, unconventional. But that does not mean I didn't long for what my straight friends took for granted. That is, an old-fashioned (legal) wedding with all the traditions and trimmings.

Proposing on top of the Empire State Building was a step toward creating a conventional marriage in a world where that is only slowly starting to be an option for people like me.

That's not to say it wasn't completely cheesy. But every time I see the Empire State Building, I smile and hurry to get home a little faster.

KIM SEVERSON

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TODD HEISLER/THE NEW YORK TIMES; RICHARD PERRY/THE NEW YORK TIMES; ROB BENNETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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Yale student plunged from Empire State Building

Published 7:36 am, Friday, April 2, 2010

NEW YORK (AP) -- A Yale University junior left a suicide note in his dorm room before heading to New York, where he apparently plunged to his death by jumping from the Empire State Building, police said Wednesday.

Cameron Dabaghi, 21, from Austin, Texas, jumped from the 86th floor observation deck Tuesday during evening rush hour. His note said he was sorry and he would be jumping from either the George Washington Bridge over the Hudson River in upper Manhattan, or the Empire State building, police said.

There were seven other people on the observation deck at the same time, and one person tried to talk to the jumper as he climbed over the barrier, but was unsuccessful.

Dabaghi was dead when rescue workers arrived at the 102-story skyscraper shortly before 6:30 p.m. He was a student in Berkeley College, majoring in East Asian studies. The college dean was meeting with students Wednesday, and counselors were available at the university to anyone who needed them.

"Yale is extending support to Cameron's family, roommates and friends at this most difficult time," the university said in a statement.

The Empire State Building is the third-tallest building in the United States. More than 30 people have committed suicide at the building since it opened in 1931. The most recent one occurred in January 2009, when a 54-year-old woman died after jumping from the 39th floor and landing on the 25th floor.

The skyscraper reaches 1,454 feet to the top of its lightning rod.

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Sunnyvale firm gets Empire State Building gig

Energy
David R. Baker, Chronicle Staff Writer
Published 7:00 am, Thursday, March 4, 2010

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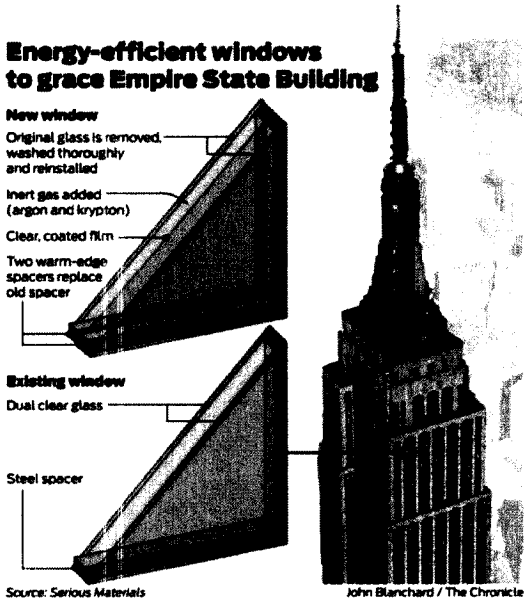

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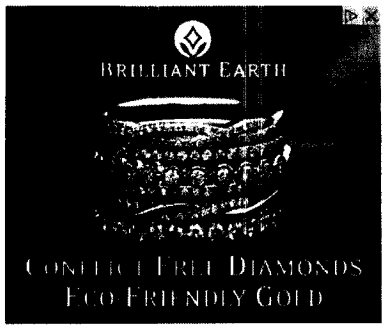

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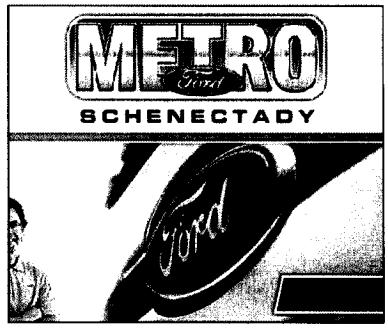
Serious Materials, an energy-efficiency company in Sunnyvale, will remove, disassemble and rebuild the Empire State Building's 6,514 windows to cut the skyscraper's utility bills.

The work will be done at night and on site, with the windows refurbished in a "micro-factory" on the building's fifth floor. The project, announced Wednesday, should be finished by December, said Kevin Surace, the company's chief executive officer.

"It's never been done on this scale," he said. "We'll take the windows out in the evening, and by the morning, they'll be back in."

The window upgrade is just one part of a larger, $13.2 million renovation effort designed to slash the iconic building's energy use by 38 percent.



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Together, all of the renovations - which include upgrading the air, water and lighting systems - should save $4.4 million per year in energy costs.

Rather than replace the building's double-paned windows, Serious Materials will reuse them.

In the fifth-floor work area, the windows will be taken apart by hand and each pane thoroughly cleaned. Then the panes will be paired up again, with new braces to keep them separate. In the space between the panes, an inert gas and a thin, transparent film will act as insulation, impeding the transfer of heat from the outer pane to the inner one.

The reassembled windows will be placed back in their frames. The work should begin in the next 30 to 45 days, Surace said.

"Serious Materials competed with the most prominent manufacturers and service providers for a key component of our program to make our energy savings goals a reality," said Anthony Malkin with the Empire State Building Co., the landmark's owner, in a statement. "Their expertise and ingenuity at competitive standards won them the job."

Surace said the upgraded windows should last 30 years or more. "Or until the next technology comes along," he said.

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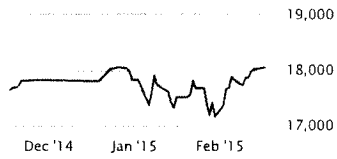

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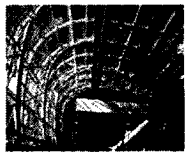

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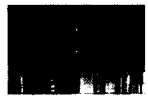

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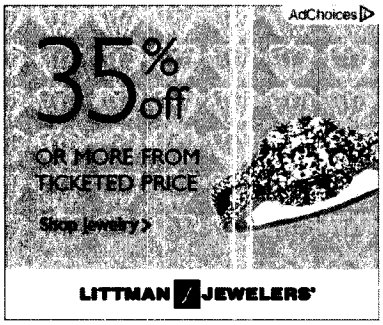

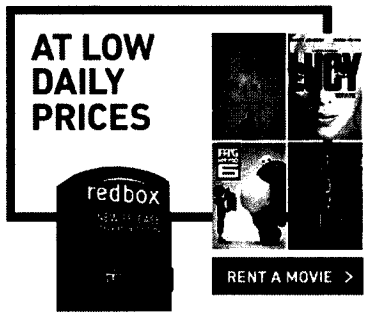

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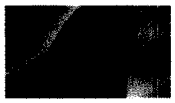

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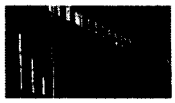

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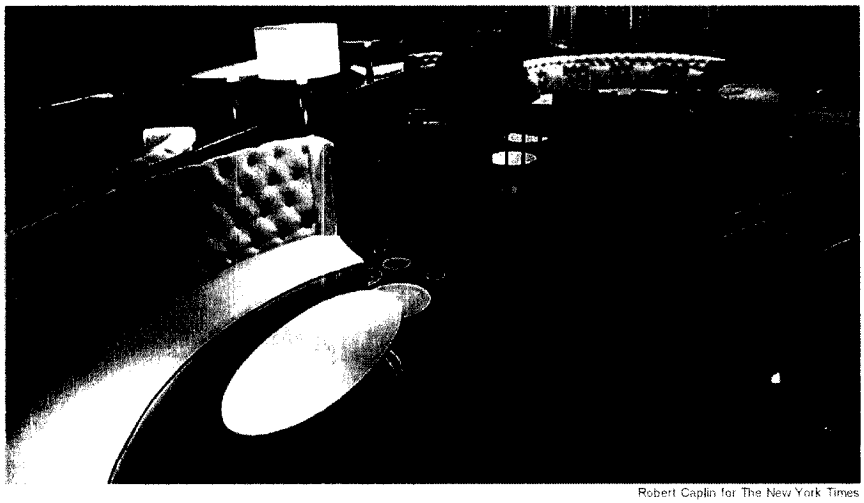
A Deco Lounge for the Empire State Building



Robert Caplin for The New York Times

By FLORENCE FABRICANT
Published March 30, 2010

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It's hard to believe the cocktail lounge that opened in the Empire State Building on March 29 is brand new because it looks so right. At 3,500 square feet of brushed stainless steel, a generous curved marble bar, tufted banquettes, glass-topped tables and Art Deco chandeliers, it accommodates up to 150 people in sophisticated style in a former postal substation at street level.

"I feel like I'm giving the Empire State Building the cocktail lounge it deserves," said the owner, Mark Grossich, who also owns the Campbell Apartment in Grand Central Terminal and the World Bar in Trump World Tower, among others.

BIRDMAN

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To accompany wine, spirits and cocktails — including the Empire, made with gin, dry vermouth, orange liqueur, lemon juice, raspberry and Champagne — there is a small selection of food, like rib-eye sliders and a toasted cheese sandwich on brioche.

The Empire Room, in the Empire State Building, 350 Fifth Avenue (34th Street), (212) 643-5400, is open from 11 a.m. to 3 a.m. (one hour after the observation deck closes).

A version of this article appeared in print on March 31, 2010, on page D2 of the New York edition.

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Man Dies in Leap Off Empire State Building

By THE NEW YORK TIMES
Published: March 30, 2010

A 21-year-old man leapt to his death from an observation deck of the Empire State Building on Tuesday, the police said.

The man, whose name was not released, got a running start and cleared a barrier on the observation deck, on the 86th floor, about 6:15 p.m., the police said.

The man landed on a sidewalk in front of a Bank of America branch near the northeast entrance of the skyscraper on West 34th Street, near Fifth Avenue.

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THE SECOND MARIGOLD HOTEL

In the skyscraper's long history — construction began in 1930, and it opened on May 1, 1931 — more than 30 people have leapt to their deaths.

In January 2009, a 54-year-old woman who worked at a clothing store in the building gained access to a 39th-floor window.

She jumped and landed on a balcony on the 25th floor, where she died, the police said.

A version of this article appeared in print on March 31, 2010, on page A20 of the New York edition.

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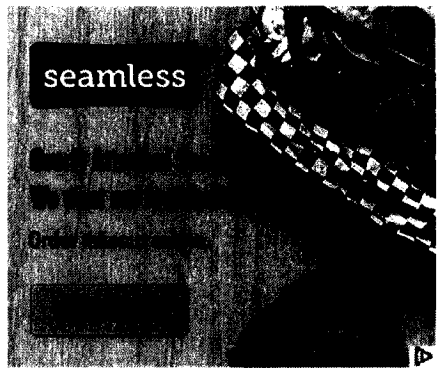

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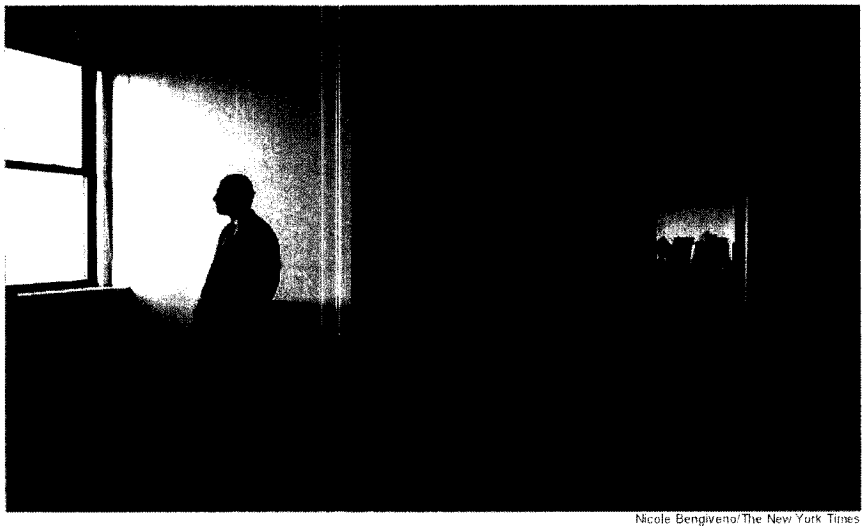
At Empire State Building, a 40th Floor Squatter



Nicole Bengiveno/The New York Times

Daniel K. Perlman, seen last November in the office in the Empire State Building where he was a squatter for months after the main tenant left.

By MANNY FERNANDEZ
Published: September 21, 2010

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Daniel K. Perlman had the quietest, cheapest and strangest office in New York City. It was quiet because he had a deserted six-room suite to himself; cheap because he paid zero in rent; and strange because he had all of this on the 40th floor of one of the most famous skyscrapers in the world.

BIRDMAN
NOW PLAYING

For about seven months, he was a squatter at the Empire State Building.

Mr. Perlman, 47, is a family-law and criminal defense lawyer. In a city of fame and power, he has neither. He used to be a school teacher in Pennsylvania. Now he lives on the Upper West Side, enjoys crossword puzzles and runs in marathons.

In 2006, Mr. Perlman moved his one-man law practice to Suite 4010 of the Empire State Building. A few other companies occupied the suite, a narrow cluster of rooms in the southwest corner of the building with stunning views. His desk and chair were tucked into a little alcove near the break room.

The tenant of Suite 4010 was a mortgage broker, which rented out rooms to other businesses, including a law firm, which in turn rented the space to Mr. Perlman. He had no lease with the mortgage broker and no lease with the building's owners, operators or leasing agent. In fact, Mr. Perlman said he did not have a lease with the law firm, but had an informal agreement. Because he had done work for the law firm, he was allowed to use the alcove for little or no rent. He said he was initially charged no rent and later paid $500 a month.

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As the housing market collapsed, the mortgage broker struggled and left the suite in July 2009. The other businesses departed around the same time. Mr. Perlman looked into moving to a new office. He said he waited for one of the eviction notices that management taped to the doors of other vacant suites, but one never came.

"I was prepared to leave, but nothing happened," Mr. Perlman said. "There was no green notice on the door. At the same time, nobody from the Empire State Building hassl about it. The maintenance people knew I was there."

Hundreds of feet above Manhattan, Mr. Perlman had slipped through the real-esta cracks of New York, working on his legal cases in his very own 3,000-square-foot s the Empire State Building, free of rent and office colleagues. He spread out, taking over one of the vacant rooms. When his original identification card was deactivated, he got a second one with the help of a friend in the building, using an ID for the 59th floor, where he intended to relocate, to gain access to the 40th floor.

One afternoon last November, Mr. Perlman stepped into what used to be the conference room. The room was empty, except for a photocopy machine upon which someone had taped a note: "Copier is trash."

It was a ghost of a suite. Most of the rooms were barren, but fragments of office life remained — unplugged fax machines, a pouch of Fairway French roast coffee on a shelf. The digital clock on the microwave in the break room was 1 hour 28 minutes off.

"I still get mail," he said at the time. "It's odd."

Mr. Perlman said he did not consider himself a squatter or law-breaker. Yet he had no sympathy for the building's management, which he complained had been trying to push out small tenants to make way for larger tenants. The mortgage broker was one of several small tenants that sued the Empire State Building over their electricity bills. "I didn't think of it as a scam," Mr. Perlman said. "If I'm guilty of anything, I'm guilty of procrastinating."

In February, Mr. Perlman walked into the suite to find his desk and the rest of the furniture had been removed. The locks were changed soon after.

A spokesman for the Empire State Building said Mr. Perlman was an illegal subtenant who found a way to gain access to the building unlawfully after his ID card was deactivated, and that management had been delayed in taking possession of Suite 4010 because their eviction case against the mortgage broker for nonpayment of rent was tied up in court. The spokesman said that illegal subtenancies were once common, when the building was under different management, but that steps had been taken to put an end to the practice.

After working from home for several months, Mr. Perlman found a new office on West 37th Street and began moving in this week. Suite 4010 remains vacant.

Jim Dwyer is on leave.

A version of this article appeared in print on September 22, 2010, on page A15 of the New York edition.

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Not Just a Perch for King Kong

By CHRISTOPHER GRAY

Published: September 23, 2010

THE new exhibition at the Keith de Lellis Gallery, "New York: A Bird's-Eye View," has a striking assortment of aerial views of the city. No image is more arresting than that of the Navy dirigible Los Angeles docking at the mooring post of the Empire State Building, a giant cigarlike cylinder coming nose-to-nose with the tallest building in the world.

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BIRDMAN NOW PLAYING

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Keith de Lellis Gallery

The famous photo of the dirigible Los Angeles docking at the Empire State Building is a fake, although there were vague plans for an airship station.

That the photograph is a composite, a fake, is disappointing but not surprising: no airship ever docked there, and indeed the whole mooring mast concept was a bit of a stunt itself.

In late 1929, Alfred E. Smith, the leader of a group of investors erecting the Empire State Building, announced that they were increasing the height of the building to 1,250 feet from 1,050. Mr. Smith, a past governor of New York, denied that competition with the 1,046-foot-high Chrysler Building was a factor. "We are measuring its rise by principles of economic investment rather than spect standards," he told The New York Times.

The extra 200 feet, it was announced, was to serve a mooring mast for dirigibles so that they could dock in Midtown, rather than out in Lakehurst, N.J., the station used by the German Graf Zeppelin. Mr. Smith said that at the Empire State Building, airships like the Graf, almost 800 feet long, would "swing in the breeze and the passengers go down a gangplank"; seven minutes later they would be on the street.

But the Germans, who dominated dirigible technology, had not asked for a docking station, and passenger traffic on dirigibles was still minuscule. The mast camouflaged the quest for boasting rights to the world's tallest building, an ambition to which it seemed indecent to admit.

Dr. Hugo Eckener, the commander of the Graf Zeppelin and the world's expert on dirigibles, said flatly that the Empire State project was not practical. Zeppelin landings

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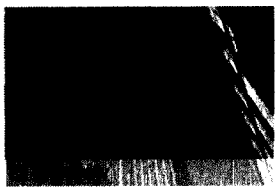

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The New York Times

The dirigible "Columbia," flying over the the mast of the Empire State Building.

Readers' Comments

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required scores of ground crewmen, retaining ropes fore and aft, and even then landings were sometimes dicey. Dr. Eckener had trained the dirigible crews for the bombing raids over London in World War I.

The dirigible docking project was still up in the air in March 1931, when Dr. Eckener visited the tower, after which all he had to say was that the matter required further study. The Skyscraper Museum has photographs of the construction of the Empire State Building online.

The tallest building in the world opened that May; the developers acknowledged that the apparatus for winching the airships had not yet been designed. In December the Navy airship J-4 flew from Lakehurst and hovered around the tower at the request of a newsreel company. The 30-mile-an-hour winds, described as "treacherous" by The Times, made the approach difficult.

In mid-September another dirigible was able to jury-rig a three-minute connection to the top of the building, in 40-mile-an-hour winds. Two weeks later the Goodyear Blimp Columbia picked up a stack of Evening Journals from the newspaper's plant at 210 South Street and lowered them on a 100-foot-line to a man on the tower, who was able to cut the bundle free.

The Columbia tried to connect again the next day, but could not. That was the last recorded attempt to make contact of any sort; in the same year NBC began broadcasting from the tower.

In 1936 Dr. Eckener passed over the Empire State Building at night on his way to Lakehurst. In command of the new dirigible Hindenburg, he resisted Nazi efforts to take over the airship program, and by May of the following year had been replaced. That was when the Hindenburg burned and crashed in Lakehurst, effectively ending commercial passenger travel in airships.

Donald Friedman, a structural engineer who contributed an essay to the 1998 book "Building the Empire State," edited by Carol Willis, said that strictly from a structural standpoint the notion of securing an airship to the Empire State Building, even at the very top, was a reasonable one. John Tauranac, the author of the 1995 "The Empire State Building," agrees.

But the notion that passengers would be able to descend an airport-style ramp from a moving airship to the tip of the tallest building in the world, even in excellent conditions, beggars belief.

The original docking level is one floor above the 102nd-floor observatory, up some steep stairs behind an unmarked door. The stairs lead to a circular room perhaps 25 feet across. A door leads out to the circular terrace where passengers fresh from Europe or South America — and their steamer trunks — were to have set foot on American ground.

The terrace is perhaps two and a half feet wide, and the parapet could not be any higher than that; it's like standing on the raised lip of a Campbell's soup can, a quarter-mile up. And because the terrace is circular, each side disappearing left and right, there is an uncomfortable sensation of being pushed outward. Were I arriving from Germany, I would have opted for blinders before leaving the nose. But it is an intoxicating view.

The show at the de Lellis Gallery, 1045 Madison Avenue at 79th Street, continues through Nov. 20, with about two dozen images of New York, ranging from amateur rooftop views from the 1880s to spectacular high-altitude views of the 1940s. It appears that the photomontage of the dirigible Los Angeles hitched to the Empire State Building was a backup, in case an actual picture could not be taken — the Los Angeles did pass over the

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building in November 1931, but it was at 10 p.m.

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A version of this article appeared in print on September 26, 2010, on page RE5 of the New York edition.

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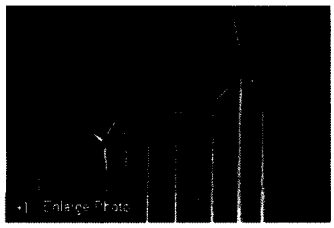

An 80-year-old New York icon has recruited Austin-based Green Mountain Energy Co. as its wind energy provider of choice, according to reports Thursday.

The *New York Times* reported the local company, recently acquired by New Jersey-based NRG Energy Inc., signing a two-year deal to sell the Empire State Building about 55 million kilowatt-hours worth in renewable energy certificates annually.

The 102-story building previously completed an energy-efficiency makeover and is now the largest commercial purchaser of renewable power in the state, according to the *Times*. The wind power will cover 100 percent of the building's needs and is Green Mountain's largest deal ever. Terms of the agreement were not released.

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Green Mountain, founded in 1997, was acquired last September for about $350 million. The company sells renewable energy from wind, water and solar sources.

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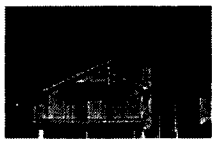
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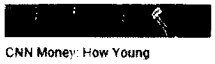

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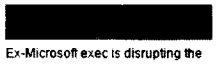

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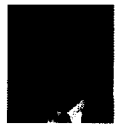

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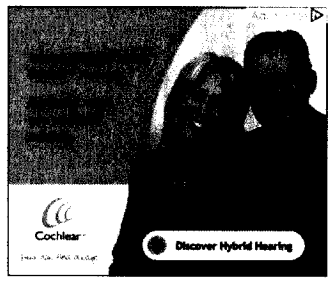

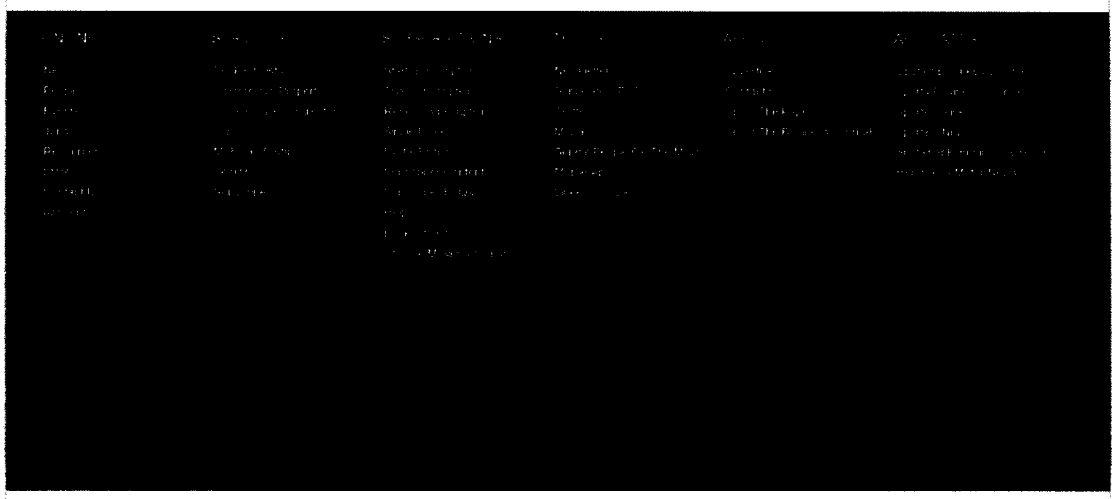

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Green Power for the Empire State Building

By TOM ZELLER JR. JANUARY 6, 2011 8:35 AM 9 Comments

Bloomberg New York's Empire State Building has reached a new green milestone

Business

Amid a more general makeover, the owners of the Empire State Building have spent the last couple of years burnishing the 80-year-old landmark's green bona fides as well — chiefly though a series of efficiency upgrades and other energy retrofits.

On Thursday, the building's caretakers announced another milestone: it has become the largest commercial purchaser of renewable power in the state.

In a two-year deal brokered with Green Mountain Energy, a renewable power and carbon offset retailer recently acquired by NRG Energy of New Jersey, the Empire State Building will purchase 55 million kilowatt-hours worth of renewable energy certificates annually — enough to cover its yearly electricity consumption.

The certificates are sourced through NRG's wind power facilities.

In a statement, Anthony E. Malkin, the president of Malkin Holdings, which supervises the Empire State Building, suggested that the move, along with the building's other greening efforts, "gives us a competitive advantage in attracting the best credit tenants at the best rents."

To be sure, trumpeting large-scale purchases of renewable energy certificates, or R.E.C.'s, has become increasingly common among businesses and institutions seeking to improve their green reputations.

The Environmental Protection Agency, which "supports the organizational procurement of green power" through its Green Power Partnership Program, is a prime mover along these lines. The program's Green Power Leadership Awards for 2010 recognize a number of businesses and organizations — including the Indianapolis Zoo, which now covers 100 percent of its electricity needs (14 million kilowatt-hours annually) through R.E.C. purchases.

The Intel Corporation, which buys 1.4 billion kilowatt-hours worth of R.E.C.'s — about half of its annual consumption in the United

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States — has been the national leader since 2008, according to the agency.

Of course, as popular as renewable energy certificates have become, their real-world impact in helping to advance green energy is notoriously difficult to measure — and a subject of much debate.

The E.P.A. provides a fair amount of explanation on just what R.E.C.'s are — essentially nontangible assets representing "the environmental, social, and other nonpower qualities of renewable electricity generation." One R.E.C. is created for every 1,000 kilowatt-hours of renewable power generated, and the certificates can be sold with, or in some cases separately, from the power.

Ideally, the whole thing would work as Green Mountain Energy elegantly lays out in its "bathtub" analogy: Power from all sources, clean and dirty, is dumped and mixed into the grid, which might be thought of as a tub. Customers draw power from that tub as needed, but they can't really separate the clean wind power, say, from sooty coal-based power.

Still, the company explains that demand for renewable energy — as expressed through voluntary purchases of certificates — will slowly increase the proportion of clean energy going into the tub.

Some skeptics caution that this is only true if the certificates help create new clean-energy facilities, rather than simply provide added profit to existing ones.

Matthew Freedman, a staff lawyer with the Utility Reform Network, a California consumer advocacy organization, suggested that there are two scenarios where R.E.C. sales do make a difference:

> (1) The R.E.C.'s are sold under a long-term contract and this long-term contract allows a new renewable generation facility to receive financing and achieve commercial operations. In this case, the long-term R.E.C. deal provides critical revenues that enable the project to be financed.
>
> (2) The R.E.C.'s are sold by a facility with high operational costs and the facility would shut down without future R.E.C. revenues. It is possible that some high-cost biomass plants could meet this criteria if their fuel costs are significant and they lack a sufficiently lucrative energy off-take agreement. The key question is whether the facility is likely to continue to operate based only on energy market revenues (without any R.E.C. sales). In the case of an existing wind project, there is no chance that a R.E.C. deal makes a difference because the operational costs are low and most wind projects receive lucrative federal tax credits based on production over the first 10 years. Once a wind project is online, the facility will continue to operate with or without a R.E.C. deal.

"The bottom line," Mr. Freedman added, "is that you need to investigate whether the R.E.C. transaction satisfies the principle of additionality. Otherwise, the transacting of R.E.C.'s serves only to provide the buyer with positive public relations value and increases profits for the seller."

Whether or not the Empire State Building's R.E.C. outlay will prompt NRG to build new wind farms — or will help shore up one of its existing facilities — is unclear. That aside, it still seems a notable milestone for Manhattan's most famous landmark. The purchase, according to Thursday's announcement, is "more than double the amount of renewable power that any other commercial customer in New York City is currently buying."

A photographer seeks to drive home the proximity of fracking to Glacier National Park. Read more ...

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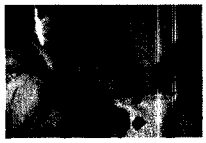

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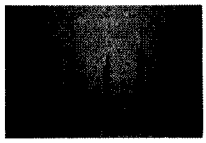

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Tampa Bay Times
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The skinny

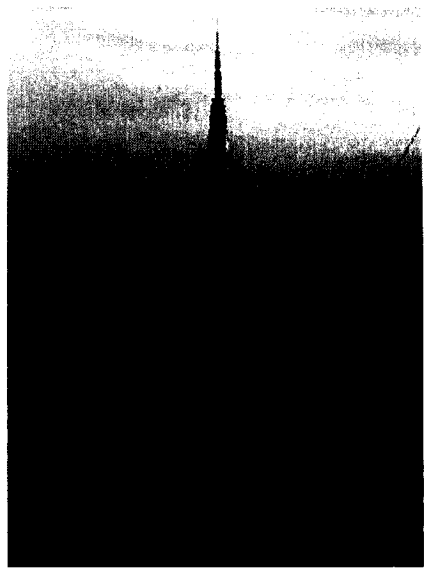
The skinny: Family controlling Empire State Building considers public sales

Times Wires

Wednesday, April 13, 2011 9:59pm

dreams of empire

Buying into tower with name cachet



People who have always wondered what it might be like to dabble in a little New York real estate may soon be able to dabble in a lot of it — by buying a piece of its most famous skyscraper, the Empire State Building. The Malkin family, which controls the 102-story art deco tower, is planning to create a publicly traded real estate company featuring the building, the *New York Times* reported, citing three executives briefed on the plans who spoke to the on the condition of anonymity. The Empire State Building did not get off to an auspicious start when it opened in 1931, during the Depression.

muzzle awards

Oil, undies and jailhouse books

Oil giant BP and the Obama administration were among the winners of the Jefferson Muzzle awards, given Wednesday by a free-speech group to those it considered the worst First Amendment violators in 2010. The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression noted the winners' restriction of media access to the Gulf of Mexico oil spill. Other recipients: the Transportation Security Administration, which arrested a passenger who stripped to his shorts to protest security measures, a Mississippi judge who jailed a lawyer for refusing to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and the Virginia prisons agency that banned a "Jailhouse Lawyers Handbook."

time for long ditty

4,000 miles of row, row, row your boat

A British woman set off from Australia on Wednesday to cross the Indian Ocean with a worry on her mind: pirates. Roz Savage, 43, rowed out of Fremantle to begin a four-month trip in her 23-foot purple rowboat. If she completes the 4,000-mile trip, Savage will be the first woman to row across three oceans, according to the Ocean Rowing Society of London, which tracks such feats. Her preparedness plan includes a good luck charm — "Woody," a tiny toy pirate with a wooden peg leg.

Sangria sippy

Better take a whiff of that juice drink

A 2-year-old boy was accidentally served sangria instead of orange juice at an Olive Garden in Lakeland on March 31. Jill VanHeest of Lakeland said it took employees about a half-hour to realize something was wrong. She said her son Nikolai began acting up and was taken to the hospital and given other fluids. Reports just surfaced this week that a Michigan Applebee's accidentally served a margarita to another toddler.

no Penury here

Presidential swipe seen round world

More than 5,000 Czechs have signed up to a Facebook campaign to mail pens to their president after a video of Vaclav Klaus sheepishly pocketing a pen during a signing ceremony last week in Chile spread on the Internet.

Compiled from Times wire services and other sources

The skinny: Family controlling Empire State Building considers public sales 04/13/11
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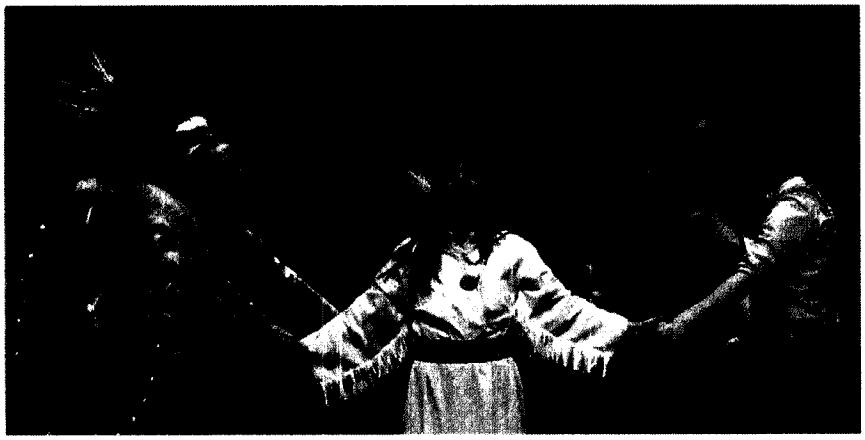
THEATER REVIEW | 'SKY BOYS'

A Boy and a Building Help Shape Each Other



Carol Rosegg

From left: Michael Mann, Keith Herron, Michael Hadary, Zachary Clause and Aaron Riesebeck, with Jessica Angleskhan, in "Sky Boys," at Abrons Arts Center.

By LAUREL GRAEBER
Published: February 22, 2011

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The Empire State Building doesn't loom as large in the public imagination as it did generations ago. In this century it has ceded its place to the twin towers, with all their tragic symbolism. But during the Empire State's construction, in 1930-31, it represented rising hope and progress at a time when so much seemed crushed and fallen.

Overview

New York Times Review

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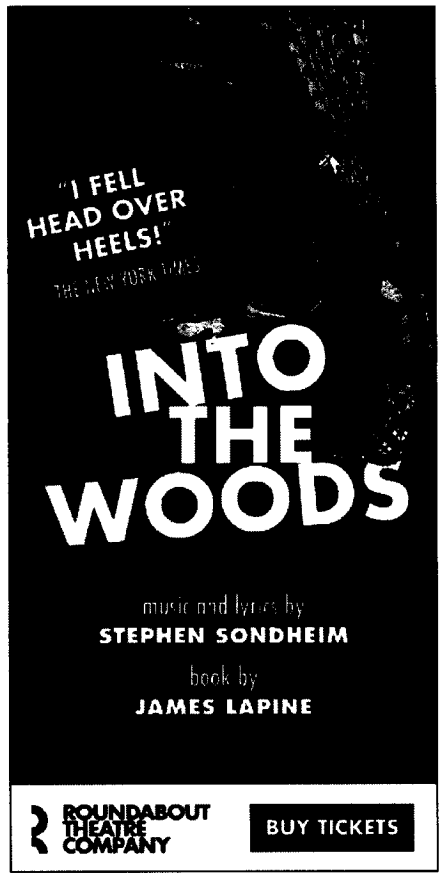
"Sky Boys: The Building of the Empire State Building," a new musical for families, recreates that period, on the eve of the completed design's 80th birthday. Produced by Making Books Sing, an organization that adapts children's books into theater, it presented its own structural challenges. The picture book inspiring it — "Sky Boys: How They Built the Empire State Building," by Deborah Hopkinson, illustrated by James E. Ransome (Schwartz & Wade Books, 2006) — has no real story line.

Wild NOW PLAYING GET TICKETS

But Barbara Zinn Krieger, the author of the show's book and lyrics and artistic director of Making Books Sing, has built an imaginative plot around this slim scaffolding. Her 13-year-old hero, Mickey (Aaron Riesebeck), son of a widower who is traveling to seek hides in the partly completed building rather than sleep in a boys' home. There he i Little Joe (Jessica Angleskhan), a Mohawk Indian girl disguised as a boy so she cai as a water carrier. She introduces him to her father, Big Joe (Michael Mann), and



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relatives, all "sky boys" (slang for builders of the "Emp"). But one cousin deeply res
Mickey, who hopes to work at the site but secretly fears heights.

With a fine cast directed by Brad Malow, "Sky Boys" is sometimes as old-fashioned as its setting: no danger is insurmountable, no terror unconquerable, no dream too grandiose. As happy coincidences pile up — the photographer offering Mickey a job is none other than Lewis Hine (Keith Herron) — hard times look awfully rosy. And how could a phobic teenager fall asleep on the exposed 68th floor?

But if "Sky Boys" doesn't offer absolute realism, it never fails to entertain. It also gives history a human face. That the face is often that of a Mohawk underscores Ms. Krieger's dedication to illuminating American Indians' contributions to many New York buildings. (Ms. Hopkinson's book doesn't mention them.) Buoyed by Charles Greenberg's winning music, which includes both Gershwin-esque passages and American Indian influences, "Sky Boys" reveals the Empire State Building as so much more than just a familiar silhouette.

"Sky Boys" continues through March 6 at Abrons Arts Center, 466 Grand Street, at Pitt Street, Lower East Side; (212) 352-3101. The final performances in the five boroughs are on March 21 on Staten Island. Information: (212) 573-8791, Ext. 13, makingbookssing.org.

A version of this review appears in print on February 23, 2011, on page C4 of the New York edition with the headline: A Boy and a Building Help Shape Each Other.

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TOMMY HILFIGER

Glory at the Top Flight for Runners

Diane Bondareff/Associated Press

The 34th Empire State Building Run-Up on Tuesday will feature about 450 runners, 86 floors and 1,576 stairs.

By AIMEE BERG
Published: January 30, 2011

One day a year, a few hundred athletes gather in the foyer of the Empire State Building, shun the elevator and sprint to its 86th-floor observation deck.

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Diane Bondareff/Associated Press

Thomas Dold after winning the 2008 Empire State Building race in 10 minutes 8 seconds.

The fastest man will reach the top in about 10 minutes, followed by a rumbling herd trying to ignore stinging quads.

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Tuesday is the 34th Empire State Building Run-Up, a vertical quarter-mile. The race, among the first on stairs, began as a lark in 1978. By 2010, there were more than 160 staircase races in the world — on 5 continents and in 34 states.

The longest is in Radebeul, Germany, a 39,700-step, 100-lap slog designed to approximate an ascent of Mount Everest from sea level to the summit.

The longest single-staircase race is the Niesen Treppenlauf, in Switzerland, a scenic thigh-screamer comprising 11,674 steps adjacent to a funicular with spectacular Alpine views.

In the United States, races tend to be indoor events in which runners compete in isolation (there is no space for cheering fans) and suffocating conditions (many staircases are closed for most of the year and collect dust).

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Chicago hosts the three longest nonstop run-up races in the United States, and Terry Purcell, 40, has won them all multiple times.

"Tell people you ran a marathon and they say, 'Oh, O.K.,' " said Purcell, an eight-time champion of Chicago's Hustle Up the Hancock. "If I say I ran up the Hancock, people are gobsmacked."

Melissa Moon, 41, a schoolteacher from New Zealand who won the Empire State Building Run-Up last year on her first try, said, "I've done marathons, track, mountain running, half marathons and I've got to say this is the hardest thing mentally and physically when you're racing all out."

Tower running, as the indoor variety of the sport is known, has become so popular that two European organizations recently began ranking the racers.

Thomas Dold, 26, is No. 1 on both charts. Over the last four years, Dold, a German business consultant, has won 27 sprints up stairs in hotels, television towers and office buildings, including the Taipei 101, an unrelenting 2,046-step dash up the second-tallest building in the world that he has won twice. On Tuesday, he will try for a record-breaking sixth Empire State Building title.

Before Dold became a skyscraper celebrity, he broke records for running backward. His 1-kilometer (0.6-mile) time of 3 minutes 36.07 seconds is in Guinness World Records.

Staircase racing draws a variety of athletes, including squash players and ultramarathoners, but the consensus is that competitive mountain runners do best.

One of them, Paul Crake of Australia, was 5-0 in the Empire State Building race, four times running under 10 minutes, including the course record (9:33) he set in 2003. (Dold, by comparison, has not broken 10 minutes.) Crake's career ended in November 2006 when a cycling accident left him paralyzed from the sternum down. "Stair running is incredibly psychological," Crake said by phone from Italy. "I don't care how strong you are in the stairs, there comes a point when it's a battle to keep running. It becomes almost impossible."

Purcell, the 1998 Empire State Building champion, says that when the adrenaline rush is over, the pain sets in.

"Most guys don't study technique anymore, which is fantastic for me," said Purcell, an Australian who lives in Illinois. "They may be fitter and have more time to train, but they waste so much energy.

"I see people wasting it on the turns by taking too many steps. I see people not using the railings well to save your legs. Also, the building messes with your head."

As do cutthroat competitors. "The way to kick them in the gut is to surge," Purcell said. "But who does that? A guy who's trained to do it for the last six months."

But where?

Top runners shun the Stairmaster for its unrealistic stride. Elliptical machines do not translate, either. Nothing simulates the demands of a staircase like a staircase; the taller the better.

Jesse Berg, the top American man in the 2010 World Cup standings, works as a fitness instructor in Chicago. One of his clients had a condominium in the Hancock building.

"He said, 'We can do some floors in the janitors' stairwell, but we can't go all the way down,' " Berg said.

Left alone, Berg was tempted.

"I almost went down to the bottom," he said. "The next week, I did it again, and security

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was waiting for me. I didn't go to jail, but I was escorted out."

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A version of this article appeared in print on January 31, 2011, on page D6 of the New York edition.

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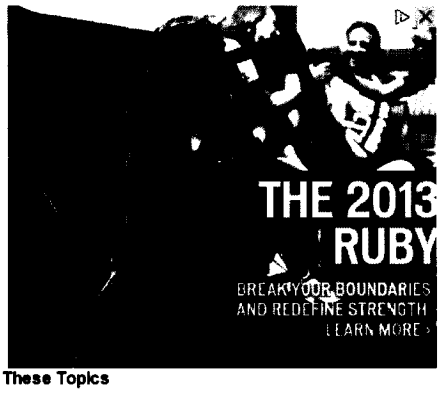

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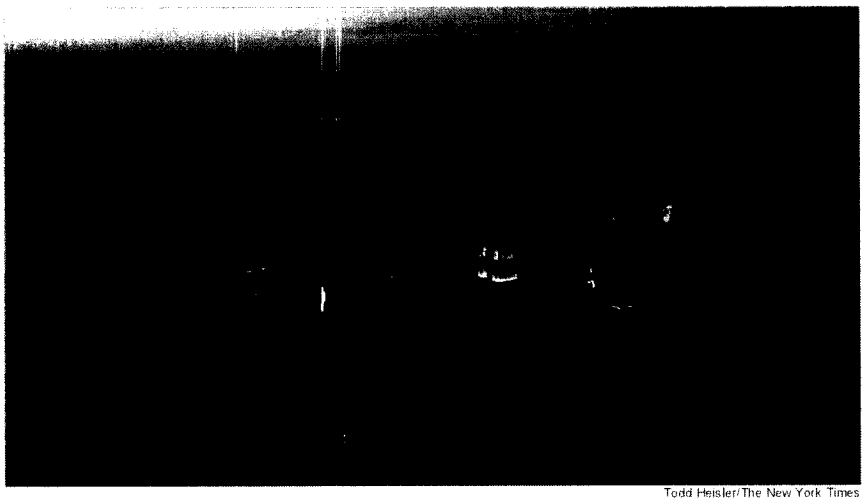
TOMMY HILFIGER

Piece of the Empire State Building Could Be Yours



Todd Heisler/The New York Times

The Malkin family is said to be planning to create a publicly traded real estate company featuring the Empire State Building.

By CHARLES V. BAGLI and PETER LATTMAN
Published: April 12, 2011

People who have always wondered what it might be like to dabble in a little New York real estate may soon be able to dabble in a lot of it — by buying a piece of its most famous skyscraper, the Empire State Building.

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Times Topic: Empire State Building

The Malkin family, which controls the 102-story Art Deco tower at Fifth Avenue and 34th Street, is planning to create a publicly traded real estate company featuring the building, according to three executives who had been briefed on the plans but spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter.

The skyscraper draws tens of thousands of tourists from across the globe every year to its 86th-floor observatory, 1,050 feet above the city streets. If the Malkin plan is successful, New Yorkers, and anyone else for that matter, will be able to buy stock in the company that owns the Empire State Building, much as Wisconsin residents bought stock in the Green Bay Packers.

The new company, the executives said, may include a number of other office buildings controlled by Anthony E. Malkin and his father, Peter L. Malkin, including 1 Grand Central, a 55-story, 1.3-million-square-foot building across 42nd Street from Grand Central Terminal, and a 26-story building at 250 West 57th Street, as well as six buildings in

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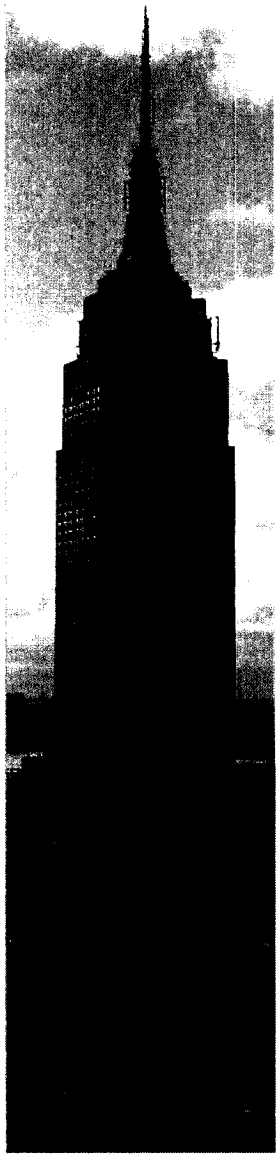

Chester Higgins Jr./The New York Times

The Empire State Building is at the center of a plan to create a publicly traded company.

Westchester County and Connecticut.

Anthony Malkin declined to comment, but he, his father and their partners are hoping to cash in on the Empire State Building's international cachet and a commercial real estate market in New York that is once again attracting buyers from around the world.

"Investors the world over are clamoring to invest in Manhattan office properties, both debt and equity," said Michael Knott, a managing director of Green Street Advisors.

Still, the Malkins must clear a number of hurdles, not the least of which is gaining the support of their principal partner, the estate of Leona Helmsley, which has hired advisers to evaluate the proposal, and the 3,400 limited partners in the existing company that owns the Empire State Building.

A public sale would come amid a sharp rebound in the number of initial public offerings, which roughly tripled in the first quarter of 2011 compared with the same period a year ago. Stock offerings for real estate investment trusts have also surged, with a total volume of $1 billion, more than double the output during the same period last year. But Mr. Knott said that many of those recent offerings had not performed very well after selling in the public markets.

The Empire State Building did not get off to an auspicious start when it opened in 1931, during the Depression. Critics derided it as the "Empty State Building," and it was not profitable until 1950.

Mr. Malkin's grandfather Lawrence A. Wien, his father and Harry B. Helmsley created what became a model for real estate syndication when they bought control of the building in 1961 from Henry Crown and leased it to a group of investors, including themselves. Those investors then sold an operating sublease for the tower to another entity now controlled by the Malkins and the estate of Leona Helmsley, while Mr. Helmsley and Mr. Wien sold the title to the property to the Prudential Insurance Company.

After years of fighting among the owners and feuds with Donald J. Trump, the Malkins gained full control of the building about five years ago and embarked on what has become a $560 million effort to burnish the 2.9-million-square-foot landmark and more than double the rents.

They have renovated the lobby — restoring original Art Deco murals — refurbished the observatory and replaced the 6,514 windows as part of an effort to make it one of the city's most energy-efficient buildings.

The Malkins and their brokers at Newmark Knight Frank have attracted a series of corporate tenants, including a division of Li & Fung, the giant trading firm, which signed a lease for 483,000 square feet in January. There are now about 200 tenants, down from 950 in 2002, though today's tenants occupy far larger spaces. The building may never command rents as high as those at trophies like the General Motors Building, but real estate brokers say the tower now shines.

"They've moved the building, in my mind, to a Class A property," said Peter Riguardi,

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president of Jones Lang LaSalle in New York. "It needed those upgrades. It's now one of the top buildings in that area."

A version of this article appeared in print on April 13, 2011, on page A20 of the New York edition.

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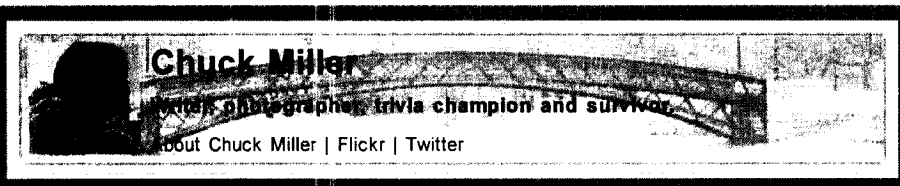

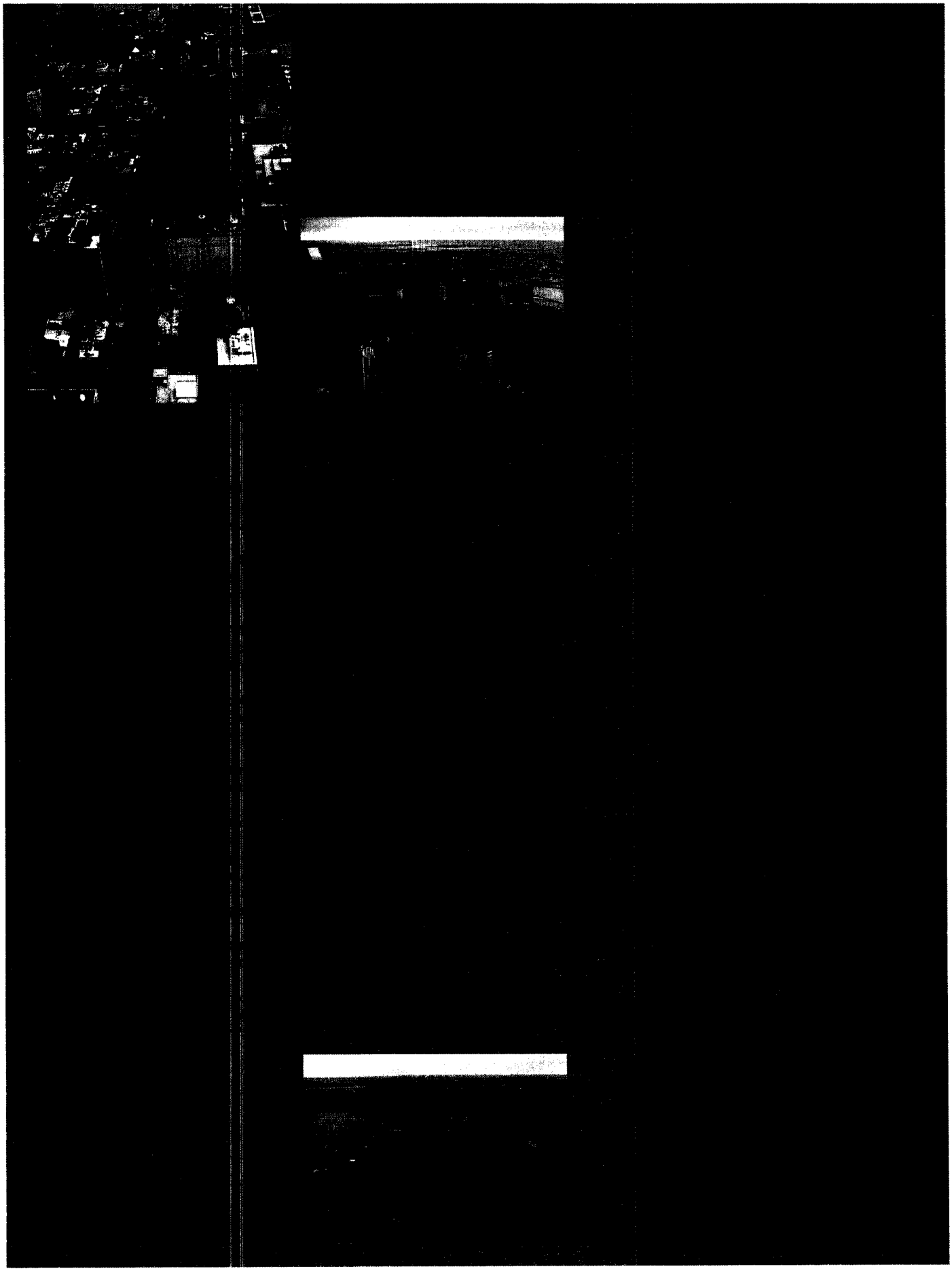

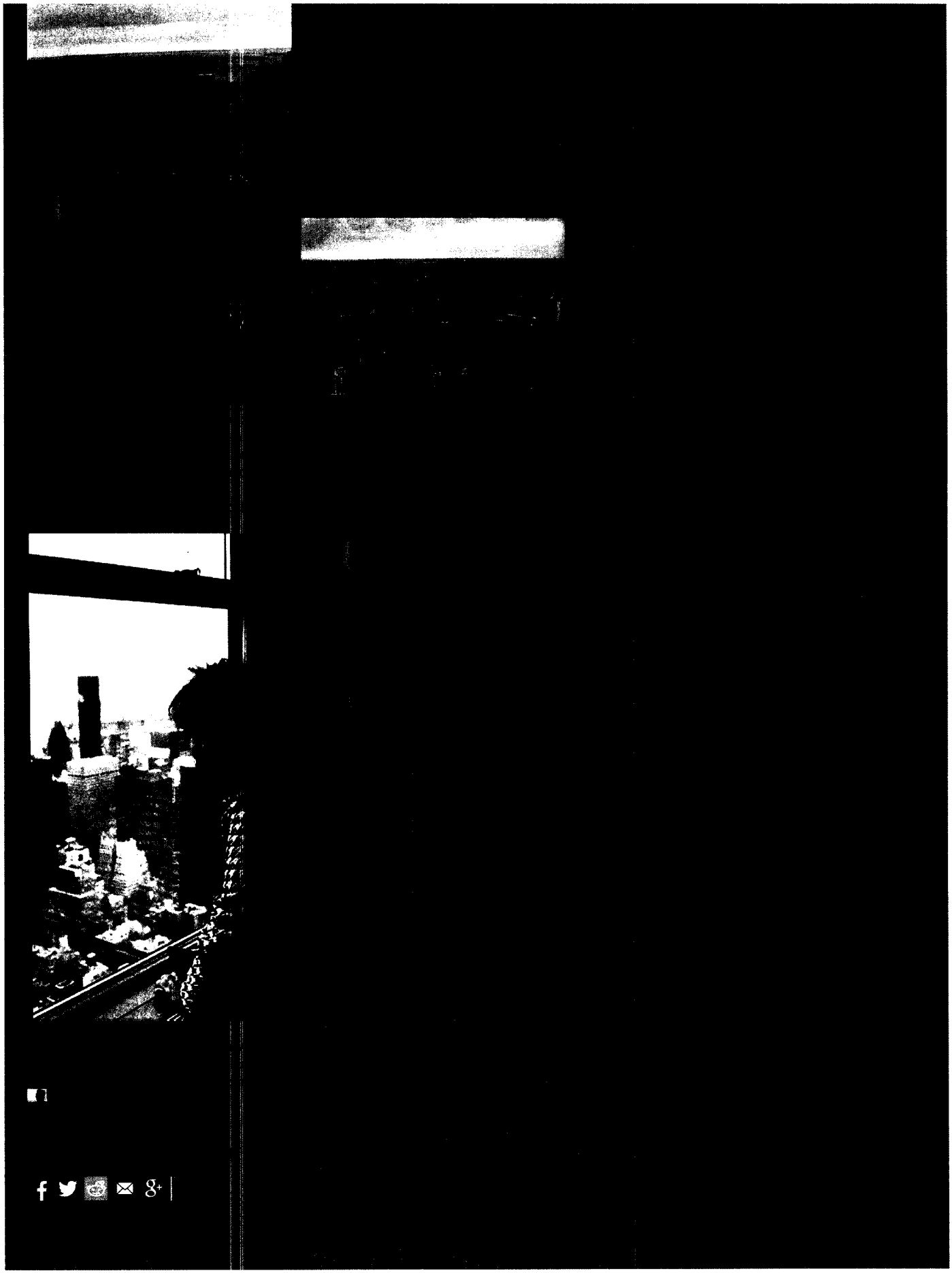

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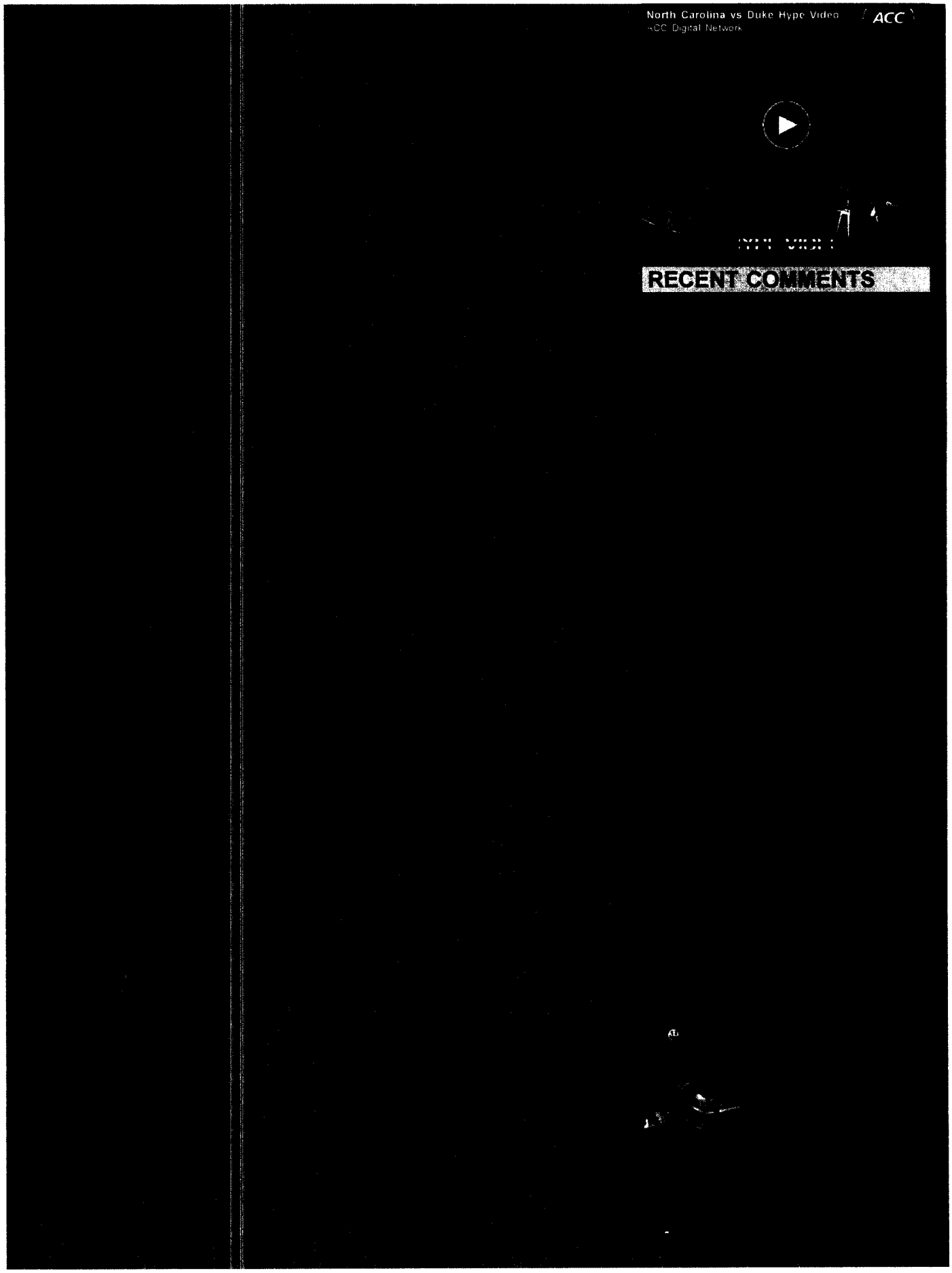
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There was enough ammunition and artillery in that ban of Duivel Doug's to make Jolin and Alvin wish they were back on the show.
#AmishMafia

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Duivel Doug took out a poor, defenseless volleyball with his shotgun. Good thing he didn't try shooting a football instead.
#AmishMafia
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Wow, they didn't list Jim Henson as part of the

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Nice View, and the Profits Surpass All Horizons

By CHARLES V. BAGLI
Published: December 24, 2011

The owners of the Empire State Building like to promote it as the most famous office building in the world.

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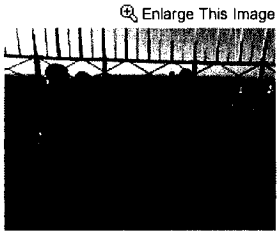

Chang W. Lee/The New York Times

Once considered just pleasant diversions, observatories like the Empire State Building's have become real moneymakers.

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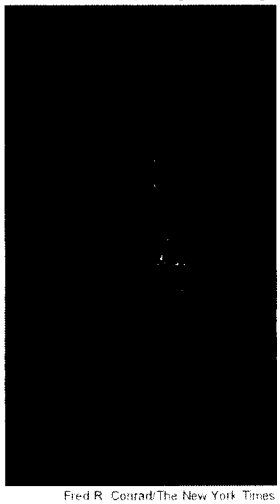

Fred R. Conrad/The New York Times

The Empire State Building attracts four million visitors a year, with ticket prices as high as $55.

But the real moneymaker at the 102-story skyscraper is not the 2.7 million square feet of commercial space occupied by tenants like the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

It is the view.

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The cramped observation decks on the 86th and 102nd floors are startlingly profitable, especially during the holiday season, when tourists swarm the city.

The decks attract four million visitors a year and generated $60 million in profits in 2010, while the owners made little if any money on the office space, according to newly disclosed documents that offer a rare glimpse at the building's balance sheet.

The financial results at the Empire State Building illustrate how observatories, once considered a modest sideline and a pleasant diversion, have become big business for owners seeking to wring every dollar out of office towers around the world.

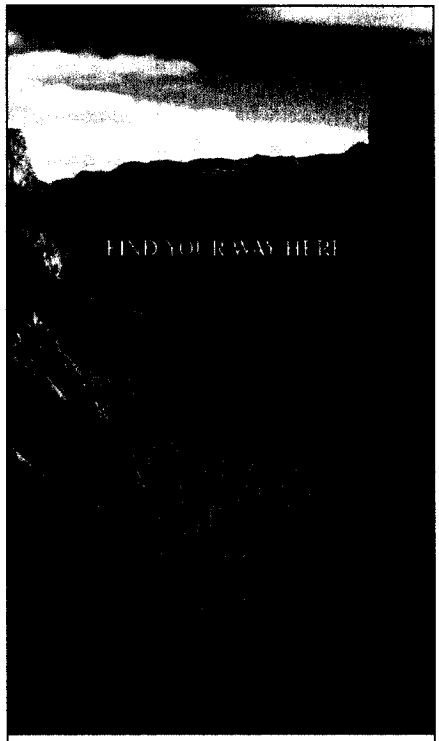
Ordinarily secret, the Empire State Building's finances are buried in a 529-page prospectus recently distributed to partners in the property as part of a proposal to create a $5 billion publicly traded company featuring the building.

The Malkin real estate family, which controls the building, would not comment, saying that it was barred from discussing the property by regulators.

But other real estate magnates were deeply impressed by the revenue from the observatory.

"That's an astounding amount of money," said Richard S. LeFrak, whose family owns 40 million square feet of apartment houses, office buildings and hotels in New York and New Jersey. "I would never have guessed anything like that. But the Empire State Building is an iconic structure. People have been making that pilgrimage since they put it up."

In Chicago, the owners of the Willis Tower, formerly named the Sears Tower and the tallest building in the United States, unveiled glass balconies for the observation deck in



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2009 that allowed visitors to look straight down, 1,353 feet, onto South Wacker Drive. Since then, attendance has jumped 28 percent, to an estimated 1.4 million this year.

Top of the Rock, the observatory at 30 Rockefeller Plaza in Manhattan, reopened six years ago after a long dormancy and now pulls in 2.5 million visitors a year and a $25 million profit, according to real estate executives who have been briefed on the project.

Eight companies are vying to operate what would be the largest and highest observation deck in the city — the one at 1 World Trade Center, the 1,776-foot tower under construction in Lower Manhattan.

Five high-speed express elevators are expected to whisk five million visitors a year to a three-level observatory on Floors 100 through 102. If ticket prices were set at $25 each, annual revenues could exceed $100 million, not counting ancillary sales of key fobs, thermometers, coffee mugs and T-shirts.

It remains to be seen whether the observatory at 1 World Trade will undercut the performance of the Empire State Building's, or establish a new market among the millions of tourists expected to visit the 9/11 memorial and museum downtown. But the Empire State Building prospectus does warn that competition from 1 World Trade and Top of the Rock "could have a negative impact on revenues."

Still, as it stands now, the unquestioned champion of observatories is at the Empire State Building. Even with adult tickets ranging from about $20, for a trip to the 86th floor, to $55, for those who want to avoid the lines and get to the top, attendance never sags.

"Just about everybody on the planet has seen the Empire State Building thousands of times in movies and television, and they want to visit," said Barry Tenenbaum, president of New York City Vacation Packages, a tour operator in New York City. "The unobstructed view from the deck does not disappoint. It's so majestic, thrilling and romantic."

Even in the 1990s, attendance at the higher, 107-story observation deck at the World Trade Center never exceeded two million.

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Peter Lattman contributed reporting.

A version of this article appeared in print on December 25, 2011, on page A1 of the New York edition with the headline: Nice View, and the Profits Surpass All Horizons.

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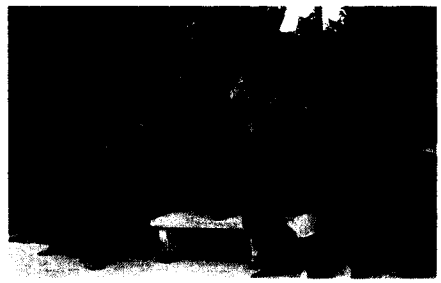

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TOMMY HILFIGER

SPORTS BRIEFING | RUNNING

Dold Runs to 6th Victory In Empire State Building

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Published: February 1, 2011

Thomas Dold of Germany won the Empire State Building Run-Up for a record sixth straight year, hustling up 86 flights of stairs in 10 minutes 10 seconds. Alice McNamara, 24, an Australian in the race for the first time, won the women's title in 13:03.

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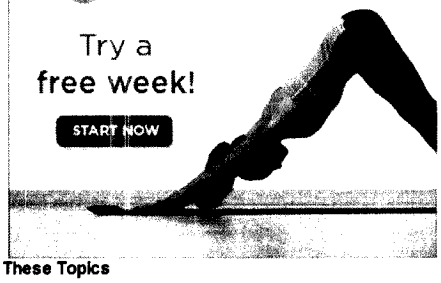

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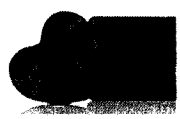

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The New York Times

15,000 New Stars Take Form in Empire State Building

By James Barron

February 9, 2011 11:01 am

It took Alfred E. Smith, by then a former governor and a failed presidential candidate, 410 days to get the Empire State Building built with help from an army of construction workers.

It took Denise Amses, a Brooklyn artist, almost that long to put 15,000 stars and 5,000 circles onto 16 panels of glass with help from an army of — well, three assistants.

What's the connection? Ms. Amses' etched-glass installation, measuring 13 feet wide and 5 feet high and weighing almost 2,900 pounds, is the final element in a $20 million renovation of the Empire State Building's lobby. An earlier phase uncovered two shiny Art Deco ceiling murals that had been hidden behind plastic panels and light fixtures since the 1960s. They were restored with 23-karat gold and aluminum leaf and unveiled in 2009.

Anthony E. Malkin, the president of Malkin Holdings, which owns the building, saw the lobby as "a real letdown," in contrast with the lobbies of two other famous skyscrapers, the Chrysler Building and 30 Rockefeller Plaza, where, as it happens, Ms. Amses and her husband, Chris Cosma, did a somewhat larger bas-relief sculpture. It is on the concourse level near the skating rink.

For the commission at the Empire State Building, she said, "My concept was to create a whole world inside this window."

But first she looked up, at the restored ceiling murals. They were relics of

the machine age of the late 1920s. In the murals, the sun and the planets look like gears and wheels and cogs.

"When this place was being built, the scientific advance was steel," she said. "No one had gone into space."

She created a work with 12 levels that is lighted from behind by several neon tubes. A constellation etched on one level acts as a diffuser.

"I wanted to create something that acts as a beacon to bring you to that spot," she said. "For people coming to a building like this, they aren't looking for art. But for the split second they're there, I want to get their attention."

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Restored Lobby's Crowning Touch

By JAMES BARRON
Published: February 13, 2011

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PHOTOS: SHIMMER: Denise Amses, a Brooklyn artist, created an etched-glass installation, "Circle In," as the final jewel in the renovated lobby of the Empire State Building. It is at the guards' desk. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHESTER HIGGINS JR./THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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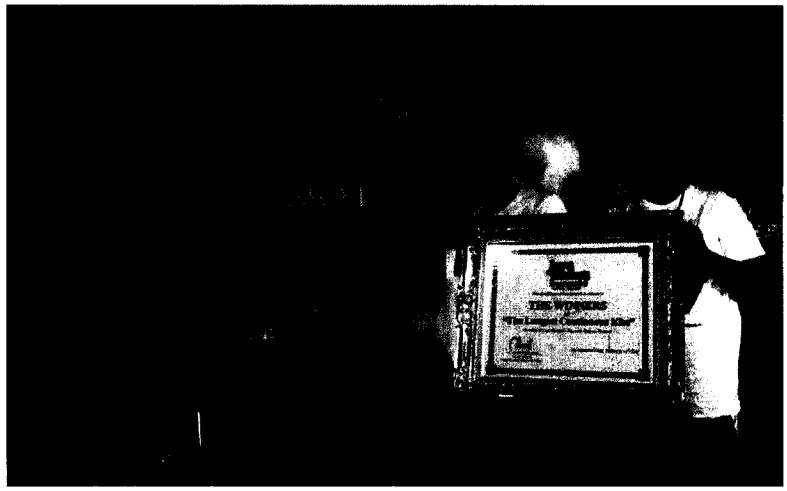
Tampa Bay Times
WINNER OF 10 PULITZER PRIZES

The skinny

The skinny: Contest winners wed atop Empire State Building

Times Wires

Monday, February 14, 2011 9:32pm



valentine topper

14 couples are sky high after tying the knot

The brides carried lavender roses and the grooms looked proud as 14 contest-winning couples got married Monday at the Empire State Building. "You are the most beautiful, the smartest and the kindest person I know," U.S. Army Pfc. Brett Beardon said as he clasped hands with Samantha Belfon and gazed into her eyes. "I will honor and respect you, laugh and cry with you and cherish you always," she replied. The 17th annual Valentine's Day wedding event at the iconic skyscraper was sponsored by TheKnot.com, a wedding-planning website. Air Force Capt. Jon Wu and Stephanie Hull of Louisville, Ky., above, won the grand prize, which includes a honeymoon in the Bahamas. "We can only go up from here," Wu said after a sunrise ceremony on the 86th-floor observatory.

gift of a lifetime

Woman gives kidney to fiance

A Minnesota man is getting a unique Valentine's Day present. Ron Spanier and fiance Amy Anderson are scheduled for a kidney donation today at the University of Minnesota Medical Center-Fairview. Spanier's been on dialysis since last summer after a disease caused cysts in his kidneys. The two have a 3-month-old son. Spanier jokes that since Anderson gave him his first-born and a kidney, he figured he'd marry her.

town is aflutter

Vermont capital papered in hearts

In keeping with a mysterious Valentine's Day tradition, sheets of paper with red hearts on them were plastered all over downtown offices, shops and buildings in Vermont's state capital. The so-called Valentine's Bandit started the tradition in Montpelier in 2002. The "phantom" has his — or her — own Facebook page, dubbed the Montpelier Valentine Phantom Phan Page.

lips in synch

Kissing tops record and then some

It was one long kiss for a couple — one record-breaking embrace for mankind. One determined Thai couple locked lips for 46 hours, 24 minutes, 9 seconds in the southern beach resort town of Pattaya, emerging victorious and exhausted after drinking through a straw, continuing to embrace during bathroom breaks and no sitting or sleeping. The record of just over 32 hours was set in 2009 by a couple in Germany, according to Guinness World Records. Ekkachai and Laksana Tiranarat of Bangkok, above, outlasted 13 couples to win a diamond ring worth $1,606 and $3,213 in cash.

Compiled from Times wires.

The skinny: Contest winners wed atop Empire State Building 02/14/11
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EXHIBITION REVIEW

A View Inside King Kong's Perch

By EDWARD ROTHSTEIN
Published: July 15, 2011

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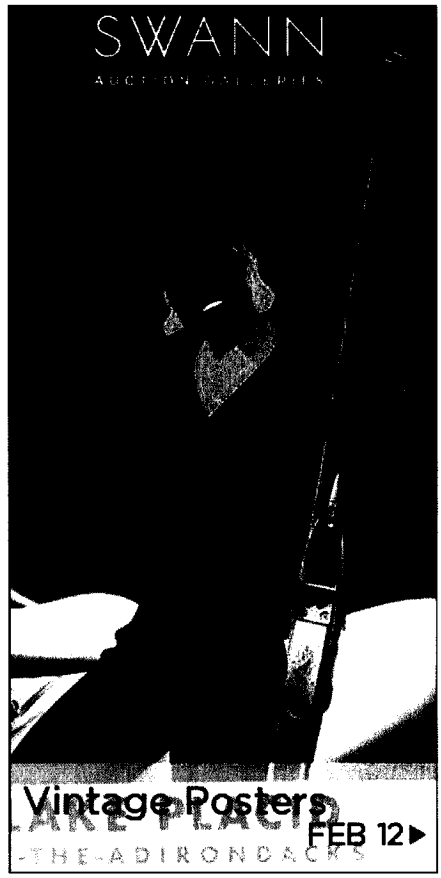
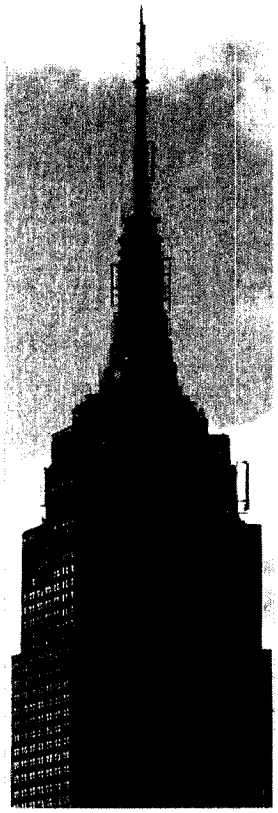
I am pressing against a secure wall, not daring to step away. The wind is whipping against me — or is it howling? My feet feel rubbery on the narrow walkway. I think of those balconies on the upper floors of colonial homes in old ports, where pacing wives would gaze out to sea, seeking the long-overdue ships of sailor husbands: widows' walks. If this particular walk were open to an anxiously pacing public, I can only imagine how many new widows and widowers would be left behind. But I look out, and the vision is literally breathtaking, the Hudson shimmering in the west, and a patch of green off to the north — Central Park — lying just beyond some half-hearted high-rises.





Chester Higgins Jr./The New York Times

I am standing a floor above the highest observation deck of the Empire State Building just outside a room with cables and communications equipment. The walkway circles around the building's narrow spire, which, in 1930, was envisioned as a mooring mast for dirigibles; as it turned out, only King Kong ever reliably used it for support.

And though the view from the glassed-in deck on the 102nd floor below is almost as remarkable, I am glad that Jean-Yves Ghazi, the director of the observatory, has led me up here, because what I have been made forcefully aware of by the jolts of wind is not the building as completed object, secure and established, dominating the cityscape, but the building as it came to be. Because it was in the midst of these whipping winds and unsettling heights that welders, riveters, steamfitters, bricklayers, marble setters, metal lathers, glaziers and roofers pieced this building together in unforgiving, empty space in an astounding 11 months.

That sense of venture — and adventure — is also the subject of a new, untitled exhibition on the 80th floor, through which three and a half million visitors a year will walk, on their way to the elevators leading upward. It is a modest show of panels and images, taking up just 3,000 square feet, but it is part of a renovation and modernization costing more than $550 million.

That project has made the Art Deco lobby a gleaming display of marble and gilt; it includes the replacement of every window and the remaking of the climate-control

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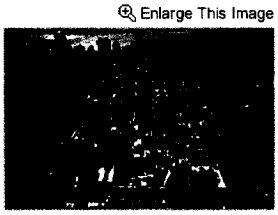

Librado Romero/The New York Times

A view from the Empire State Building's 103rd floor, not open to the public. It overlooks the visitors' observation deck on the 86th floor and shows views of the East River and Manhattan.

system (saving, we are informed, almost 40 percent in energy costs). And it has also given rise to a series of animated panels about its environmental achievements, on display in the ticket area, where adults wait to pay at least $22 each on lines that snake around stanchions.

But this exhibition on the 80th floor does something else. It is safe to say that visitors to the Empire State Building don't really come to see the building. They come to see the city around it. This show, whose curator is Carol Willis, the founder and director of the Skyscraper Museum, redirects attention from what the building lets us see, to what we see in the building, which is considerable. On its opening on May 1, 1931, we are told, the Empire State "had broken every record in the book in terms of both size and speed of construction."

The windows on the 80th floor do not look out on the cityscape; there is time for that upstairs. Instead they are covered with enlarged, semi-translucent photographs taken during the building's construction in 1930. In one pair of windows we seem to be looking east, toward the river and the rival Chrysler building, finished just months before and doomed to have its height record surpassed. Another window gives us a glimpse of men riveting steel on the 86th floor. A third shows the setting of steel columns in the open air on another nearby floor.

Industriousness abounds, but still, how could the Empire State have been built in so short a time? Within 20 months of the signed contracts with the architects (Shreve, Lamb & Harmon), the building was ready for tenants. Yet it was greater in scale than any yet constructed.

It required 57,000 tons of steel, 10 million bricks, 62,000 cubic yards of concrete and 67 elevators. At one point more than 3,400 workers were employed. And the building grew one story a day. "No comparable structure," we read, "has since matched that rate of ascent."

In her researches for her own museum, Ms. Willis found a typed manuscript on blue-lined graph paper, which she published in facsimile in 1998 in "Building the Empire State."

The manuscript, resembling a notebook and lacking any attribution, is titled "Notes on Construction of Empire State Building" and meticulously annotates the work accomplished and its cost. It seems written by someone associated with the contractor, Starrett Brothers & Eken.

After its publication, heirs of the contractor contacted Ms. Willis, offering a "family scrapbook" of more than 500 photos of the tower's construction. Those photographs are used in this exhibition, images of the building as a work in progress. They are also accompanied by pages from the notebook, with financial accounts. We learn that $15,507.53 was spent on workmen like those portrayed in an adjacent photo, cleaning and pointing limestone. The building's total job cost, one spreadsheet says, was $25,679,772, which amounted to about 71 cents per cubic foot.

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The show at the Empire State Building is on permanent view on the 80th floor; esbnyc.com.

This article has been revised to reflect the following correction:

Correction: July 20, 2011

6. Seahawks' Earl Thomas Will Need Surgery

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A picture caption on Saturday with an exhibition review of a display at the Empire State Building about the building itself may have left the incorrect impression that the picture showed the Hudson River. The river visible in the photograph, taken from the building's 103rd floor, is the East River. (The caption noted that the 103rd floor, which is not open to the public, also provides a view of the Hudson River.)

A version of this review appeared in print on July 16, 2011, on page C1 of the New York edition with the headline: A View Inside King Kong's Perch.

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FEBRUARY 16 - 17

At Empire State Building, a Feud Over a Virtual Tour of New York

By N. R. KLEINFIELD
Published: June 15, 2011

It is pretty much compulsory on any tourist's to-do list. You ascend to the 86th-floor Observatory of the Empire State Building and soak in the big city in all its dizzying splendor, and probably get dizzy yourself.

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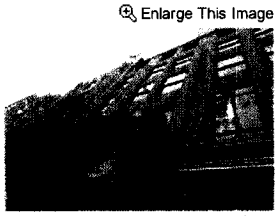

Mylan Cannon/The New York Times

Harrison Humphrey selling tickets to New York Skyride, a simulated helicopter ride on the second floor of the Empire State Building in background.

Or, for those otherwise inclined, you can stop at the second floor of the building and witness the skyline from there. Do not eat beforehand. That is where the New York Skyride is, a roughly 15-minute simulated helicopter ride. The stomach-churning tour around the city is narrated by Kevin Bacon, whom you just about never run into at the Observatory.

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Skyride has offered this bumpy aerial possibility since 1995, and says that more than 10 million people have taken it. Yet its current owner claims that it is caught in a nasty war for survival against the Malkin family, which owns the Empire State Building.

The two sides have long feuded over just about everything: the electric bill, what bathrooms Skyride customers can use, whether Skyride can have a gift shop. Matters, however, moved in a new direction in April, when the police began handing out summonses and arresting the street vendors who promote and sell most of the ticke Skyride.

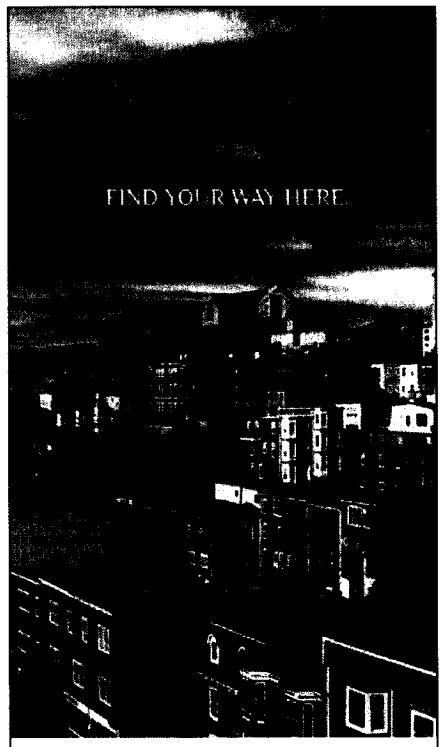
Skyride Associates, the ride's owner, said 14 summonses were issued and six emplo arrested for not having general vendor licenses, even though it maintains they have needed licenses before. It believes the Malkins are behind this, and filed a petition on Monday in State Supreme Court in Manhattan against the city and the police to halt the practices. On Tuesday, a judge issued a temporary restraining order preventing actions against the ticket sellers until the case is heard.

Skyride's majority partner, Walter Threadgill, said it was evident to him that the Malkins did not feel that the virtual helicopter fit the spiffier image that they now prefer in a tenant. In court papers, Skyride said Malkin representatives referred to Skyride employees and customers as "riffraff" and called its street sellers "people from the hood."

Mr. Threadgill said that "it certainly doesn't give me pleasure to hear that," noting that most of the 35 or so vendors are African-American or Hispanic.

Anthony E. Malkin, one of the building's owners, said, "Skyline's allegations are baseless."

"I understand that the N.Y.P.D. has issued summonses to Skyline based upon their activity," he said, "and it will be up to the courts to decide if those summonses were properly issued."



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Skyride has had its troubles. It went into bankruptcy last year, though it emerged in February.

Mr. Threadgill feels the Empire State Building ought to like Skyride. He said he paid more than $3.5 million a year in rent and added that most Skyride tickets were $52 combo packages that got you the artificial helicopter ride plus a pass to the 86th floor, and that the building got a nice split of that revenue.

Not every ticket buyer adores Skyride. Some online reviews have called it an "inane mechanical ride" or "corny." But Mr. Threadgill said, "We've also got some great reviews."

On Wednesday, the ticket vendors were pushing Skyride hard outside the big building, beseeching passers-by with, "You guys going up?"

Customers were of many minds. Some felt the ride was satisfactory. "The Observatory was better," was the verdict of Dan Martinez, 24, from Puerto Rico. Karen Walsh, 62, visiting from Scranton, Pa., with her daughter, was more severe: "We got ripped."

The case over the street sellers is to continue as early as next week. Whatever the outcome, Mr. Threadgill does not expect Skyride's lease to be renewed in 2014. He is seeking a new spot.

"We have to keep going," he said. "It's the only ride like it in New York City."

Matt Flegenheimer contributed reporting.

A version of this article appeared in print on June 16, 2011, on page A29 of the New York edition with the headline: At Empire State Building, a Feud Over a Virtual Tour of New York.

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Otis to modernize Empire State elevators

Published 5:15 pm, Thursday, June 16, 2011

HARTFORD (AP) – Everything is big with New York's Empire State Building, so upgrading the 20th century elevators running up and down it 102 floors without disrupting thousands of office workers, visitors and tourists each day is no small task.

The office and retail tower and Otis Elevator Co., the nation's best-known elevator manufacturer, announced Thursday a partnership to replace and modernize the building's elevators to bring them into the computer age and reduce passenger wait time. It's the final phase of a $550 million renovation project.

For the Empire State Building – among the world's most photographed buildings, reproduced into countless paperweights and star of a 1933 movie with King Kong hanging from its side -- the renovation caps its 80th year.

And for Otis, which sold its first elevators in 1853 but now gets much of its business in China's booming office construction market, working at the marquee office tower in midtown New York is as high profile as it gets.

Upgrading all 68 elevators and replacing 13-ton machines with new equipment while workers, tourists and others enter and leave will be a major effort. The elevators will carry nearly 10 million people each year, Otis said.

Anthony Malkin, of the Empire State Building Co., called it the largest elevator modernization of its kind in the world and Otis, a United Technologi Corp. subsidiary based in Farmington, says it's the biggest in its 158-year history.

The project is a homecoming for Otis, which designed and installed the Empire State Building's original elevators during the Depression. The project that is set to begin in November and be finished in March 2014. It will involve as many as 60 workers on two shifts a day, six days a week.

"When you're young from another country you think of the Empire State Building," said Didier Michaud-Daniel, Otis' president who hails from France. "The Empire State Building is known worldwide, so in terms of image it's a great opportunity for us to talk about what we're going to do there."

The newly refurbished elevators promise quick and efficient rides to make the prized address even more attractive to tenants, who also are benefitin from upgraded lighting, heating and cooling and other systems.

which owns the tower, said his company has been leasing to tenants that occupy entire floors or multiple floors and expect premier appearances anc service.

"We're touching on everything, restoring the Art Deco lobby to its original grandeur and a new energy-efficient system," he said.

The two sides did not disclose how much the contract, which includes a 10-year maintenance agreement, is worth.

The number of tenants has declined to fewer than 200 from 561 since 2006 as tenants rent entire floors or multiple floors and the building's management seeks larger and higher quality tenants, Malkin said. The renovations, including the new elevators, are part of the plan.

The new elevators promise to route passengers better and reduce their wait times, Otis said. Michaud-Daniel said it's probably the first time ever in a building this size that elevator equipment will be as good or better than those newly installed.

"I've been working in the industry 30 years and for me, coming from France, it was a dream getting the Empire State Building back," he said. "We're extremely proud of it."

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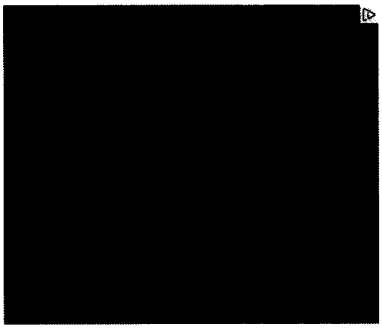
Tall order: Empire State Building elevator revamp

Going straight to the top
Empire State Building's elevators will be renovated for 21st century
STEPHEN SINGER
, ASSOCIATED PRESS
Published 6:30 am, Friday, June 17, 2011



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Since 1853

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10 million a year

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Malkin called it the largest elevator modernization of its kind in the world, and Otis, a United Technologies Corp. subsidiary based in Farmington, Conn., says it's the biggest in its 158-year history.

The two sides did not disclose how much the contract, which includes a 10-year maintenance agreement, is worth.

Michael Poon, director of technical support at Motion Control Engineering, an elevator control manufacturer in Rancho Cordova, Calif., said elevator upgrades are common, but the Otis-Empire State Building project is unusual for its size and complexity.

Frequent updates

With lifespans of 15 to 30 years, elevators require frequent upgrades to replace aging, inefficient equipment, he said.

"It's almost like upgrading your kitchen in your house," he said. "The equipment is getting too old and too costly to maintain."

Moving to digital

In addition, elevators have joined nearly all other equipment in the move from mechanical to digital, requiring improvements almost as frequent as computer upgrades, Poon said.

Computers can efficiently direct elevators to where passengers are, shut elevators down to save energy and communicate with elevator operators who are becoming networking experts, he said.

The Empire State Building's design specifications and bidding process lasted more than a year in what Malkin called a "hotly competitive process."

Only three elevator manufacturers - Schindler, ThyssenKrupp and Otis - could credibly compete, he said. Otis came up with a novel and innovative staffing system, Malkin said.

The project is a homecoming for Otis, which designed and installed the Empire State Building's original elevators during the Depression.

It will hire a full-time branch manager to run the project that is set to begin in November and be finished in March 2014. It will involve as many as 60 workers on two shifts a day, six days a week.

Larger tenants

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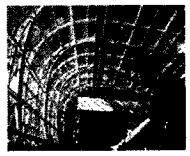
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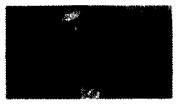

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Can The Mets Take Back New York?

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By Adam Meshell, NJ.com fan blogger
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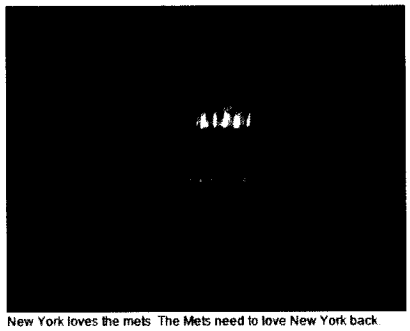
Print

I have seen the pictures, watched the replays, and read the books, but in my 25 years on this planet, I have never experienced what it is like to have the Mets own New York City. I know it has happened before, but my question is; will it happen again?



New York loves the mets. The Mets need to love New York back.

Since their World Series victory in 1986, the year I was born coincidentally, the Mets have earned a berth in the playoffs exactly four times. Those four trips include two heartbreaking game 7 losses in the NLCS, and a World Series defeat to a team that shares the same city. By contrast, in the same time period, the New York Yankees have been to the playoffs an astonishing fifteen times, went to seven World Series, and have won five of them. Since 1986, the Yankees have won an average of 90 games per year as opposed to the Mets 80. Why has there been such a drastic differential in the team's success? Perhaps its luck, perhaps its different philosophies; whatever it is I wonder if the Mets can find a way to reverse it.

When I walk out of my apartment on a Saturday morning and stroll around midtown Manhattan I encounter Yankees caps countless times before I see a Mets one. When I login to Facebook or twitter, I see a newsfeed sprawling with Yankee statuses, yet rarely can a Mets status be found. Growing up as a Mets fan in New Jersey, I was undoubtedly a minority amongst my friends. Wearing Mets merchandise actually seems to enact a feeling of pity by Yankees fans these days. Sarcastic or not, when asked "Yankees or Mets?" the reaction to an answer of "Mets" is typically "I'm sorry". When one team has been good for two decades and the other has been remarkably average, this is bound to happen.

Mets fans are adept at heartbreak. We're just losing our touch at seeing better days.

From 1980-1990 the Yankees averaged a bit over 28,000 fans per game. On average, that was about 1,500 more tickets punched per game then the Mets. From 1991 to present time the Yankees attendance jumped to over 38,000 per game. The Mets jumped slightly to 30,000 giving the Yankees an 8,000 person edge on average per game. In a matter of a decade the fan bases drastically changed in numbers. This is the consequence of a generation of youth growing up watching a team win World Series after World Series while the other muddled in mediocrity. Both teams have built new stadiums 3 years ago. While the Yankees kept capacity around the same as the old stadium, the Mets decided to decrease their seating by about 13,500. These are two teams in the same market, competing for the same fans yet Mets ownership clearly feels as though they cannot compete for fans on the same level.

The toughest part for the Mets is that the difference between the two franchises is not solely based on wins and losses. For decades, the Yankees were directed by an owner

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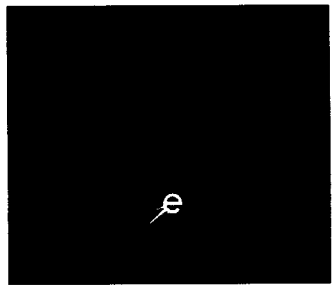

who had his share of negative moments, but for the most part was an extremely charismatic individual. Despite any negative attention he may have received during his life, George Steinbrenner will be remembered for how significantly he was able to grow the franchise by doing and spending whatever it took. By contrast, the Mets ownership will most likely be remembered for being a large investor with one of the most infamous financial villains the world has seen. Follow that with a story being leaked that the Mets required a loan from Major League Baseball just to make expenses. The saga does not yet have an ending, but the chance it ends positively for Jeff and Fred Wilpon is microscopic.

While the Yankees have had to deal with some steroid scandals involving Alex Rodrguez and Roger Clemens their perception in the media and to the outside world remains squeaky clean. The Mets on the other hand are viewed as a walking calamity. The Yankees have received negative attention in recent days because one of their most respected players asked out of the lineup. Last year, the Mets had a player assault an older aged man in the clubhouse. The Mets certainly win that battle if they are fighting for the biggest public relations disaster.

Even a brand new beautiful stadium had its share of problems. When first opening in 2009, fans continually complained of a lack of a Mets theme. $600 million and the place did not feel like home. How could this happen?

The question remains; how can the Mets once again become the darlings of New York? The simple answer is winning. Anyone who attended game 7 of the 2006 NLCS can tell you that this fan base is ready for a winner. There was no place louder in the world the moment Endy Chavez made the catch of a lifetime. The potential is there, the fans are abound, but it needs to be unleashed. One magical season and the tables can turn on a dime. One playoff run and Citi Field will feel like Shea Stadium in 1986. I hope that the current regime of ownership and management can lead the franchise to its rightful place in this town, the fans deserve it.

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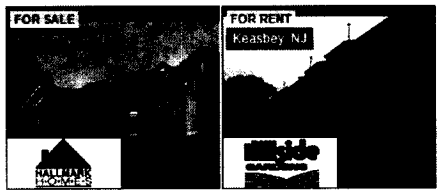

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Who is this team called the "Mets"? I never heard of them

Constantly measuring yourselves against the Yankees. Yankee fans don't give your team a second thought.

Adam Meshell, NJ.com fan blogger

"Yankee fans don't give your team a second thought."

I can listen to WFAN for 3 minutes and render that statement invalid. It is completely natural to

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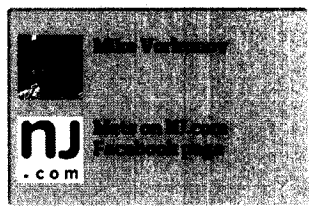
Following the Mets



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Can the mets take back New York ? The mets never had New York . The Yankees have won 27 World Series . The mets have won 2. The Yankees beat the mets in the 2000 World Series . The mets never beat the Yankees in a World Series. The Yankees have won a leading 27 World Series in 40 appearances (which, since the first World Series in 1903, currently amounts to an average appearance every 2.7 seasons and a championship every 4.0 seasons.)The test tube mets started in 1962 . 2 World Series in 48 seasons. ONE WORLD SERIES EVERY 24 YEARS. AT THIS PACE IT WILL TAKE THE MUTTS 648 YEARS TO WIN 27 WORLD SERIES LIKE THE YANKEES. THE YEAR 2610 ?. The Yankees are the only MLB team to pitch a perfect game in the post season. The mets have NEVER pitched a perfect game in ANY season. The Yankees have 2 ice creams from Turkey Hill . The mets have none

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Empire State Building on Track to Be Part of I.P.O.

By PETER LATTMAN and CHARLES V. BAGLI NOVEMBER 29, 2011 1:08 PM
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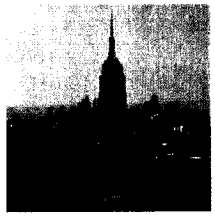

Librado Romero/The New York TimesThe 102-story Empire State Building at Fifth Avenue and 34th Street in Manhattan

Want to buy a piece of the Empire State Building? Interested investors are one step closer.

The Malkin family disclosed plans to create a publicly traded real estate company that would include the 102-story skyscraper at Fifth Avenue and 34th Street, according to papers filed Tuesday with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The plans were first reported in April. Two other buildings controlled by Anthony E. Malkin and his father, Peter L. Malkin — 1 Grand Central Place, a 55-story, 1.3-million-square-foot building across 42nd Street from Grand Central Terminal, and a 26-story building at 250 West 57th Street — would be part of the publicly traded real estate company.

The unusual S.E.C. filings were devoid of specific financial information but said that more detailed information was expected in about three months, setting the stage for an initial public offering of stock. Goldman Sachs is expected to be the lead underwriter on the deal, according to a person with direct knowledge of the potential offering who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss it publicly.

A prominent I.P.O. of a company built with bricks and mortar would stand in stark contrast to the spate of Internet company stock offerings that have dominated headlines. After several tech I.P.O.'s this year, including those of Groupon and LinkedIn, the market is looking to an offering by Facebook sometime in 2012.

The I.P.O. would clean up the complex ownership structure of the Empire State Building and the other Malkin family assets. Each of the buildings that would be placed into the real estate company has separate owners with multiple partners, a legacy of the real estate syndication model pioneered by Lawrence A. Wien, Peter Malkin's father-in-law, and Harry B. Helmsley.

As a result, the Malkins have to go through the painstaking process of gaining approval for the deal from the various buildings' investors and then allocating the shares in the new company. If the deal was consummated, the Malkin's holdings would be converted into a real estate investment trust, a common form of public ownership for real estate assets.

After gaining control of both the Empire State Building and the land underneath it about five years ago, the Malkins have spent more than a half-billion dollars renovating the landmark, restoring its lobby to its original Art Deco grandeur and more than doubling the rents. Its 6,514 windows have been replaced, transforming the 1930s-era office tower into one of New York's most energy-efficient office buildings.

The name of the new company is not known, but a person briefed on the matter said that its name would refer to the Empire State Building, a branding move that the owners hope will attract

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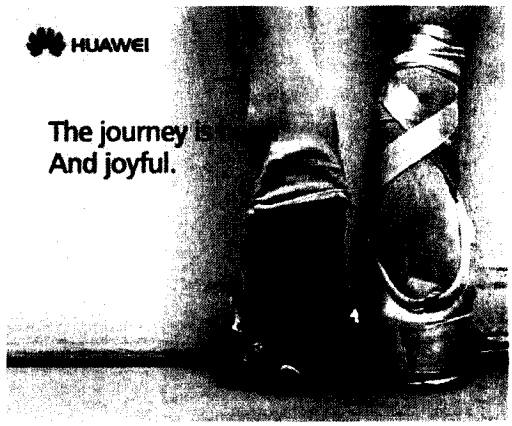

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investors hoping to own a stake in one of the world's most celebrated skyscrapers.

It is unclear at this point what the color of the tower's lighting would be on the evening of its I.P.O., if that day should come. But most people expect it to be green, said a person briefed on the deal.

Correction: November 29, 2011

An earlier version of the story said the Empire State Building was a century old. It was built in the 1930s.

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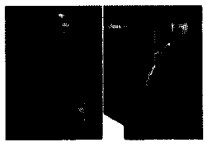

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DEALBOOK; Plan Advances for Making the Empire State Building Part of an Investment Trust

By PETER LATTMAN and CHARLES V. BAGLI
Published: November 30, 2011

8:36 p.m. | Updated

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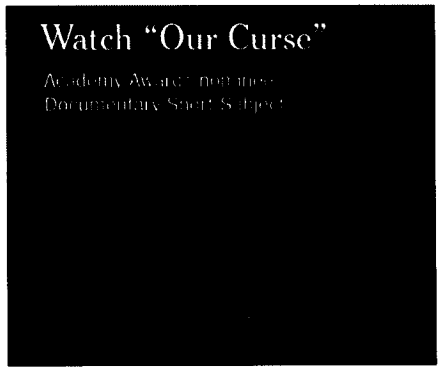

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This is a more complete version of the story than the one that appeared in print.

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Empire State Building to go public?

Updated 11:05 pm, Wednesday, November 30, 2011

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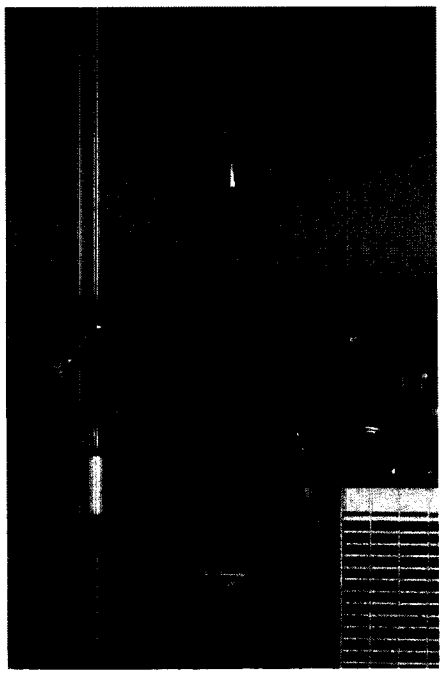
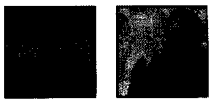


In this May 29, 2008 photo, the Empire State Building rises above the New York Skyline. The company that supervises the portfolio of office properties that includes the iconic Manhattan skyscraper filed notice with the Securities and Exchange Commission acknowledging it was weighing the possibility of becoming a publicly traded company. The filing could pave the way for an Initial Public Offering, making the Empire State Building part of a publicly traded real estate investment company. (AP Photo/Richard Drew)



Even King Kong might go ape over this possible business deal: The Empire State Building could become part of a publicly traded real estate investment company.

Malkin Holdings LLC, the family-owned company headed by Greenwich resident Peter Malkin that supervises the portfolio of office properties including the iconic Manhattan skyscraper, is weighing that possibility,

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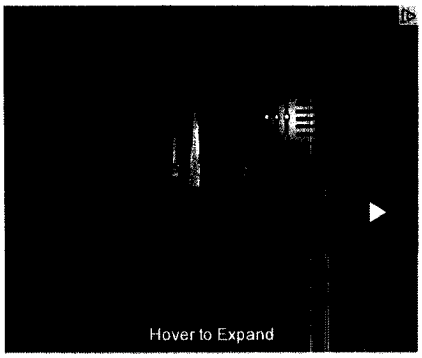

according to a filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission on Tuesday.

The filing, called an 8-K, does not necessarily mean that an initial public offering is imminent or even likely.

Scott Sweet, a senior managing partner at IPO Boutique, said the 8-K filing is rare, and could be a trial balloon or simply a method of informing potential investors and traders. It also might be a means to communicate with shareholders that something is afoot.

"They're going through the legal channels of announcing there could be something happening and are making it clear what it could be," he said.

In the one-paragraph filing, the company said it could not disclose further information at this time because of legal reasons. But the company said in the filing that more information could be forthcoming in about three months.

The company echoed its filing in a statement emailed to the Associated Press. It declined to answer specific questions about any possible public offering.

The Empire State Building, a 102-story tower completed in 1931, is famous for its rooftop view and its role as the building that the giant ape scaled in the 1933 film "King Kong."

Earlier this year, the building announced it was completing a $550 million renovation project with the replacement of its elevators.

Malkin bought his stake in the Empire State Building with his father-in-law in 1961. His former real estate partner in the building was Leona Helmsley, who assumed her share of ownership of the landmark upon husband Harry Helmsley's death in 1997. She died in 2007. Malkin is also father-in-law of Greenwich resident and U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal.

What started as a $66 million investment for Malkin has matured quite handsomely over the past four decades. Some estimates of the building's value exceed $1 billion.

A message seeking comment was left for Malkin by Greenwich Time Wednesday.

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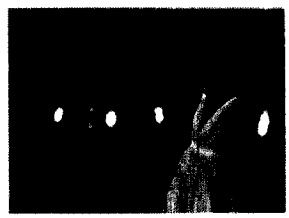
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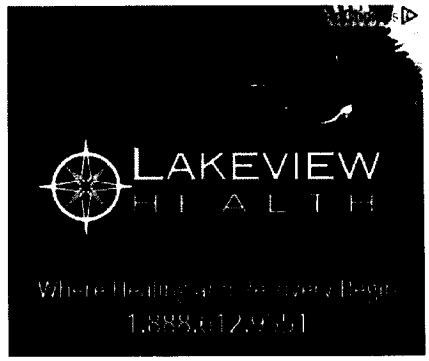

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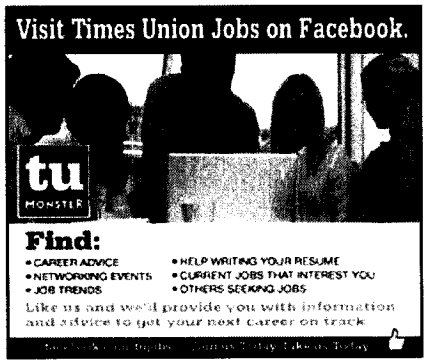

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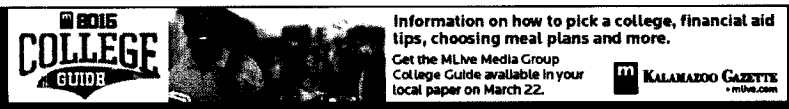

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Video: 9/11 tributes, Twin Tower stories and more pack week of remembrance

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By John Gonzalez | gonzo@mlive.com
Follow on Twitter
on [redacted] at 11:24 AM, updated September 06, 2011 at 11:28 AM

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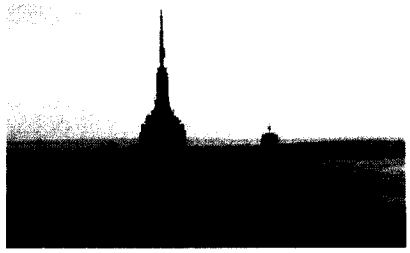
It's going to be a tough week for all Americans, who are being deluged by **9/11 tributes**, Twin Tower stories and Ground Zero memories as we approach Sunday's 10-year anniversary of the **September 11 terrorist attacks**.

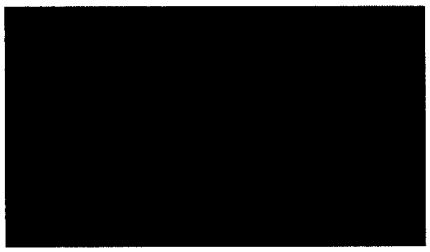


AP Photo

The Empire State Building, center, and One World Trade Center, right, rise above the Manhattan skyline in this aerial photo from Aug. 30, 2011 in New York. Sept. 11, 2011 will mark the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attacks in the United States.

I watched over the weekend a very compelling story by entertainment reporter Lara Spencer of ABC News. She interviewed a young woman who has rebuilt her life after the events of 9/11.

The story was well done, and Lara Spencer, who I typically follow for my Hollywood news and entertainment updates, told a story that stuck with me, and I'm sure countless of other viewers.



ABC News, like other news organizations, including the **Grand Rapids Press and MLive.com**, has been working hard to package different stories to tell various perspectives of the tragedy.

Did you see today's story about **Zeeland native Tom Plewes**, who as the commander of the nation's U.S. Army Reserve, felt the Pentagon walls shake around him when a jet crashed into the building?

• As for other coverage, the ABC News Investigative Team has put together a 9/11 timeline which details what America was doing and what the hijackers were doing, day-by-day, in August and September 2001. **[ABC NEWS]**

• Our friends at WOOD-TV 8 have put together a package about how newspapers played a role in covering 9/11 through a gallery of "**Newspaper Headlines**" of front page clippings from newspapers around the globe. They also have a home page devoted to all things 9/11. **[WOOD-TV8]**

• Channel 13 WZZM, a Gannett-owned property, has packaged their stories under the heading: "How 9/11 Changed Us: Volunteer, Share Your Story, Honor the Fallen." **[WZZM]**

• Fox 17 has audio, as well as graphics and photos. And it also features a story behind the raid of the Osama bin Laden compound, called 40 minutes to capture or kill: Timeline, history of Osama bin Laden raid. **[Fox 17]**

• The Press and MLive.com will have more coverage daily. You can follow all of our stories here. **[MLive.com]**

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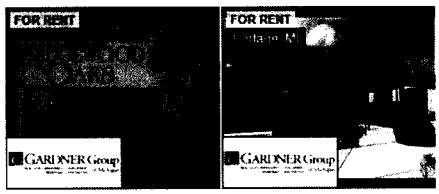

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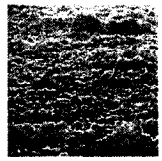

Great Lakes ice growing faster than last year

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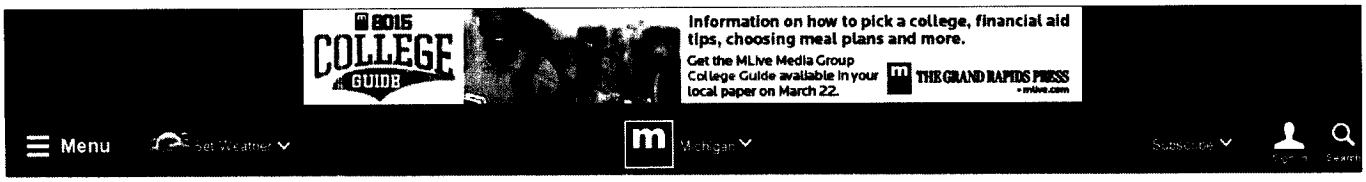

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SVSU students commemorate Sept. 11 anniversary with candlelight vigil

By Lindsay Knake | lknake@mlive.com
Email the author | Follow on Twitter
on [redacted] at 8:00 AM

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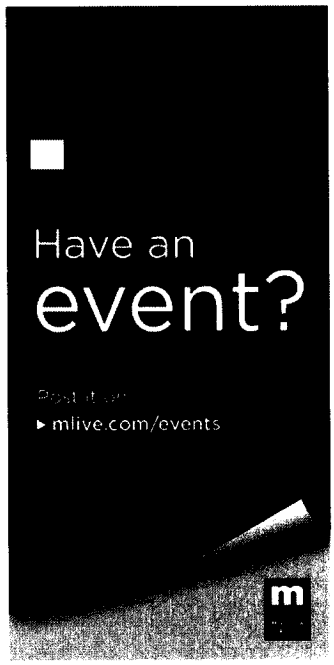
In this Sept. 11, 2001 file photo, the twin towers of the World Trade Center burn behind the Empire State Building in New York.

KOCHVILLE TWP. — Many college students were sitting in elementary and middle school classrooms on the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, when terrorist flew planes into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

The Saginaw Valley State University Student Association and Residential Housing Association are hosting a ceremony to remember the 10th anniversary of the attacks.

The event begins at 8:30 p.m. at the Spirit Rock near Living Center North at 7400 Bay. A candlelight vigil will follow at 9 p.m.



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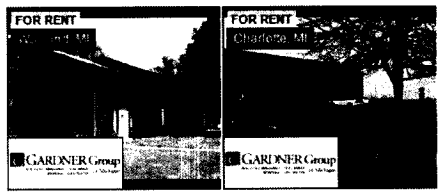

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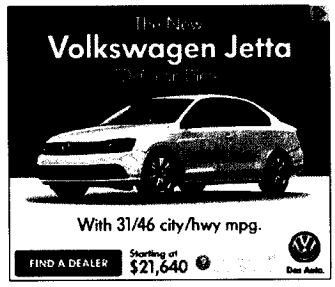

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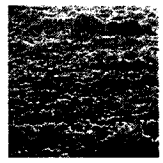

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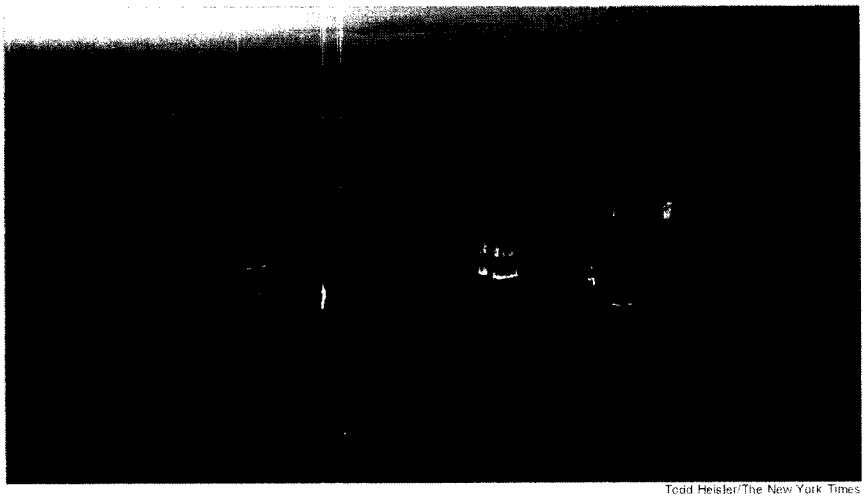

Todd Heisler/The New York Times

The Malkin family is said to be planning to create a publicly traded real estate company featuring the Empire State Building.

By CHARLES V. BAGLI and PETER LATTMAN
Published: April 12, 2011

People who have always wondered what it might be like to dabble in a little New York real estate may soon be able to dabble in a lot of it — by buying a piece of its most famous skyscraper, the Empire State Building.

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Times Topic: Empire State Building

The Malkin family, which controls the 102-story Art Deco tower at Fifth Avenue and 34th Street, is planning to create a publicly traded real estate company featuring the building, according to three executives who had been briefed on the plans but spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter.

The skyscraper draws tens of thousands of tourists from across the globe every year to its 86th-floor observatory, 1,050 feet above the city streets. If the Malkin plan is successful, New Yorkers, and anyone else for that matter, will be able to buy stock in the company that owns the Empire State Building, much as Wisconsin residents bought stock in the Green Bay Packers.

The new company, the executives said, may include a number of other office buildings controlled by Anthony E. Malkin and his father, Peter L. Malkin, including 1 Grand Central, a 55-story, 1.3-million-square-foot building across 42nd Street from Grand Central Terminal, and a 26-story building at 250 West 57th Street, as well as six buildings in

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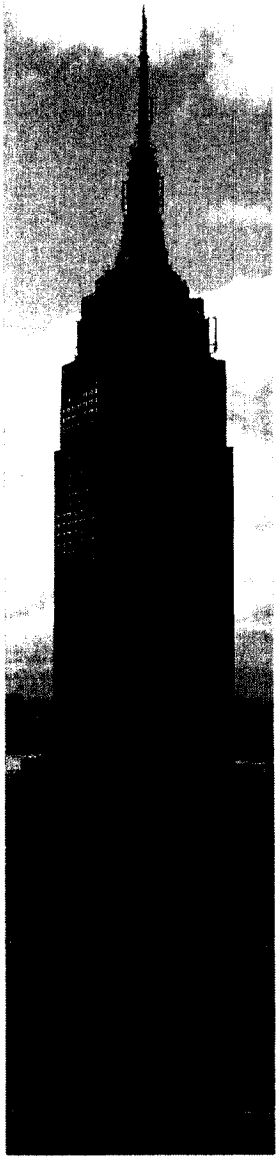


Chester Higgins Jr./The New York Times

The Empire State Building is at the center of a plan to create a publicly traded company.

Anthony Malkin declined to comment, but he, his father and their partners are hoping to cash in on the Empire State Building's international cachet and a commercial real estate market in New York that is once again attracting buyers from around the world.

"Investors the world over are clamoring to invest in Manhattan office properties, both debt and equity," said Michael Knott, a managing director of Green Street Advisors.

Still, the Malkins must clear a number of hurdles, not the least of which is gaining the support of their principal partner, the estate of Leona Helmsley, which has hired advisers to evaluate the proposal, and the 3,400 limited partners in the existing company that owns the Empire State Building.

A public sale would come amid a sharp rebound in the number of initial public offerings, which roughly tripled in the first quarter of 2011 compared with the same period a year ago. Stock offerings for real estate investment trusts have also surged, with a total volume of $1 billion, more than double the output during the same period last year. But Mr. Knott said that many of those recent offerings had not performed very well after selling in the public markets.

The Empire State Building did not get off to an auspicious start when it opened in 1931, during the Depression. Critics derided it as the "Empty State Building," and it was not profitable until 1950.

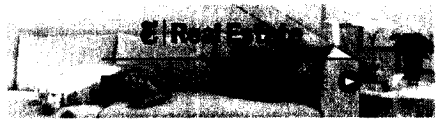
Mr. Malkin's grandfather Lawrence A. Wien, his father and Harry B. Helmsley created what became a model for real estate syndication when they bought control of the building in 1961 from Henry Crown and leased it to a group of investors, including themselves. Those investors then sold an operating sublease for the tower to another entity now controlled by the Malkins and the estate of Leona Helmsley, while Mr. Helmsley and Mr. Wien sold the title to the property to the Prudential Insurance Company.

After years of fighting among the owners and feuds with Donald J. Trump, the Malkins gained full control of the building about five years ago and embarked on what has become a $560 million effort to burnish the 2.9-million-square-foot landmark and more than double the rents.

They have renovated the lobby — restoring original Art Deco murals — refurbished the observatory and replaced the 6,514 windows as part of an effort to make it one of the city's most energy-efficient buildings.

The Malkins and their brokers at Newmark Knight Frank have attracted a series of corporate tenants, including a division of Li & Fung, the giant trading firm, which signed a lease for 483,000 square feet in January. There are now about 200 tenants, down from 950 in 2002, though today's tenants occupy far larger spaces. The building may never command rents as high as those at trophies like the General Motors Building, but real estate brokers say the tower now shines.

"They've moved the building, in my mind, to a Class A property," said Peter Riguardi,



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president of Jones Lang LaSalle in New York. "It needed those upgrades. It's now one of the top buildings in that area."

A version of this article appeared in print on April 13, 2011, on page A20 of the New York edition.

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laid-off designer kills exec at former ompany outside Empire State Building

By The Associated Press
Saturday, Aug. 25, 2012, 12:01 a.m.

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NEW YORK — A laid-off clothing designer fatally shot an executive at his former company on Friday outside the Empire State Building, setting off a chaotic showdown with police in front of one of the world's best-known landmarks.

Officers killed the gunman and at least nine others suffered minor wounds, likely all of them by stray police gunfire, authorities said.

The gunshots rang out on the Fifth Avenue side of the building about 9 a.m., as pedestrians on their way to work packed sidewalks and merchants were opening their shops.

"People were yelling, 'Get down! Get down!' " said Marc Engel, an accountant who was on a bus in the area when he heard the shots. "It took about 15 seconds, a lot of pop, pop, pop, pop, one shot after the other."

Afterward, he saw the sidewalks littered with the wounded, including one person "dripping enough blood to leave a stream."

Wearing an olive suit and tie and carrying a briefcase, Jeffrey Johnson walked up to the import company Vice President Steven Ercolino put a gun to his head and fired without saying a word, authorities said.

A witness told investigators that Johnson shot Ercolino once in the head and, after he fell to the sidewalk, stood over him and shot him four more times.

"Jeffrey just came from behind two cars, pulled out his gun, put it up to Steve's head and shot him," said Carol Timan, whose daughter Irene was walking to Hazan Imports at the time with Ercolino.

The gunman walked away and calmly turned up Fifth Avenue, where he blended in with the crowd, police said.

A construction worker who saw the shooting followed Johnson and alerted two police officers, a detail regularly assigned to patrol city landmarks like the 1,454-foot skyscraper since the 9/11 terror attacks, officials said.

The two officers drew their weapons and fired 16 rounds, killing Johnson, police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said.

A witness had told police that Johnson fired at the officers, but authorities say ballistics evidence so far does not support that. Johnson's .45-caliber weapon held seven rounds, they said. He fired five times at Ercolino, one round was still in the gun, and one was ejected when officers secured it, authorities said.

"These officers ... had absolutely no choice," Kelly said. "This individual took a gun out very close to them and perhaps fired at them."

Another loaded magazine was found in Johnson's briefcase.

Johnson legally bought the gun in Sarasota, Fla., in 1991, but he did not have a required permit to possess the weapon in New York City, police said.

"New York City, as you know, is the safest big city in the country, and we are on pace to have a record low number of murders this year," Mayor Michael Bloomberg said. "But we are not immune to the national problem of gun violence."

Robert Asika, who was shot in the right arm, said he was "100 percent positive" that a police officer had shot him. Asika, 23, sells tickets for the Empire State Building's observatory.

"When I woke up this morning, I didn't even want to go to work," he said. "Something told me not to go to work."

The wounded victims were five women and four men, aged 20 to 56, authorities said. All were from New York City, except a 35-year-old woman from Chapel Hill, N.C. They suffered graze wounds or other minor injuries, and police believe that at least some of the injuries were caused by bullet fragments that ricocheted off security planters.

Johnson, 58, and Ercolino had traded accusations of harassment when Johnson worked there, Kelly said.

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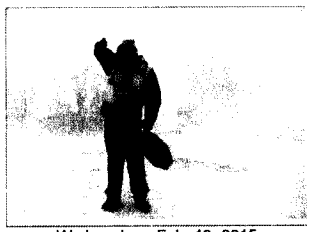

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3-Question Trib Poll

Johnson, 56, and Ercolino had traded accusations of harassment when Johnson worked there, Kelly said. Johnson had been laid off about a year ago.

Police said he blamed the victim, believing Ercolino had failed to promote his line of women's T-shirts aggressively.

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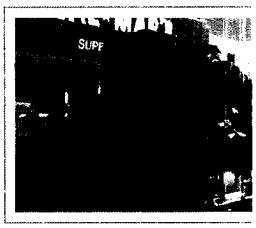

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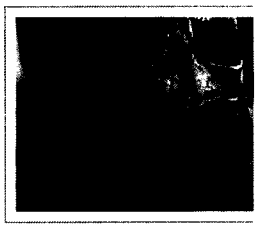

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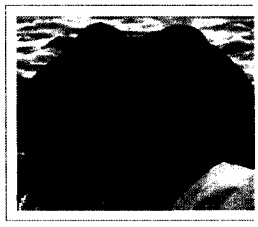

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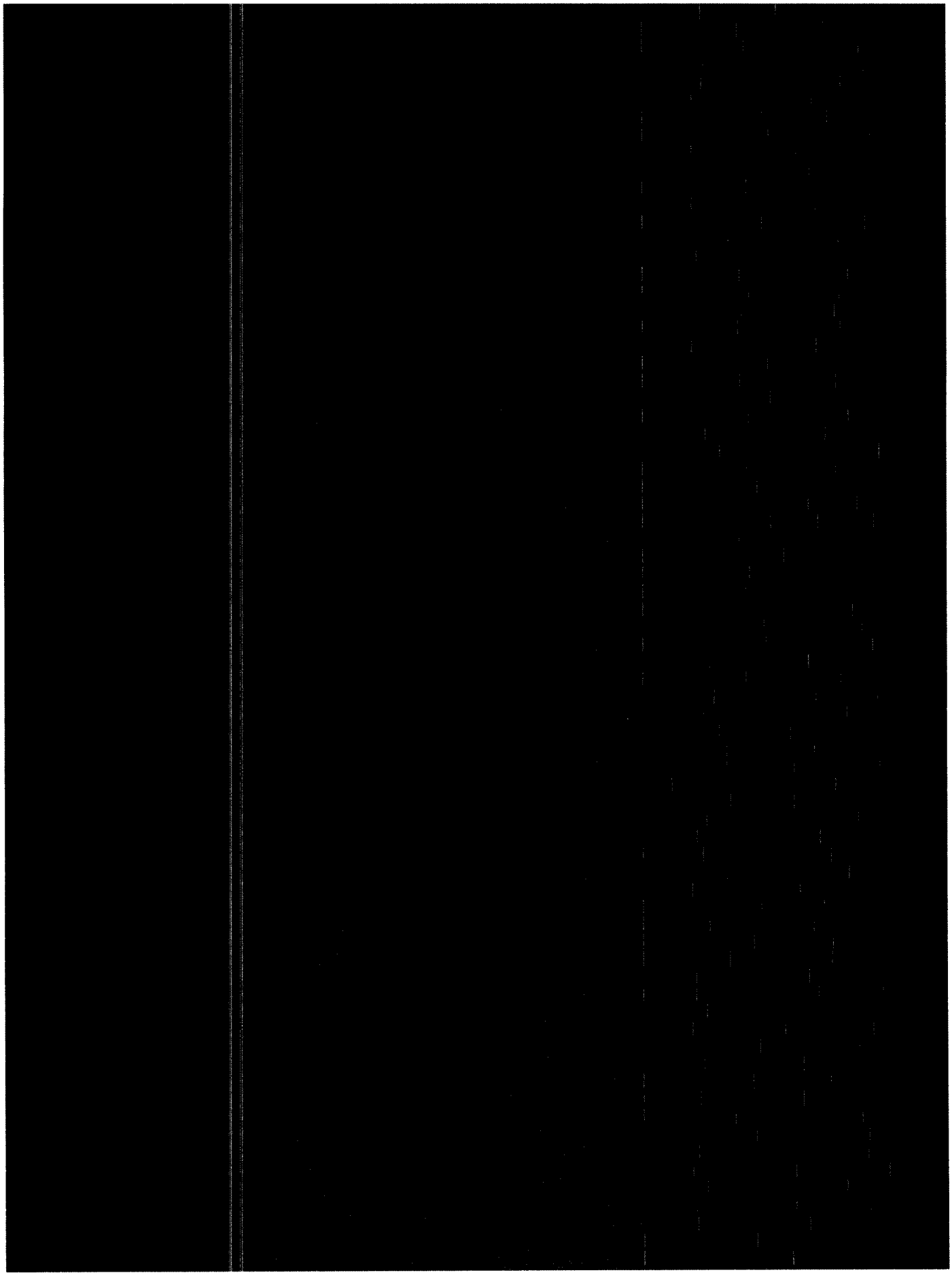

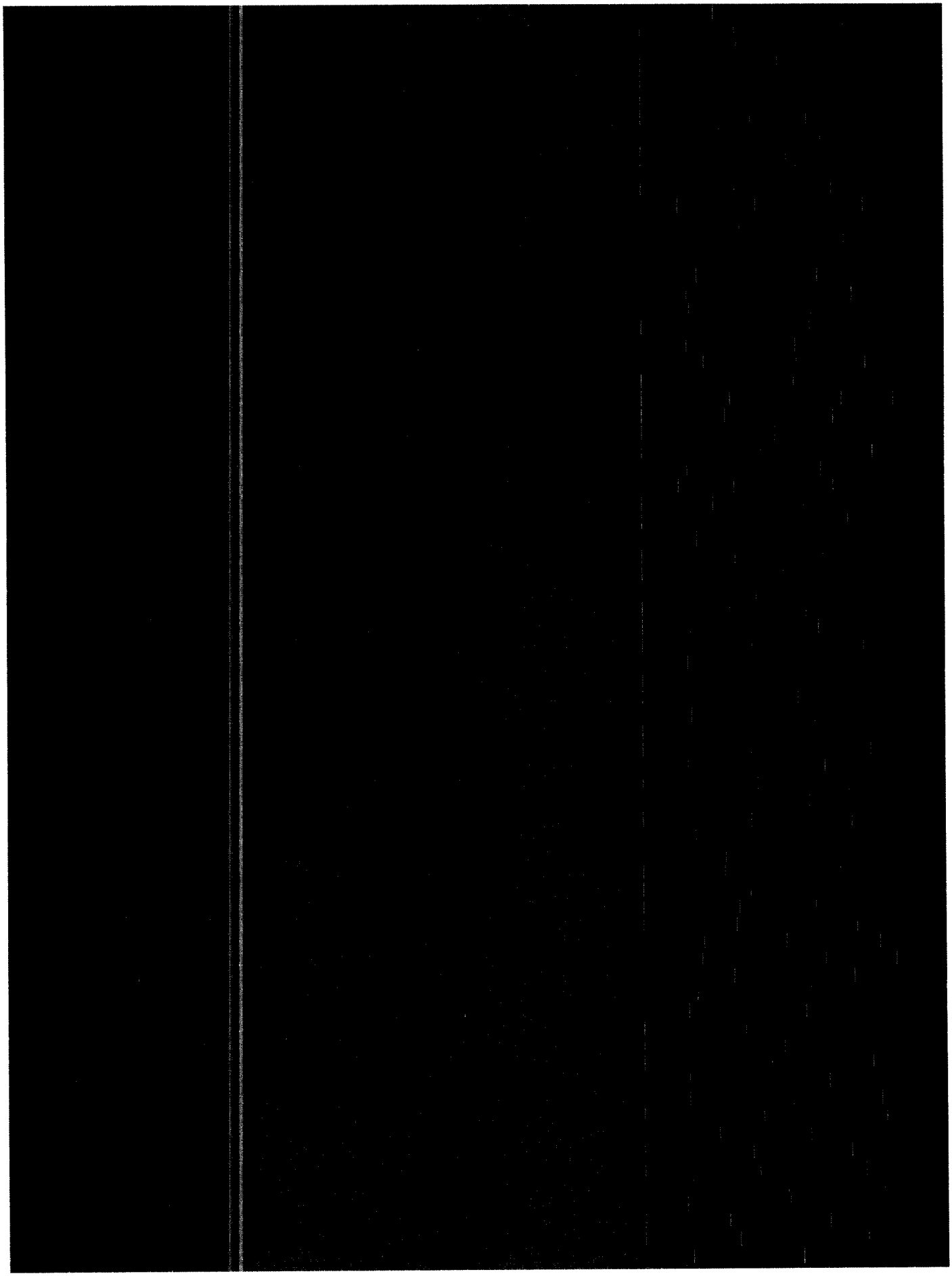

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Members of the 2012 US Women's Gymnastics Olympic Team, from left, Kyla Ross, Aly Raisman, McKayla Maroney, Jordyn Wieber and Gabby Douglas pose on the observation deck of the Empire State Building, Tuesday, Aug. 14, 2012 in New York.

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Members of the 2012 US Women's Gymnastics Olympic Team from left, Kyla Ross, Aly Raisman, McKayla Maroney, Jordyn Wieber and Gabby Douglas pose on the observation deck of the Empire State Building.

The Olympic Games have long stood as an institution of world unity and friendly competition. Those principles don't always come first when a nation is the focus of broadcasts across the world and its reputation is put on the line. The modern emphasis on commercialism, consumer demand, and international media has resulted in many long-lasting negative effects on host cities of the Olympic Games. A reconstruction is in order to bring the Olympics back to what they are.

In 2009, Greece was struck hard by a domestic debt crisis, possibly in part as a result of spending $15 billion on the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens. In 2008, the Olympics in Beijing, China, cost $31 billion. This large sum of money was spent constructing infrastructure in one of China's most congested areas, only exacerbating its environmental problems. Additionally, 1.5 million Chinese citizens were forced to move by government regulations, in order to construct Olympic venues and games-related projects. These demonstrations of commercialism over welfare of the public cannot be ignored.

London has spent $19 billion hosting the 2012 Olympics. BBC News Magazine reports that, "It has created anger about congestion and the preferential treatment of Olympic dignitaries and sponsors over ordinary Londoners." London also constructed stadiums that will serve no purpose after the Games other than costing money to maintain and occupying previous wildlife-inhabited areas.

The Olympics are a tremendous source of pride in one's country; however, the negative effects of them on a host city cannot be ignored. Steps need to be taken to ensure a nation isn't left with national debt and environmental issues as payment for hosting the Olympics. Commercialism needs to be de-emphasized, and the spirit of the Games needs to be put back on top.

GRIFFIN MILLER/Kalamazoo

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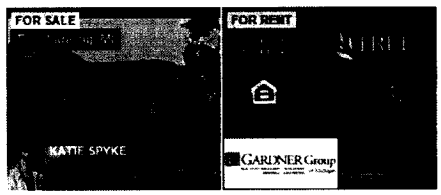

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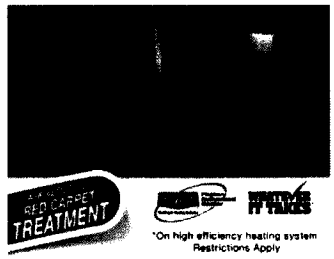

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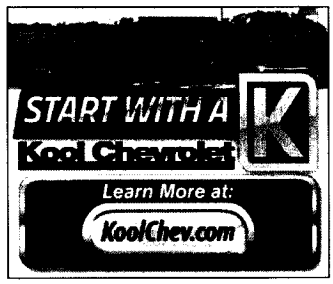

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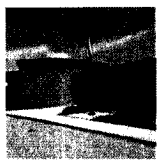

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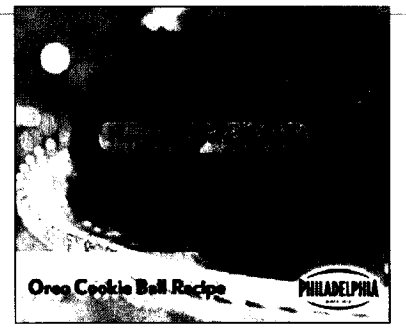
npire State Building owners file $1B stock offering

By Pittsburgh The Tribune-Review
Tuesday, Feb. 14, 2012

The company that controls the Empire State Building plans to raise as much as $1 billion in an initial public stock offering, giving investors an opportunity to own a piece of the landmark 102-story Manhattan skyscraper. Empire State Realty Trust Inc. plans to become a real estate investment trust and list shares under the ticker symbol "ESB," the company said in a Securities and Exchange Commission filing. The offering would give investors ownership of one of the world's most famous buildings and other Midtown properties as New York's real estate values rebound after the recession. Midtown Manhattan office values have gained 87 percent since a mid-2009 trough, according to Green Street Advisors Inc., a research firm in Newport Beach, Calif.



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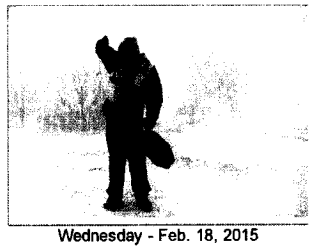

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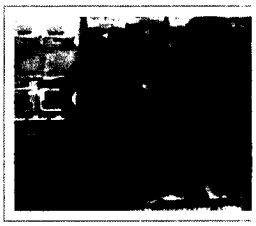

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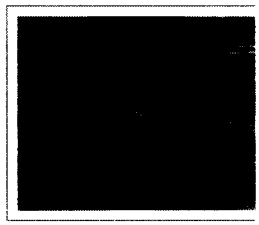

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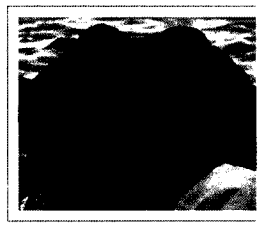

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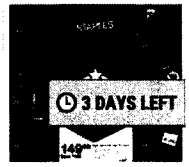

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SPORTS BRIEFING | RUNNING

Stair-Climbing Champion Repeats

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Published: February 8, 2012

Thomas Dold won the annual race up 86 flights of stairs at the Empire State Building for the seventh straight time. Dold of Germany dashed up the stairs in 10 minutes 28 seconds. His time last year was 10:10. Melissa Moon of New Zealand won the women's division in 12:39.

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A version of this brief appeared in print on February 9, 2012, on page B12 of the New York edition with the headline: Fastest Up Stairs Again.

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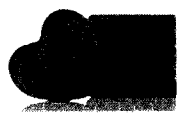

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an inspiring leader

Once Again, First to the 86th Floor

By HUNTER ATKINS
Published: February 9, 2012

Part Lance Armstrong and part Don King, Thomas Dold, a 27-year-old German, has built a brand by striding up staircases better than anyone.

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Chang W. Lee/The New York Times

Thomas Dold, of Germany, right, won the run up the Empire State Building for the seventh straight year, in 10:28. More Photos »

Wednesday night, Dold ran up 86 floors of the Empire State Building in 10 minutes 28 seconds, winning the men's division of the race for the seventh straight year.

Dold, one of more than 670 competitors at the 35th annual competitive stair-climbing event, has come close to breaking 10 minutes every time, but this year's win was the longest he has ever taken.

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Unlike most of the competitors, who wore generic running shorts and sagging tank tops, Dold had several skintight, sweat-resistant tops and bottoms that were color-coordinated in black, lime green and white. International reporters waited in line for an interview. Dold fielded every question and routinely flashed his enormous grin.

Dold also stands out at the starting line, where he h known to lunge forward a split-second before the ra begins.

"Then, we forget about the respect," said Tim Van Orden, a 43-year-old from Vermont, who customarily lines up near Dold. "You can see people getting trampled, their faces smashed into the floor. It's like trying to run out of a nightclub that's on fire."

Dold spread out his arms to hold back nearby runners a moment before an air horn signified the 8:05 p.m. start. Dold catapulted forward for a clean escape from the uncomfortable crunch of runners squeezing into the first-floor doorway.

The best climbers take on the Empire State Building's 1,576 steps two at a time, but they cannot pace themselves as they fight to create room and breathe consistently up the narrow, stuffy flights.

"I felt like my throat constricted early on, about Floor 6 or 7," said Chrissie Wellington, 34, a four-time triathlon world champion.

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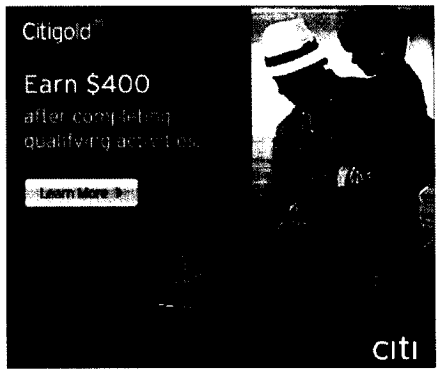
Empire State Building Run-Up



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Between the 20th and 30th floors, people fall into order as space widens and leg strength dissolves. Runners then primarily use the railings to pull themselves up.

"Your legs aren't functioning, your throat is screaming, you can barely put your arms on the railing and you want to throw up — and you've got 10 to 15 floors to go," said Van Orden, who has competed in the event five times.

Dold crossed the finish line with fists raised, but soon staggered and clung to an event staffer, who carried him inside and sat him down on the ground.

"He's very dramatic," the staffer said later as he watched Dold give a spirited interview. "He does this every year."

Dold is basically the sole competitor in the spotlight of the fringe sport, if not for his sheer dominance at least for placing himself there through dogged self-promotion.

"I never go to work," said Dold, unable to deny his charmed life as a professional athlete and marketing manager for a healthcare center. "I just have hobbies that I can follow."

Dold's Web site is engaging for a sport of unknowns that has between 150 and 200 events a year without any organizing body. As in real life, the digital Dold is quick to point out his success in competitions of all kinds. In addition to more than 40 first-place finishes in tower contests, Dold holds a Guinness World Record for running backwards one kilometer in 3 minutes 20 seconds.

Dold does not think there is much depth to his athletic motivation.

"If you have a thought, if you have a dream, you can make it a reality," he said. "You just have to make your goal and your strategy, and follow them. You don't have to learn that. It's logical."

He took up stair climbing at 17 and backwards running shortly after. He does basic training in the Black Forest. A few times a week, he travels three hours to the 56-story Main Tower building in Frankfurt to prepare for skyscrapers.

Although the Empire State Building run does not present a cash prize, winning it is Dold's best advertising campaign. He said that his collapse was legitimate and that it offered an explanation for why he dominates the sport from all sides.

"When I see videos of the runs, I sometimes see these guys walk like that was nothing," he said. "That was 86 floors. I try to give everything."

After the event, Dold refused no photo request — whether it was with the women's winner, Melissa Moon (12:39), or Al Shakana, a 40-year-old event volunteer from Rockaway who watched Dold from an entrance on the 80th floor.

"It was awe-inspiring," Shakana said. "He just zipped up. He looked surprisingly well. He didn't look out of breath. He wasn't walking up the stairs, he was running. Some people coming after him were stumbling, but he wasn't stumbling."

When Dold finished his interviews, the room was nearly empty and darkened after several lights were turned off. He caught up with other top finishers on the way to the elevator, but he turned around to head out to the Observatory.

Dold entered the terrace as the final climber, Touché Howard, was moments from completing the event in a full firefighter suit. The man finished and lay on the ground surrounded by photographers.

At 10:20 p.m., more than two hours after Dold came up gasping for air, he finally took a breather. He almost had the deck to himself, which he called an "unpayable" privilege. He stared out, in love with the dim glow of New York City on a foggy evening. "That's the real value of a victory," he said.

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Dold was the first man to finish the event and the last one to leave it. He hardly said anything upon exiting the building. He stepped into the elevator and an automated voice announced: "We hope you enjoyed the experience."

Dold looked up to the ceiling with another grin and said, "Definitely."

A version of this article appeared in print on February 10, 2012, on page B15 of the New York edition with the headline: Once Again, First to the 86th Floor.

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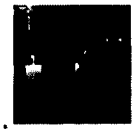

Empire State Building going public

Landmark may draw $1 billion as stock offering

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What secret have these drivers learned that could save you up to $500 on auto insurance?

By Alex Veiga - *Associated Press - Monday, February 13, 2012*

Soon investors can, like King Kong, grab a piece of the Empire State Building (/topics/empire-state-building/).

The company that runs the Great Depression-era skyscraper, the tallest building in New York, is planning to go public in a stock offering that could raise $1 billion, according to documents filed with regulators Monday.

That means that even if you can't afford to buy a home, you can buy a stake in perhaps the nation's most iconic office building - at least until the government sells shares in the Pentagon.

The planned IPO comes about 10 years after real estate investor Peter Malkin bought the 102-story Art Deco landmark from Donald Trump and a business partner for $57.5 million.

It's the latest chapter in a saga that dates to 1931, when the building was completed, establishing it as the city's highest skyscraper. It regained that standing after the collapse of the World Trade Center twin towers in the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attack.

Millions of tourists visiting New York ascend its heights to gape at the city from its observation deck, made famous in films such as "Sleepless in Seattle." It was 1933's "King Kong" that showed a giant ape clutching actress Fay Wray and fending off airplanes atop the tower.

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"You have a trophy property that is irreplaceable," said Hessam Nadji, managing director for research and advisory services at Marcus & Millichap, a commercial real estate services firm.

In its regulatory filing Monday, Empire State Realty Trust Inc. (/topics/empire-state-realty-trust-inc/) didn't say how many shares might be involved in the IPO or what price they might fetch. The $1 billion figure is subject to investor demand.

Empire State Realty (/topics/empire-state-realty-trust-inc/), which owns and operates 12 properties in Manhattan and greater New York, expects to trade on the New York Stock Exchange under the stock ticker symbol ESB.

By going public, Empire State Realty (/topics/empire-state-realty-trust-inc/) will be able to tap the equity markets for capital, something real estate investment trusts have had a lot of success doing, even in a wobbly economy. Marcus & Millichap's index of REITs has doubled since the bottom of the recession.

The Empire State Building (/topics/empire-state-building/)'s owners have sought to modernize the 80-year-old tower. In 2009, they embarked on a $550 million renovation to make it more environmentally friendly and energy efficient. The owners said they need $55 million to $65 million beyond 2013 to finish upgrades.

Apart from the novelty factor, will investors see the Empire State Building (/topics/empire-state-building/) as a good real estate investment?

John Fitzgibbon, founder of IPOScoop.com, which tracks IPOs, said investors won't get a good sense of the value of the IPO until the company provides more complete information about the offering. But he added that IPOs by real estate investment trusts generally don't make much of a splash.

"REITs seem fairly valued when they're priced. You don't see any moon shots in the crowd," he said. "I wouldn't expect it to behave as people were talking about Facebook."

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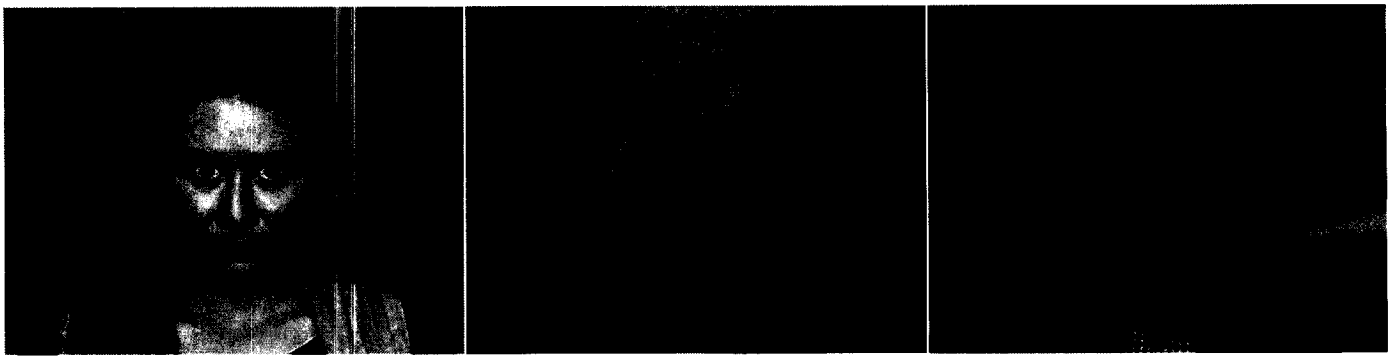

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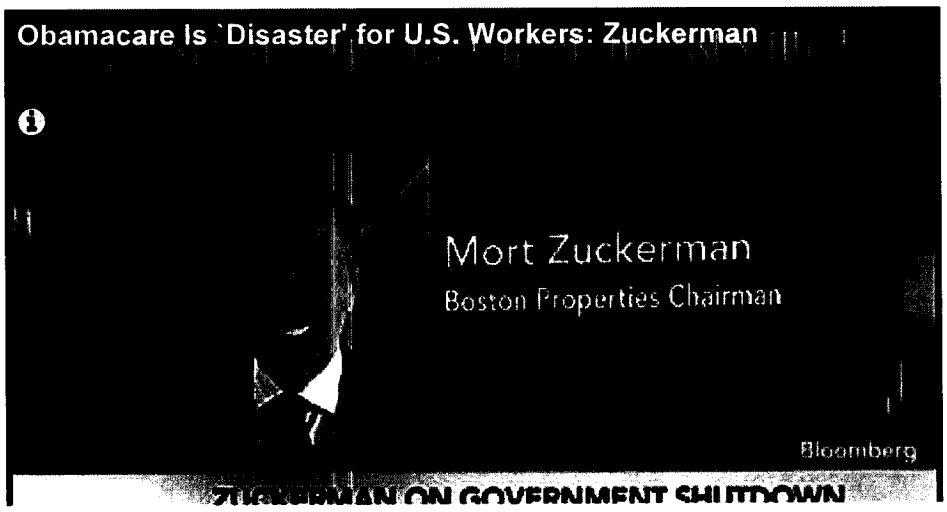

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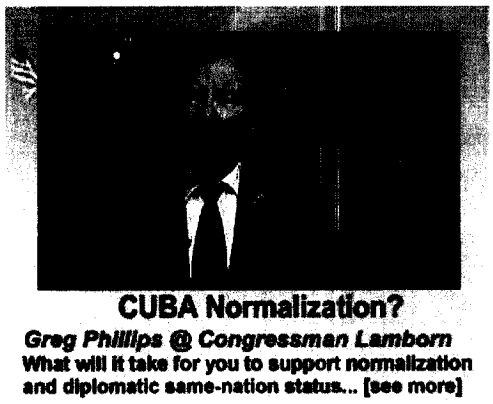

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William 3 years ago

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William W. Choate, P.E.

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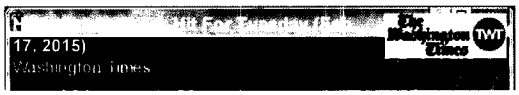

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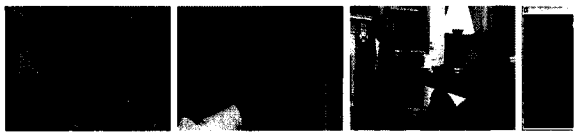

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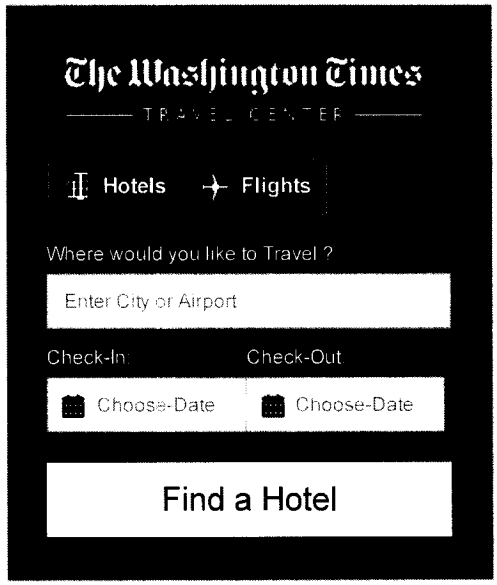

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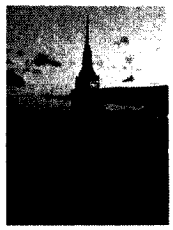
Empire State Building Included in I.P.O. Filing

By THE NEW YORK TIMES FEBRUARY 13, 2012 2:27 PM


Fred R. Conrad/The New York Times

Want a piece of the Empire State Building? You may soon be able to have one.

DealBook reports that the owner of the building, the Malkin family, has included the New York City skyscraper in a new I.P.O. filing aimed at simplifying its sprawling real estate holdings. The landmark is the crown jewel of the offering that includes shares in 12 buildings in New York and Connecticut.

The move will allow the Malkins to convert the equity held by other investors into stock in the new company, Empire State Realty Trust.

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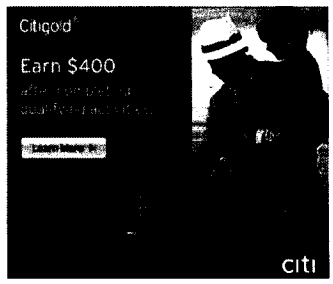

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The Big City Book Club returns for 2015, and we're getting things rolling with Bernard Malamud's classic New York novel "The Assistant."

Set in Brooklyn in the 1950s, the novel has it all: the clash of immigrant cultures, the threats of modernization to old shopkeeping ways, crime and illicit love.

Join us for the online discussion of the novel on **Thursday, Feb. 12, at 6:30 p.m.** on The New York Times's City Room blog. To join the club and receive regular email updates, visit nytimes.com/marketing/bigcitybookclub.

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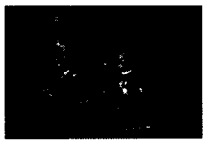
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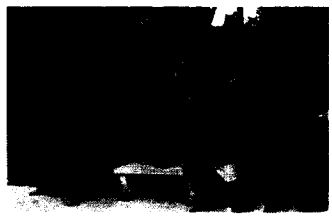

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Empire State Building owners plan an IPO

February 13, 2012 | By David Colker

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Word is that King Kong is on top of this IPO.

The owners of the famed Empire State Building in New York are planning an initial public offering that could raise as much as $1 billion toward making upgrades to the 1931 structure that was once the tallest building in the world.

Empire State Reality Trust Inc. said in a regulatory filing that about $65 million of the money will be used to complete planned renovations of the 102-story building that claims to be the most famous office building in the world. Otherwise, according to the Associated Press, the company plans to use investors' money to pay off loans and for possible future acquisitions, among other matters.

The company owns and operates 12 properties in the New York area.

One of the reasons that the building is so famous is its observation deck, which is a must-stop for tourists from around the world. And of course, there was the matter of the giant ape that climbed up outside of the building in the landmark 1933 "King Kong" movie.

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Here's hoping that investors in the company, which plans to trade on the New York Stock Exchange under the ESB ticker symbol, don't meet the same fate, financially speaking.

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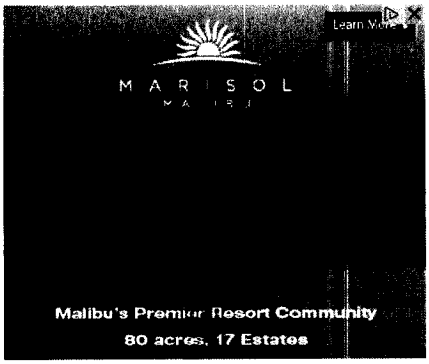

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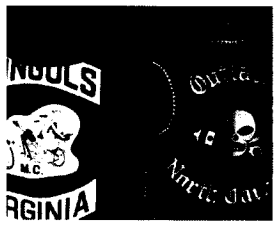

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Empire State Building going public

Associated Press Published 7:16 pm, Tuesday, February 14, 2012

Soon investors can take after King Kong and grab a piece of the Empire State Building.

Malkin Holdings LLC, the family-owned company headed by Greenwich resident Peter Malkin that runs the Depression-era skyscraper, is establishing a realty trust and planning to go public i a stock offering that could raise $1 billion, according to documents filed with regulators Monda

It's the latest chapter in a saga that dates to 1931, when the building was completed, establishing it as the city's tallest skyscraper. It regained that standing after the collapse of the World Trade Center twin towers in the Sept. 11 attacks.

In its regulatory filing Monday, Empire State Realty Trust Inc. didn't say how many shares migl be involved in the IPO or what price they might fetch. The $1 billion figure isn't final, either. It's subject to investor demand.

The company plans to use proceeds to pay investors, repay loans and cover the expenses of the IPO and the company's formation last summer, as well as for possible future acquisitions.

Empire State Realty, which owns and operates 12 properties in Manhattan and greater New York, expects to trade on the New York Stock Exchange under the stock ticker symbol ESB.

By going public, Empire State Realty will be able to tap the equity markets for capital, somethin real estate investment trusts have had a lot of success doing, even in a wobbly economy. Marcus & Millichap's index of REITs has doubled since the bottom of the recession.

Commercial real estate has also been improving, particularly in New York. The city's office market bounced back after the financial crisis in 2008 led to sweeping job losses on Wall Street and companies pulled back on space.

The office vacancy rate stood at 10.5 percent at the end of last year, down from a peak of 13 percent in 2009, Nadji said. That is still well above the 6 percent vacancy rate in 2007, but New York's office market remains the lowest in the nation among major metropolitan areas, he said Rents also have been rising, particularly for prime office buildings.

Still, there's a difference between a unique, historic building and a property that can draw the highest rental rates, says Rob Stevenson, head of U.S. REITS at Macquarie Capital (USA) Inc.

"You can't find too many buildings in this country that are more iconic than the Empire State Building," Stevenson says. "But if you're talking about a trophy building -- that's definitely not th Empire State Building."

He says that the skyscraper is not well suited as space for financial services companies and othe large tenants, who typically prefer more modern buildings. He adds that its location is not as desirable as a building in the Plaza District, an expensive zone in midtown Manhattan.

The Empire State Building's owners have sought to modernize the 80-year-old tower. In 2009, they embarked on a $550 million renovation aimed at making it more environmentally friendl and energy-efficient. The owners said they need $55 million to $65 million beyond 2013 to finish upgrades.

Apart from the novelty factor, will investors see the Empire State Building as a good real estate investment?

John Fitzgibbon, founder of IPOScoop.com, which tracks IPOs, says investors won't get a good sense of the value of the IPO until the company provides more complete information on the offering. But he says IPOs by real estate investment trusts generally don't make much of a splas

"REITs seem fairly valued when they're priced. You don't see any moon shots in the crowd," he said. "I wouldn't expect it to behave as people were talking about Facebook."

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Empire State Building going public

Associated Press
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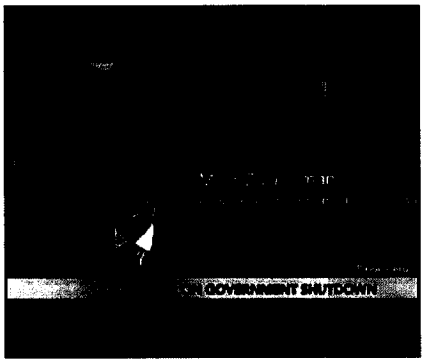

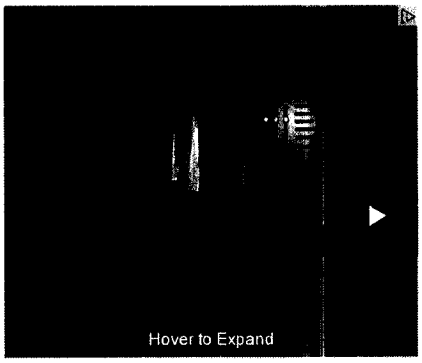

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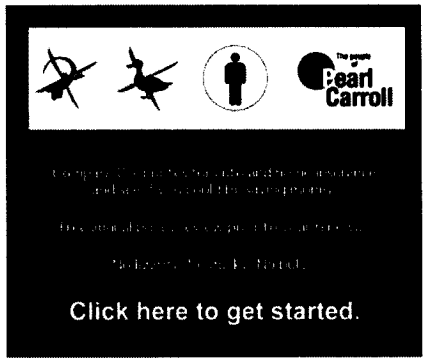

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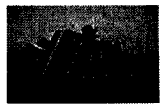
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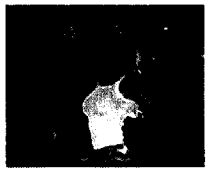
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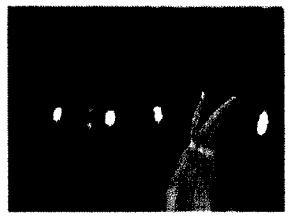
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Greenwich couple weds at Empire State Building

Lisa Chamoff Published 7:13 pm, Tuesday, February 14, 2012

IMAGE 1 OF 55

A couple kiss on the corner of 34th Street and Park Avenue in New York City, Tuesday, Feb. 14, 2012. In the background is the Empire State Buidling where four couples were married at the historic skyscraper on Valentine's Day. The building is managed by Malkin Holdings LLC, the family-owned company headed by Greenwich resident Peter Malkin.

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Nearly three years ago, Paula Cubero and Enrique Catter felt crushed when a flu outbreak caused them to cancel the wedding they had spent months planning in Cubero's native Mexico.

But how the pair spent this Valentine's Day more than made up for it.

Cubero and Catter, who live in Greenwich, were among four lucky couples to tie the knot at the Empire State Building Tuesday, in weddings designed by celebrity event planner Colin Cowie. Among those to exchange vows were the first gay and lesbian couples to wed at the Empire State Building.

Valentine's Day is the only time couples are allowed to marry at the landmark building, which has held an annual contest to select brides and grooms for the past 18 years.

"It doesn't get higher than this," said Catter after the ceremony, in an area on the 61st floor that rented out for events. "It was something different and very special."

Cubero met Catter, a native of Peru, in 2007 at a party in New York City, where she had traveled to visit a friend. After falling in love and carrying out a long distance relationship -- which included such romantic gestures as Catter hiring a mariachi band to play outside her home in Mexico -- he proposed.

The two spent five months, and much of their savings, planning a wedding for 300 people in Mexico City in 2009, but it was canceled amidst the swine flu scare that year. One week before the wedding, guests started canceling, and the borders closed, so Catter's family could not fly in from Peru.

"When we heard about the Colin Cowie contest we thought this was our chance," said Cubero in the video she and Catter submitted for the contest.

Shortly after 5 p.m. Tuesday evening, Cubero, wearing a Maggie Sottero gown compliments of the Manhattan bridal shop Kleinfeld, walked down the aisle with her parents to Bette Midler's "Wind Beneath My Wings," and met Catter underneath a canopy of peach and pink flowers.

The ceremony included the couple and their parents participating in a symbolic washing of thei hands, to signify the bond bringing the families together.

After the ceremony, an entourage of photographers and videographers followed the newly married couple to the 86th-floor observation deck to pose for pictures.

lisa.chamoff@scni.com; 203-625-4439; http://twitter.com/lchamoff

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Greenwich couple weds at Empire State Building

Lisa Chamoff
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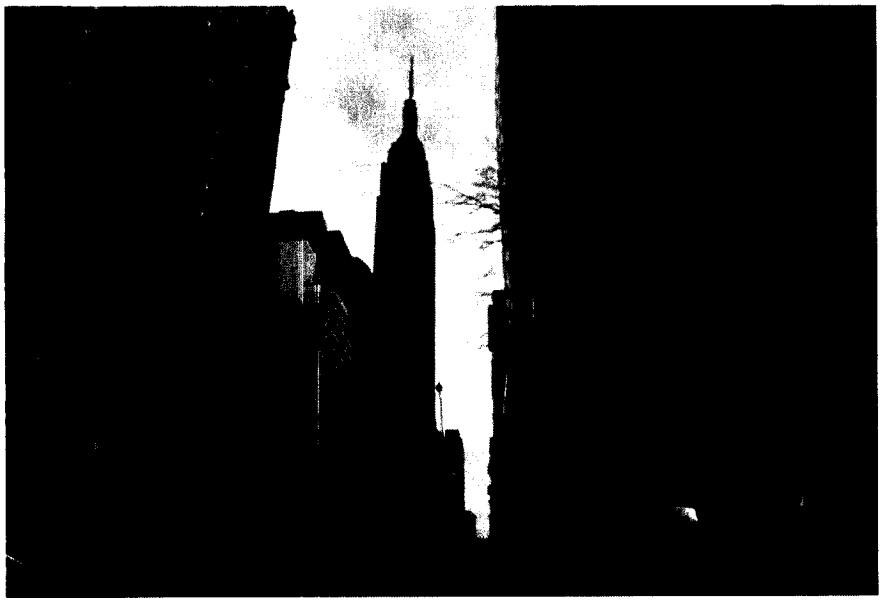

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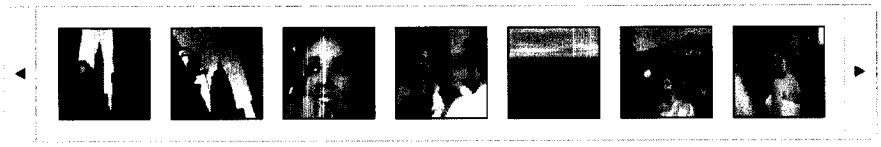

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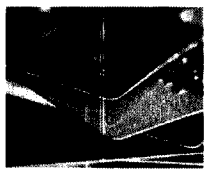

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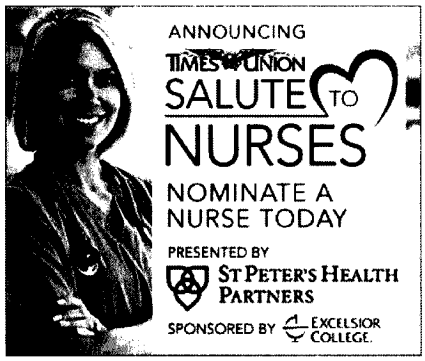

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First same-sex couple marries at the Empire State Building

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By The Associated Press
on February 14, 2012 at 12:15 PM, updated February 14, 2012 at 12:38 PM

Print

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NEW YORK — Two women who met at the University of Alaska have become the first same-sex couple to be married at the Empire State Building.

John Moore/Getty Images

Two women from Alaska won an online contest and became the first same-sex couple to wed at the Empire State building today.

Stephanie Figarelle and Lela McArthur exchanged rings today and promised to love each other for the rest of their lives.

The couple won an online contest. Theirs was the first of four Valentine's Day weddings being held at the landmark New York City skyscraper.

A wedding chapel was set up for the occasion. After the ceremony, the couple went to the observation deck for photos.

The 29-year-old Figarelle wore a black tuxedo for the ceremony. The 24-year-old McArthur wore a strapless white gown with a train.

Both work as personal trainers in Anchorage.

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The big One

Ok, let's get down to brass tacks about Homosexuality and Christianity.

Almost every homosexual I know believes in God, but we have a different perspective on the issue of who and who and what God is; and that is most likely shaped from our personal experiences. As homosexuals, we have been attacked, beaten, bludgeoned, bullied, raped, mutilated and even killed for being who we are. If we live long enough, we eventually have to wrestle with our concept of God.

Most of homosexuals long for love, affection and a family that provides unconditional love. We have seen hardship, and heartache, and even though we get beaten down, we pull ourselves up and start all over again. We have been the family caretakers while our heterosexual siblings were "taking care of their on families". We have been our ailing parent's friends, nurses, housekeepers, confidants and companions until their deaths.

After putting our lives on hold, we then long for a family of our own. When we find each other, we are not monsters, we are loving, caring partners, and yes, even adoptive parents of children discarded by the heterosexual community. We are not nymphomaniacs, whores, abusers of children, or the reason heterosexual marriages fail; that's the heterosexual community's problem of their own creation.

We never stop believing in God. Through our own suffering, we know that there are a lot of hurting people out there. And we are more willing to show those less fortunate compassion; in hopes that someday they will return the favor. I have not denied Jesus Christ, nor will I ever. I believe that he loved me so much that he gave his life for me. As a Christian, I am therefore commanded to show the same compassion especially when it's tough to do so.

I have a repentant heart. I've read and studied the Bible from Genesis to Revelations many times. I've tried to "Pray the Gay Away". (and only mature Christians will understand this), sometimes God's answer is "NO".

What angers me is that so many young Christians would rather be right, than being compassionate and forgiving. I guess it's easier for them because they are not putting their hearts and souls on the line and risking being hurt. It gives you a feeling of superiority, when you really should be humble.

Christians never stop sinning, not even after a confession of faith, baptism, or joining a church. It that was the case, Catholics would not need confessionals, and Protestants would not need repentance. As long as there is breath in your body, sin is there with you. Your sin is no less than mine, and you are no more bound for hell than I.

So let's cut to the chase: denying me the Civil Right to marry my partner, you are intentionally hurting me and my family, while yours is not in jeopardy. You are neither repentant nor compassionate. If you really thought I was a heathen, you should do what is necessary to win me over to Christ, and that would mean Praying for me, witnessing to me, sharing the love of Christ with me, an NOT pelting me with rocks or bottles as I walk down the street or enter into a Church.

Sometimes Christianity is tough. It means putting your beliefs into actions. It means humbling yourself before God your creator and the Creator of homosexuals and knowing that while you may not understand homosexuality, these are your brothers and sisters in Christ. Trust God to be in control, bow your heads, and open your hearts before God is forced to smash you and remake you into a vessel he can use. I know, I've been there.

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They'll still have to play single taxes.

UncleRuckus

Honeymoon in Asbury Park next to Lou's pizzaria.

freespeech01

We are a soceity in decline.

> **matt8204**
>
> The same thing was probably uttered by bigots and other bitter folks after women got the vote and civil rights was passed.

Orangepope

as always, anti-religous attacks are tolerated. The pilgrims came to this country to escape religious persecution. Our consitution's foundation pays homage to the Creator. What the liberal left is looking to do is completely squash religous beliefs. Look at the President's contraceptive insurance plan. The people must take a stand against this religous persecution.

xanderzone365

Congratulations to them.

hibernian20

The Empire State going the way of the Roman empire to hell.

heltonfan714

Oh look you can quote from the Bible! That and three dollars gets you on the subway.

> **hibernian20**
>
> Three dollars is cheap entertainment watching Gays jumping the turnstile.

Hector

Therefore shall a MAN leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his WIFE, and they shall be one flesh - Genesis 2.24 (GOD's only prescription for marriage).

But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. I Corinthians 7.2

You hall NOT lie with a male as with a female : it is an ABOMINATION- Leviticus 18.22

If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely

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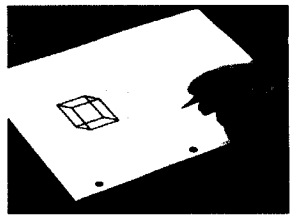

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if a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination, they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them-Leviticus 20:13

Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the creator, Who is blessed forever. Amen. for this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do these things which are not convenient Romans1:22-27

Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality I Corinthians 6:9

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. Romans 1:18

---

matt8204

Again, falling back to religious edicts. Since when do we legislate based upon religion? What about separation of church and state?

And if you want to lean on the Bible, that's a book that also says a man lived to be over 900 years old and that Earth was created in seven days. You know, as long as we're taking it verbatim.

hibernian20

Look again at the constitution amendment # 1 and tell Obama that Government can not make a state religion. Liberal edicts from Progressive Statism is Religion

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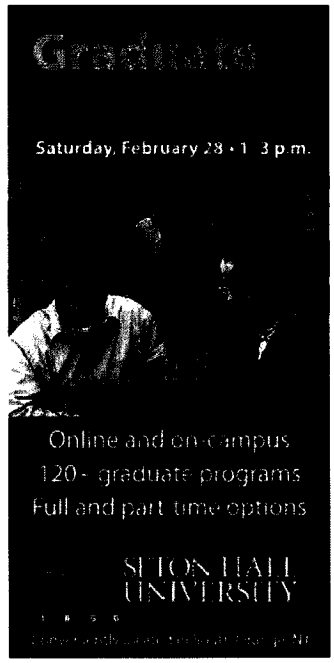

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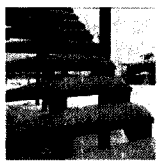

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Conn. couple marries at Empire State Building

February 15, 2012 5:07 AM

IMAGE 1 OF 56

A couple kiss on the corner of 34th Street and Park Avenue in New York City, Tuesday, Feb. 14, 2012. In the background is the Empire State Buidling where four couples were married at the historic skyscraper on Valentine's Day. The building is managed by Malkin Holdings LLC, the family-owned company headed by Greenwich resident Peter Malkin.

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SFGATE http://www.dariennewsonline.com/news/article/Darien-athletes-take-on-Empire-State-Building-for-3339996.php

Darien athletes take on Empire State Building for cancer research

Published 3:08 pm, Friday, February 17, 2012

Tom Holland is the coach of the MMRF PowerTeam, the charity fundraising group that has raised more than $5 million in four years. He is pictured after finishing the race.

Tom Holland and Doug Schiff, both Darien residents, charged up the stairwell of the world's most famous office building Wednesday, Feb. 8 a the Empire State Building Run-Up Powered by the Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation. Staged by the New York Road Runners, the event is one of the most challenging and prestigious stair climbs in the world and the MMRF was honored to be the title and benefiting charity.

Now in its 35th year, the Empire State Building Run-Up has been highly exclusive, with less than 5,000 people participating since the race began. Th year, the event moved from morning to night and increased the field size. There were about 650 runners in total, including a team of 100 from the MMRF – all of whom had committed to raise a minimum of $2,500 to support the cancer research organization in its mission to develop next-generation treatments and extend patients' lives.

Multiple myeloma is a type of blood cancer that originates in plasma cells. It is the most common type of white blood cell cancer and the second mo common blood cancer. Four treatments that the MMRF has helped accelerate are now standard therapies for patients with multiple myeloma and are being used or explored as treatments for more than 30 other cancers. Yet the five year survival rate for myeloma remains one of the lowest of all cancers and with all patients eventually relapsing, myeloma remains an incurable cancer.

Darien residents were excited to put their stamina to the test while supporting the MMRF.

"This is my second year running the ESB Run-Up for the MMRF PowerTeam," Holland said. " I could not be more pleased with how the event has grown and become such a great way to raise money and awareness for the organization."

The 86-flight race culminates in a final lap around the 86th floor observatory, approximately 1/5 of a mile above Fifth Avenue.

MMRF PowerTeam members participate in athletic events in the United States and abroad including marathons, half marathons, triathlon and cycling events as part of the MMRF Endurance Events Program. Since its inception in 2008, the MMRF Endurance Program has raised more than $5 million for research.

"Athletes reach out to their friends, coworkers and family members, who contribute whatever amount they can. It all adds up, and the power of one

becomes the power of many," said program manager Alicia O'Neill, a New Canaan resident.

Guaranteed entries for the NYC Half Marathon on March 18, the NYC Triathlon on July 8, Ironman NY on Aug. 11 and the New York City Marathon on Nov. 4 are available through the MMRF. Visit www.mmrfRunBikeTri.org to learn more.

The Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation was established in 1998 as a nonprofit organization by twin sisters Karen Andrews and Kathy Giusti, soon after Giusti's diagnosis with multiple myeloma. The mission of the MMRF is to relentlessly pursue innovative means that accelerate the development of next-generation multiple myeloma treatments to extend the lives of patients and lead to a cure. As the world's No. 1 private funder o multiple myeloma research, the MMRF has raised more than $190 million since its inception and directs 90 percent of total budget to research and related programming. As a result, the MMRF has been awarded Charity Navigator's 4-star rating for nine consecutive years, the highest designation for outstanding fiscal responsibility and exceptional efficiency. For more information about the MMRF, visit www.themmrf.org.

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History of the world's tallest buildings

By AUBREY COHEN, SEATTLEPI.COM STAFF Published 8:49 pm, Wednesday, June 20, 2012

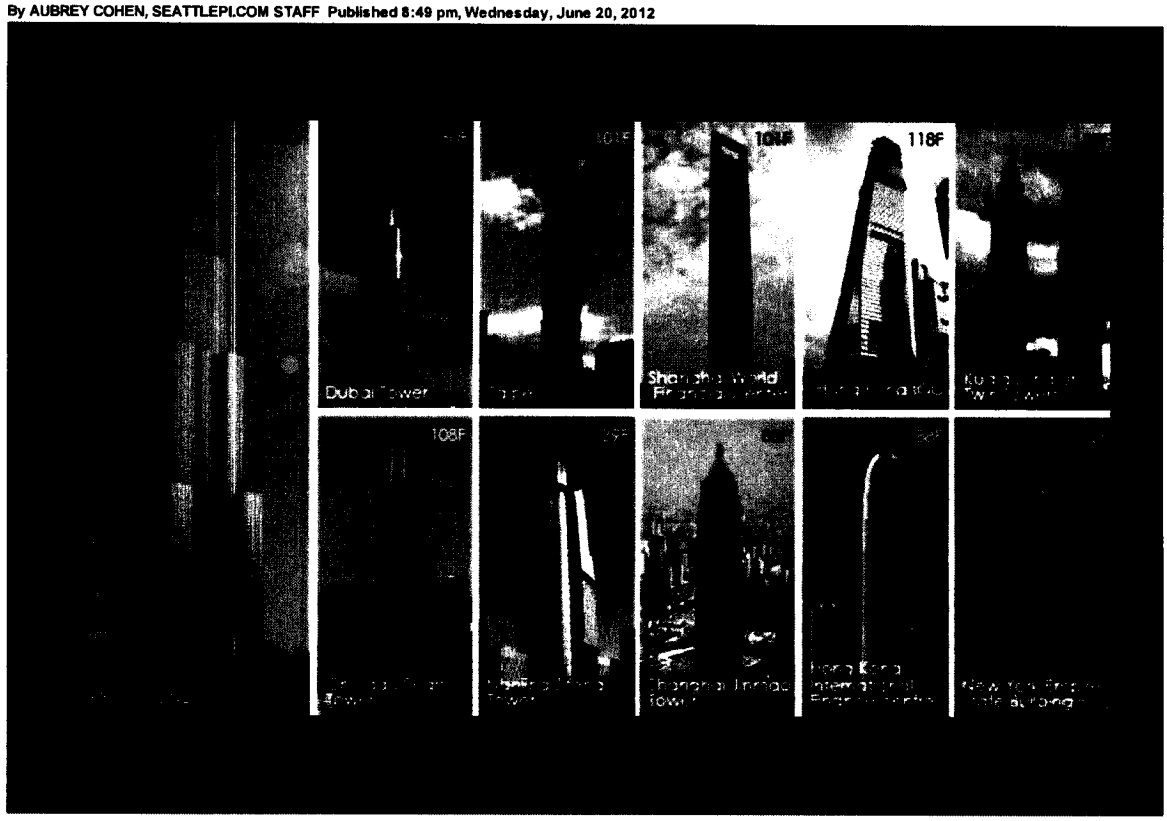

IMAGE 2 OF 26

Broad Group's proposed 2,749-foot Sky City One tower is depicted, along with other tall towers, in this image from a 2010 planning file.

In the first 31 years of the 20th century, seven buildings became the world's tallest. We entered a new era of such one-upsmanship in 1998, wit completion of the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur.

The latest news comes from China's Broad Group, which has made a name erecting buildings quickly and efficiently using modular construction. It plans to claim the title with the 2,749-foot Sky City One tower in its hometown of Changsha, the capital of Hunan provice.

In a written summary, Broad said it started the project in April, plans to start installing pre-fabricated buidling sections in November and expects to finish in January 2013. That's just three months on site.

The news got us wondering which buildings have held the title of world's tallest. See the gallery above for the answer, going back to 1901, along with some tidbits from Seattle. Thanks to Emporis for the data.

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History of the world's tallest buildings

By AUBREY COHEN, SEATTLEPI.COM STAFF
Published 11:49 pm, Wednesday, June 20, 2012

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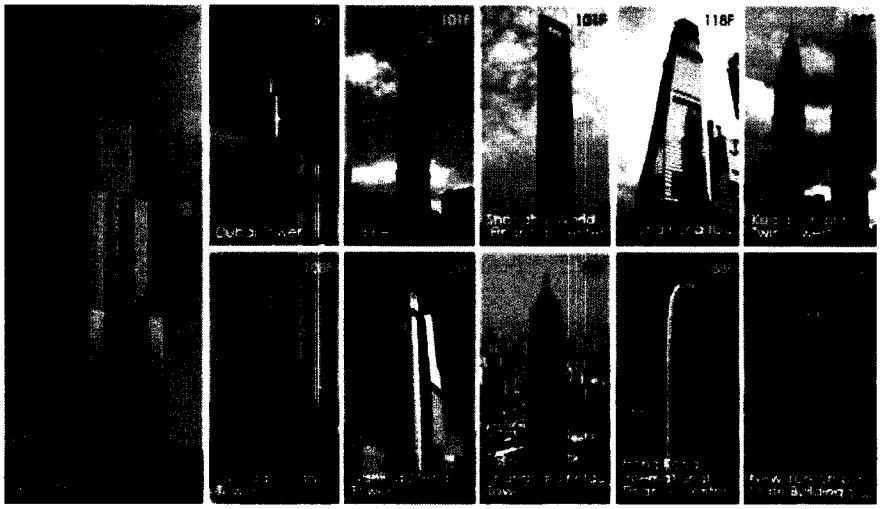
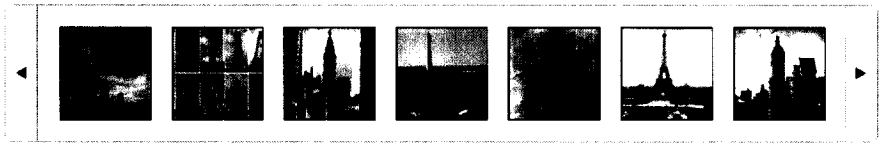


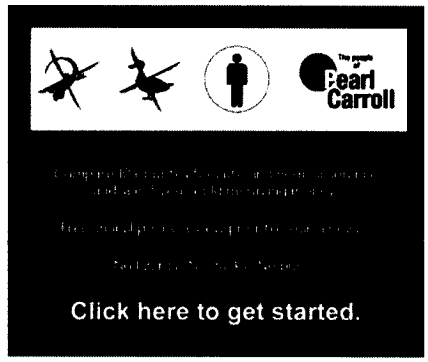
Broad Group's proposed 2,749-foot Sky City One tower is depicted, along with other tall towers, in this image from a 2010 planning file. (Broad Group)



In the first 31 years of the 20th century, seven buildings became the world's tallest. We entered a new era of such one-upsmanship in 1998, with completion of the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur.

The latest news comes from China's Broad Group, which has made a name erecting buildings quickly and efficiently using modular construction. It plans to claim the title with the 2,749-foot Sky City One tower in its hometown of Changsha, the capital of Hunan provice.

In a written summary, Broad said it started the project in April, plans to start installing pre-fabricated buidling sections in November and expects to finish in January 2013. That's just



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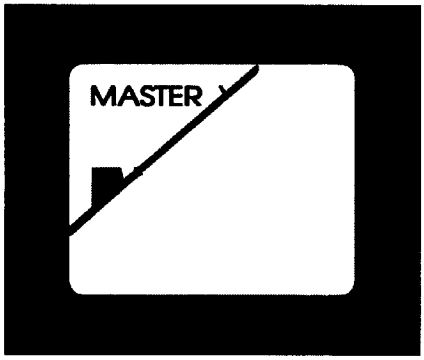

three months on site.

The news got us wondering which buildings have held the title of world's tallest. See the gallery above for the answer, going back to 1901, along with some tidbits from Seattle. Thanks to Emporis for the data.

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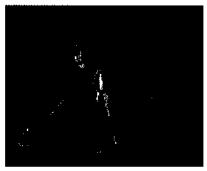

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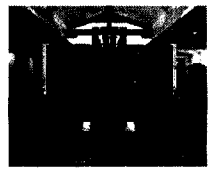

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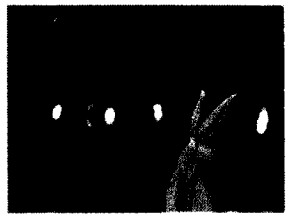

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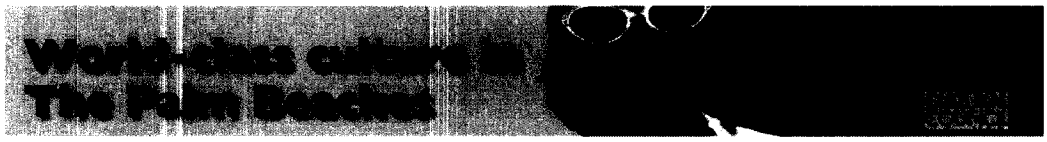

CITY ROOM; Bathed in 1,200 New Lights, Empire State Building Will Star in More Vivid Shows

By ERIC A. TAUB
Published: May 8, 2012

When redesigning the exterior lighting for one of the world's best-known buildings, how should you proceed?

With much greater energy efficiency, a significantly wider palette of more intense colors and a lot of panache.

That is the tack that the owners of the Empire State Building are taking with their decision to replace its 400 existing standard lamps - technology that was introduced to coincide with the 1976 bicentennial - with 1,200 newly designed fixtures using the latest LED technology.

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Because the colors of each LED fixture can be manipulated independently and instantaneously via computer, lighting effects - including rainbows, ripples, cross-fades and burst effects - can be created that appear to be animated, continuously moving and changing.

"We'll have some real fun with our ability to manipulate the new lights," said Anthony E. Malkin, president of Malkin Holdings, an affiliate of the entity that owns the building. The announcement on the new lighting is scheduled to be made on Wednesday.

Of course, changing the lighting on such a prominent building is fraught with not only financial considerations, but also ethical responsibilities. Just because technology creates the ability to stage rock-concert-like light shows on the walls of one of the world's most recognizable buildings does not mean that is what should be done.

Fear not, Mr. Malkin said.

"We want the Hong Kong experience," he said, referring to the often-dramatic lighting seen on buildings there, but "we won't be showing TV shows on the side of the building."

The installation of the LED fixtures will begin in a few weeks and will be completed sometime in the fall; it will save 75 percent in annual energy costs and will last three to six times longer than the existing fixtures.

The timing of the new lighting is serendipitous. The significant improvement in the look of the building at night could draw additional attention to the building just as 1 World Trade Center is claiming its status as the tallest building in New York.

With the new LED fixtures, bought from Philips Color Kinetics, based in Massachusetts, the Empire State Building will be illuminated with millions of deep, rich colors and subtle pastels, compared with a limited palette of 10 colors from the existing lamps, which also tend to flicker and produce different brightnesses depending on the color.

The existing lamps project static colors only after gels are placed on top of each one, a process that takes a crew of seven workers up to seven hours. With LED lamps, color

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changes can be made immediately.

"When the Yankees win the pennant, we can put pinstripes on one side of the building and solid blue on the other," said Jeff Campbell, director of architectural products for Philips Color Kinetics.

The retrofit was originally conceived four years ago. "At that time, the costs were very high and the illumination was not impressive enough," Mr. Malkin said.

He decided to go ahead with the project now because the newest LED fixtures produce seven times as much light as the earlier units. The lighting will be on the 72nd and 81st floors. The building's mast, which is now lighted with fluorescent tubes, will also receive an LED upgrade.

One thing the public will not see is corporate logos flashing along the walls. "We'll maintain the traditional iconic international recognition that the Empire State Building has," Mr. Malkin said.

The lighting retrofit is part of an energy efficiency package to which Malkin Holdings committed itself when it gained control of the building in 2006.

Working with the nonprofit Rocky Mountain Institute, the company embarked on a major energy efficiency retrofit with the switch to light-emitting diodes being a small part. In addition, the company has revamped its ventilation system and the building's insulation, and upgraded its existing windows.

"The building was state of the art when it was built, and when we're done with our retrofit, there will be no more technically advanced building," Mr. Malkin said.

The switch to LED fixtures, which will cost "a few million dollars," he said, will pay for itself in six years.

With the new lighting retrofit, "the owners of the Empire State Building have a unique responsibility" not to mess up, said Paul Gregory, a principal in Focus Lighting, an architectural lighting design firm based in New York. Focus Lighting has used LEDs to redesign the lighting in F. A. O. Schwarz's flagship store on Fifth Avenue, in the Aureole restaurant in Manhattan and on the exterior of the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts in Milwaukee, among others.

With LEDs, Mr. Gregory said, "you can create a light painting that's not bludgeoned with color."

"Lighting can help you see the beauty in nature," he continued, "and help you understand how small you are in comparison."

With well-constructed lighting, Mr. Gregory added, "you realize you're not as important as you think you are; that's an accomplishment."

"And," he continued, "the Empire State Building can do that."

This is a more complete version of the story than the one that appeared in print.

PHOTO: The owners of the Empire State Building are replacing its standard lamps with fixtures using the latest LED technology. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PHILIPS COLOR KINETICS)

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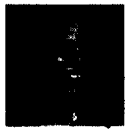

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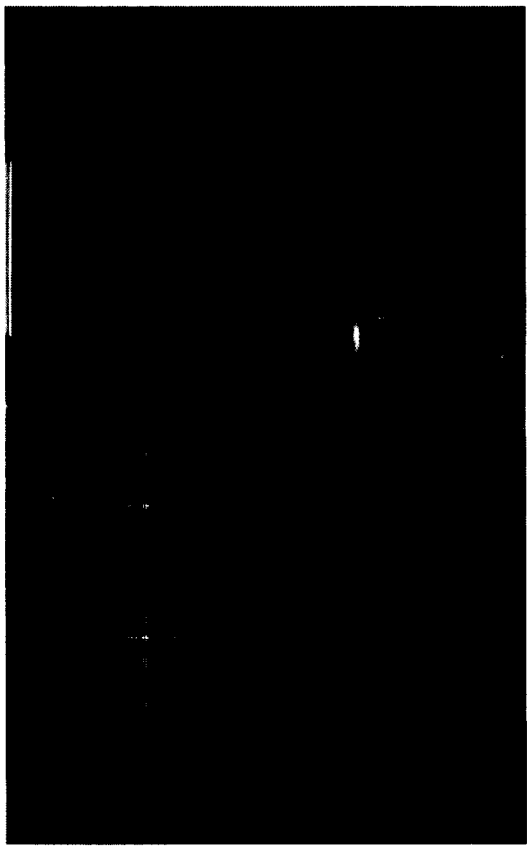
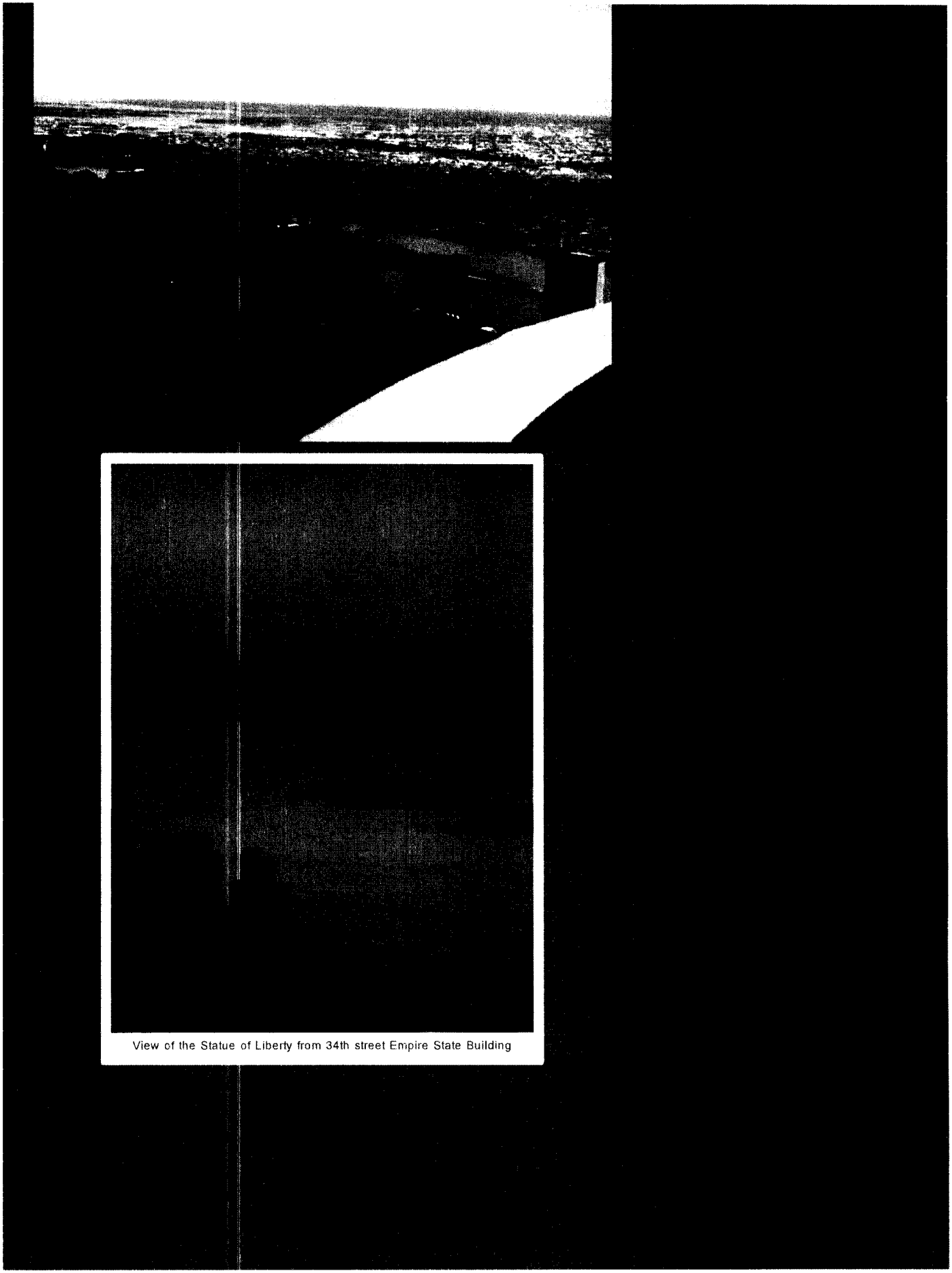


Climbing the stairs to the 103rd floor

High above on the 103rd floor



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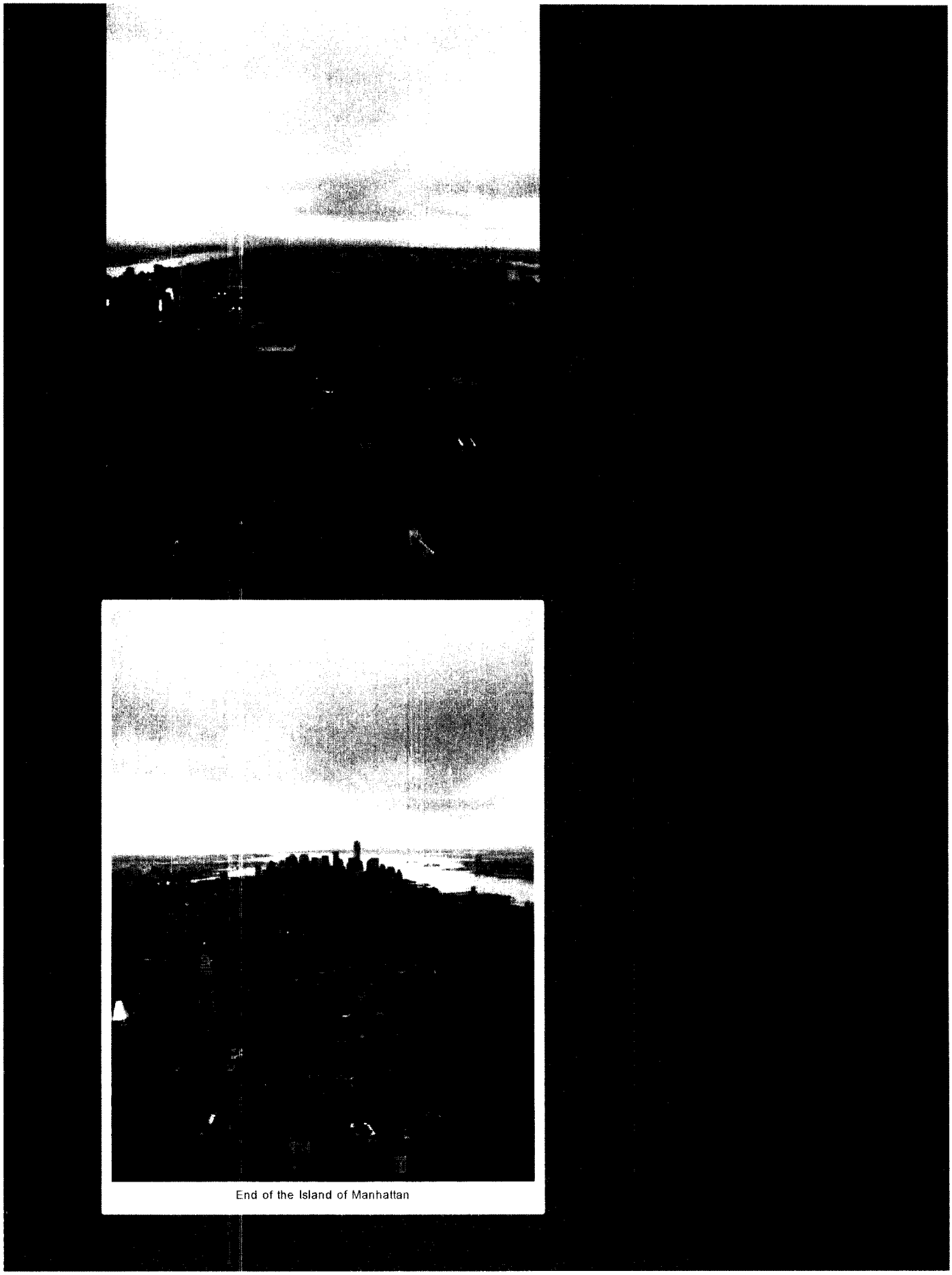

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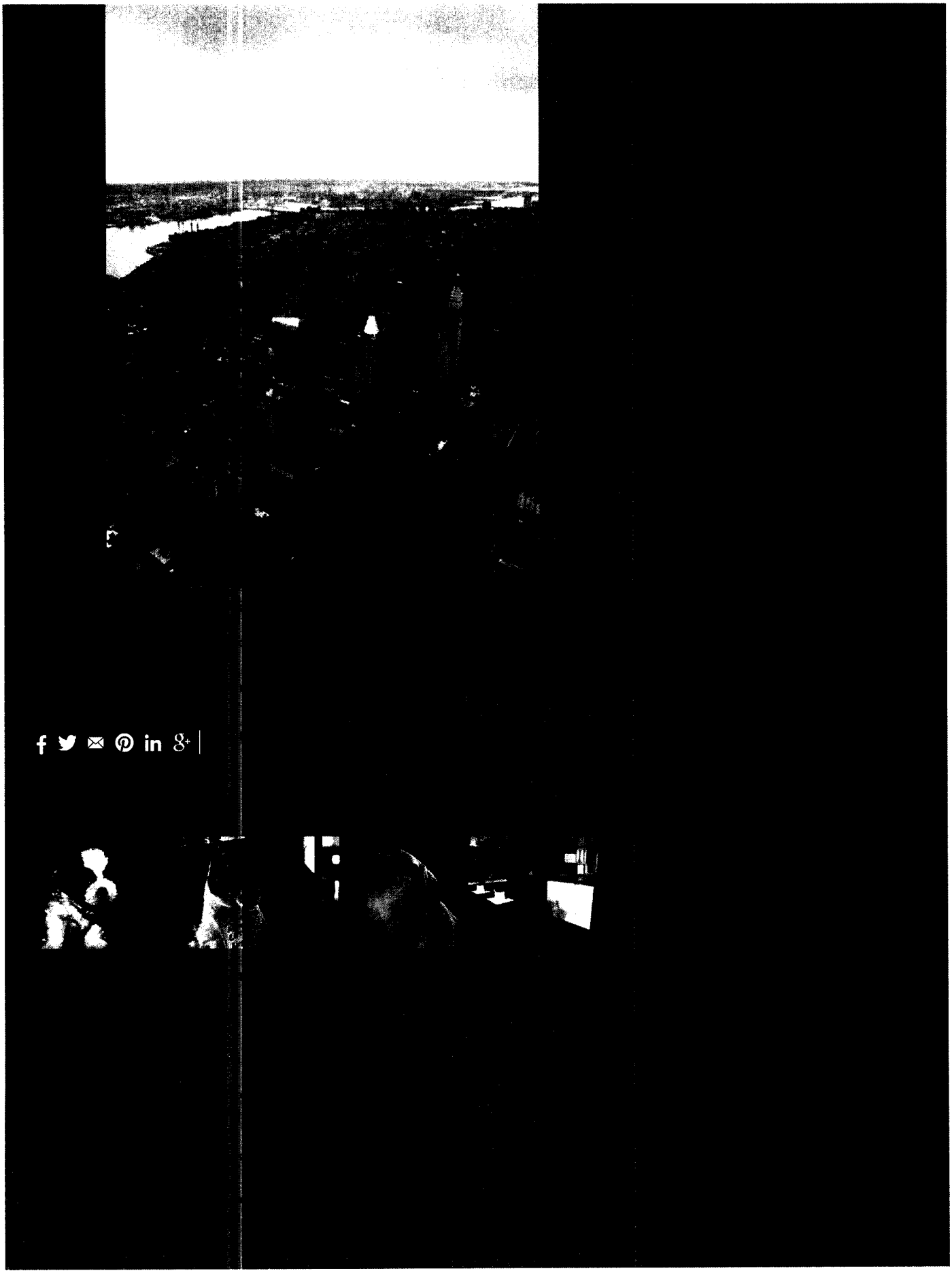

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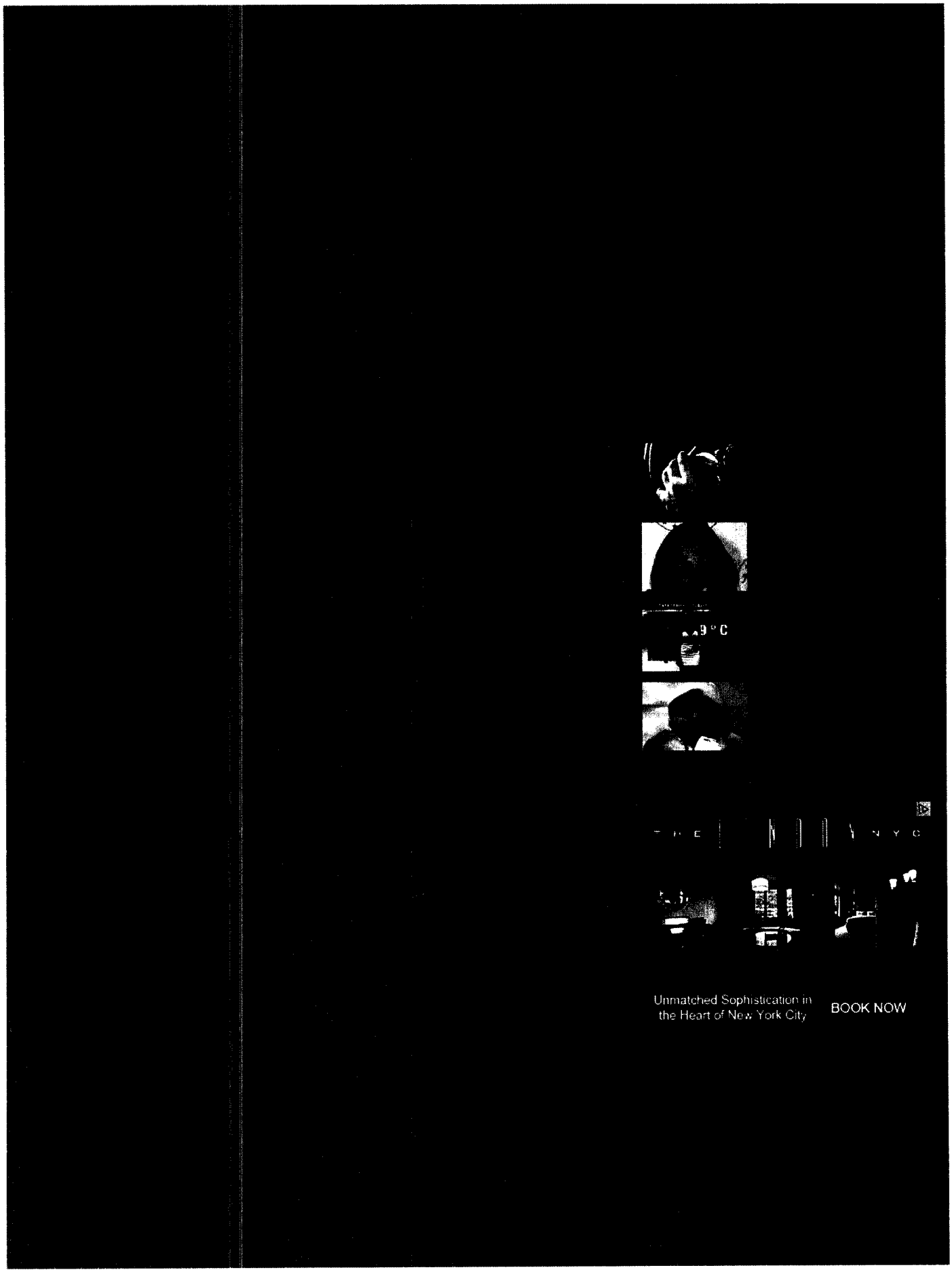
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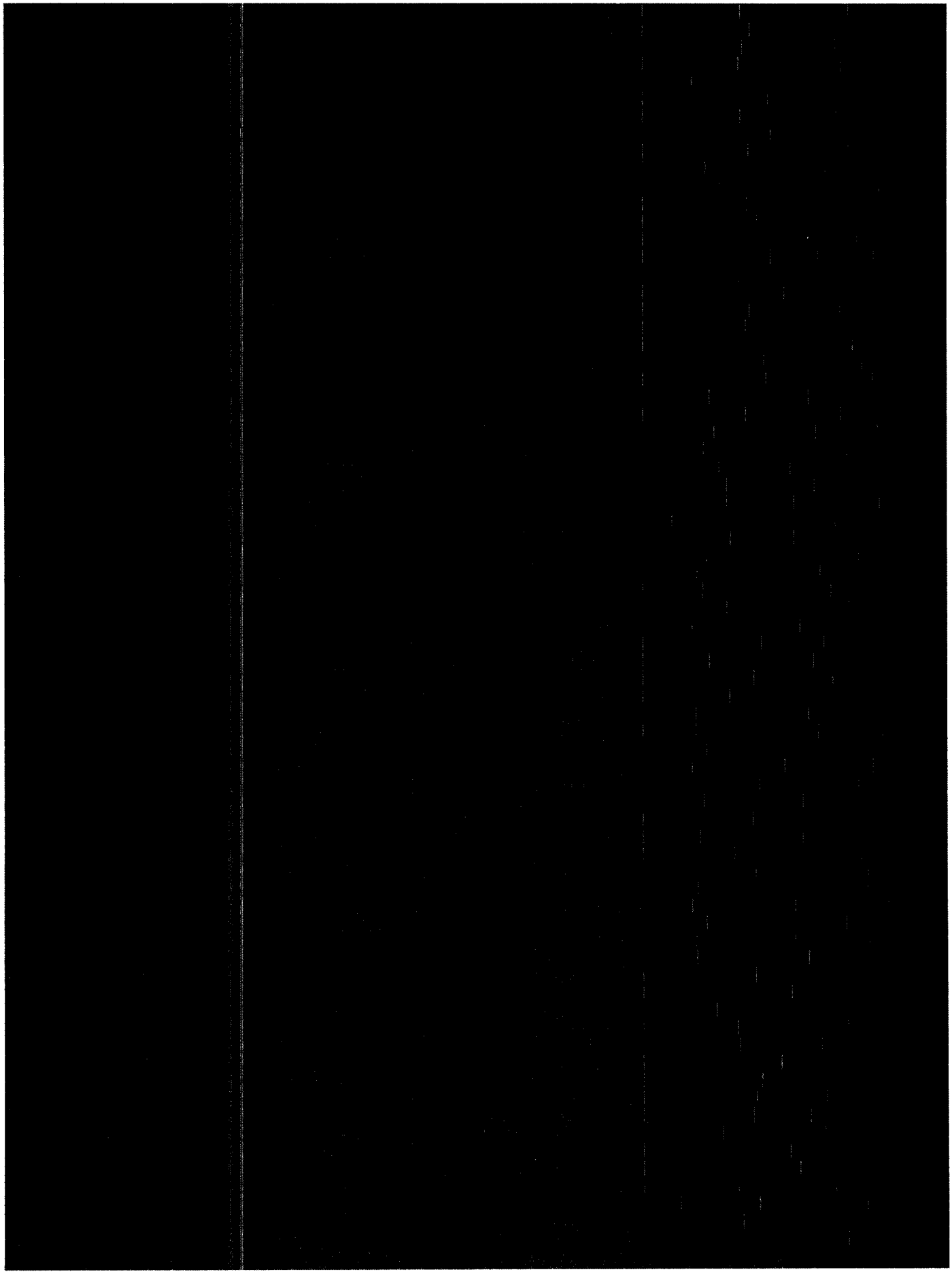

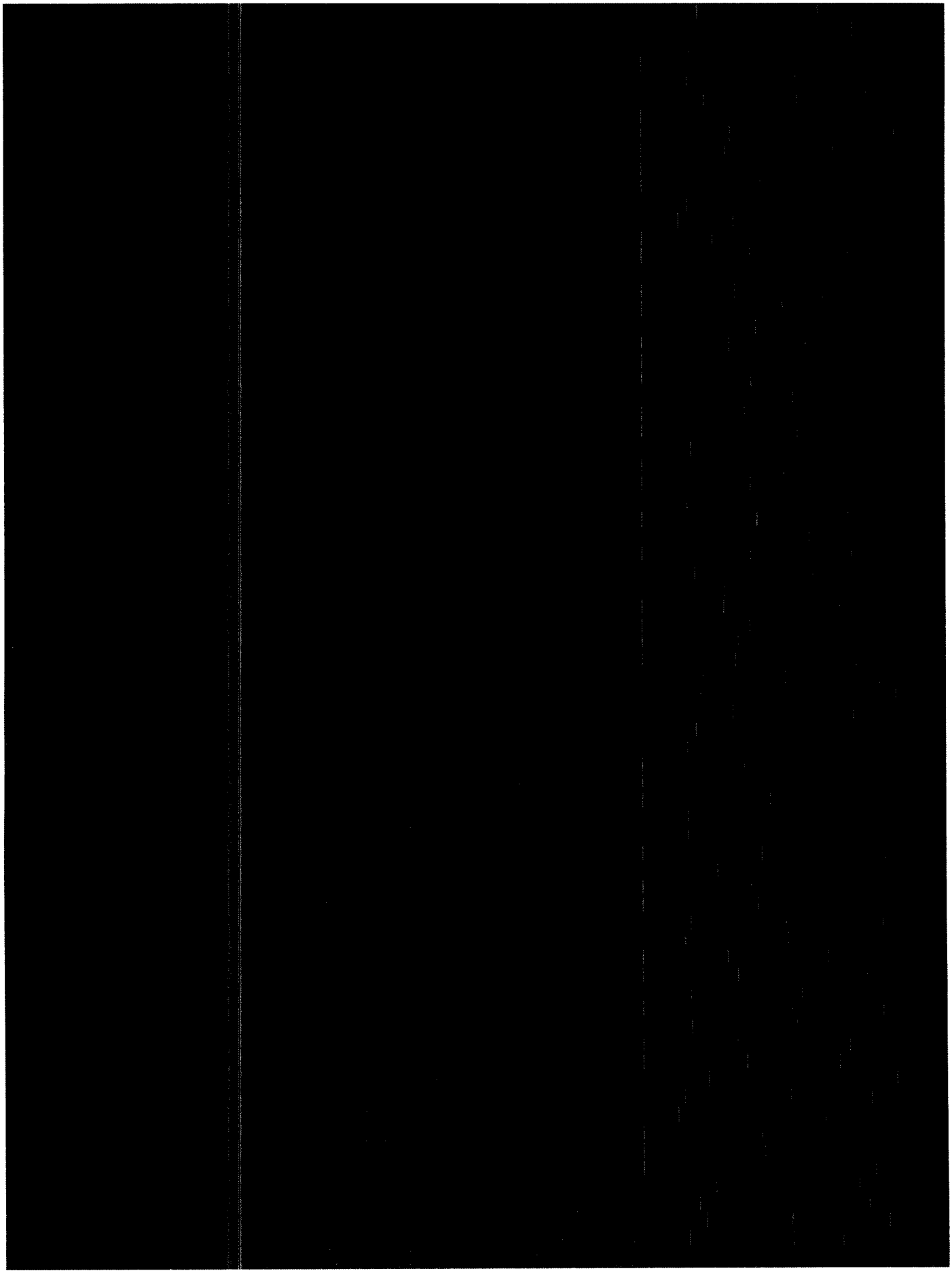

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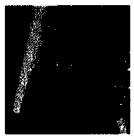

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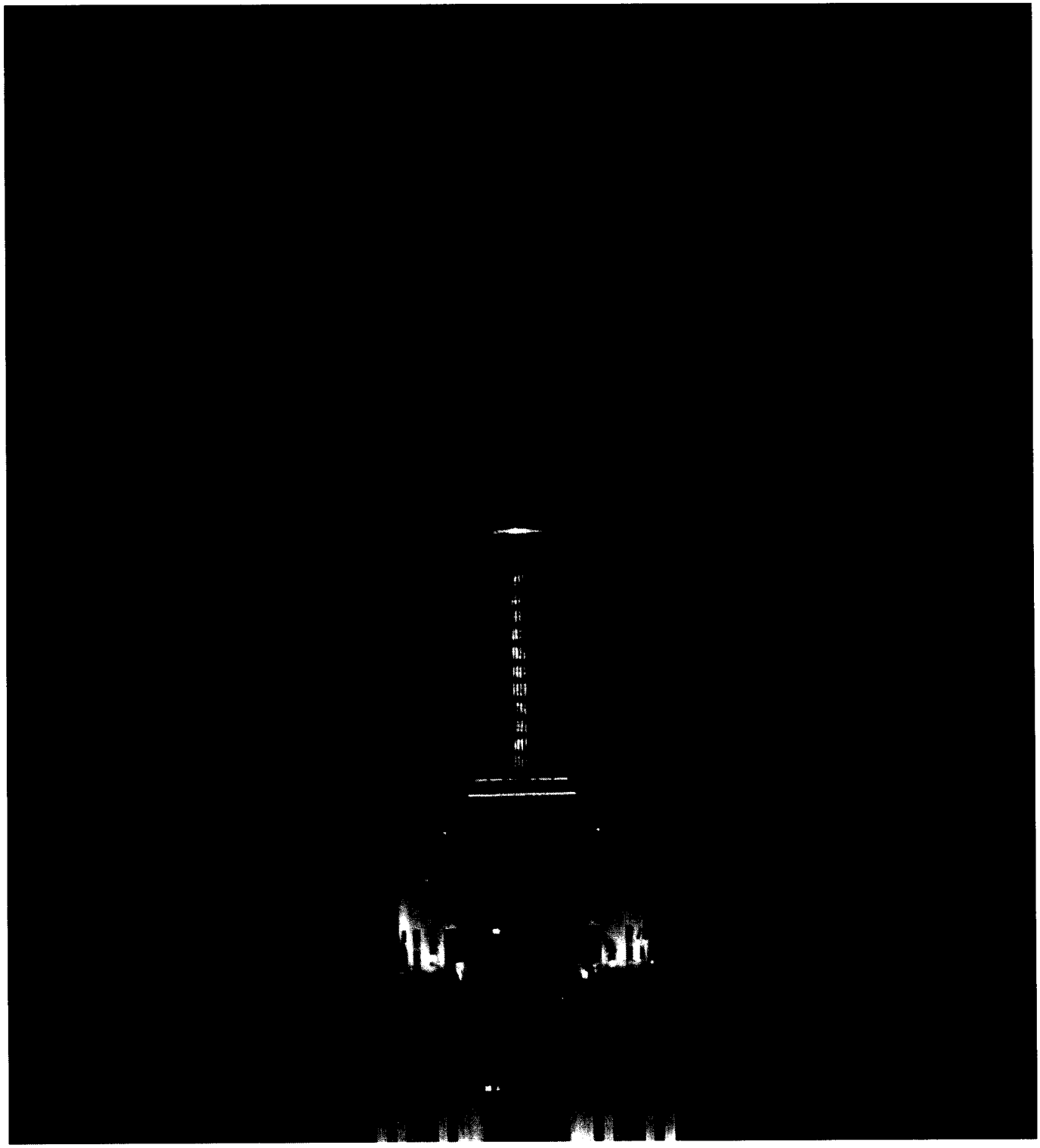

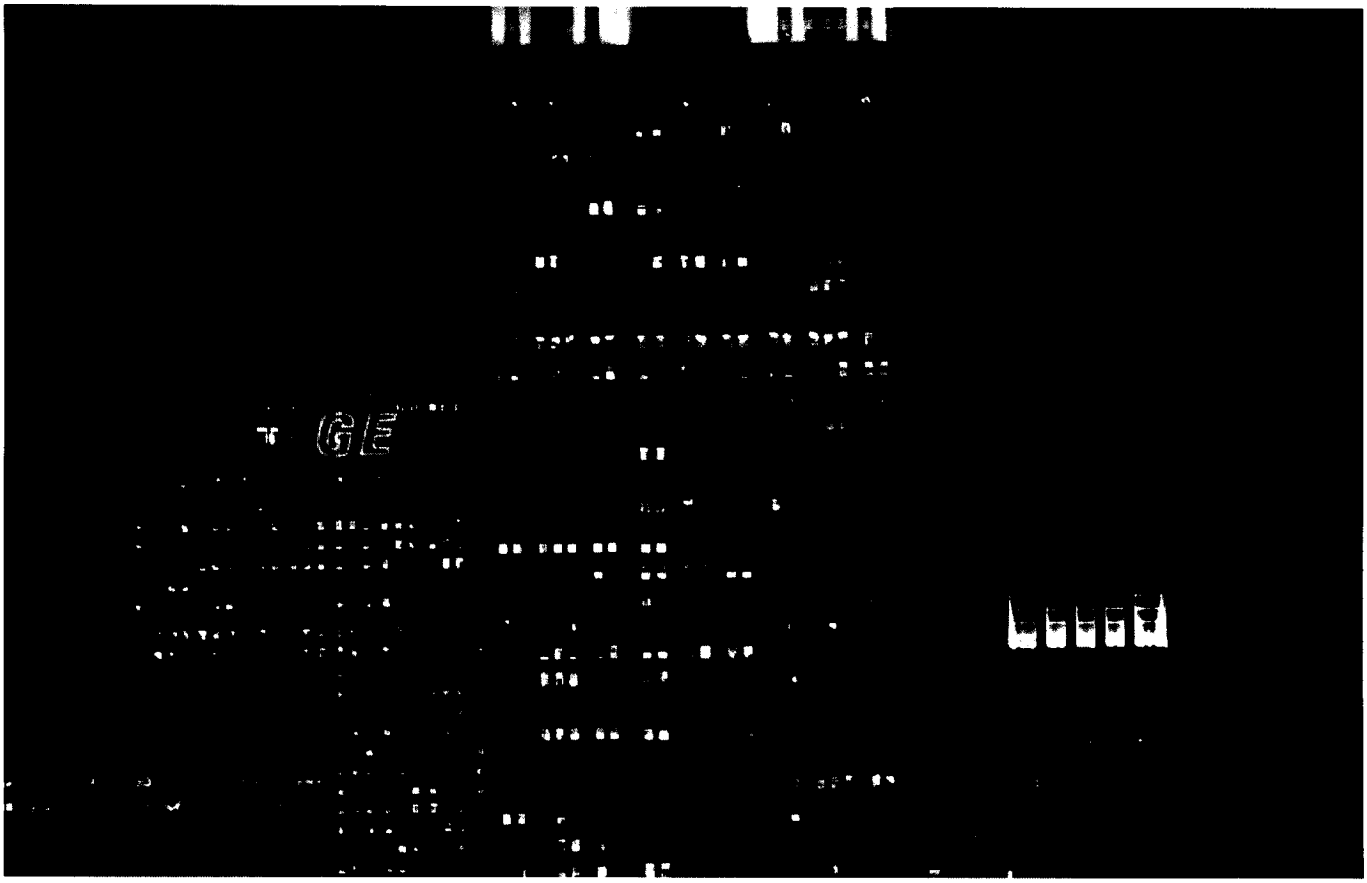

Photo by: Bryan Smith
The top floors of New York's Empire State Building (/topics/new-yorks-empire-state-building/) are lit in gold, red, blue and white light on Monday, Nov. 26, 2012, after a new LED illumination system was switched on by R&B star Alicia Keys (/topics/alicia-keys/). (AP Photo/Empire State Building, Bryan Smith)

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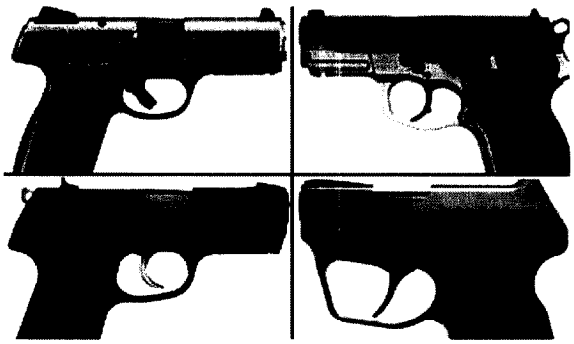

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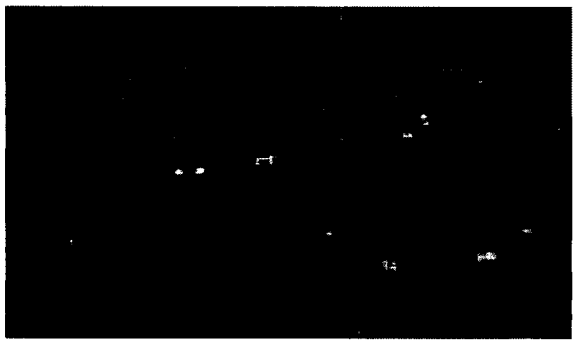

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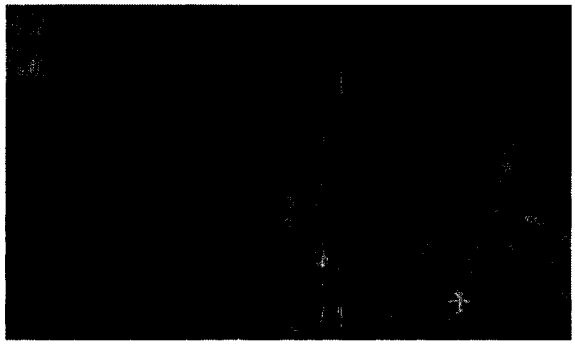

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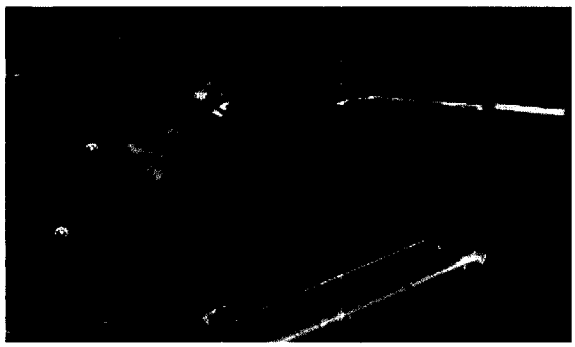

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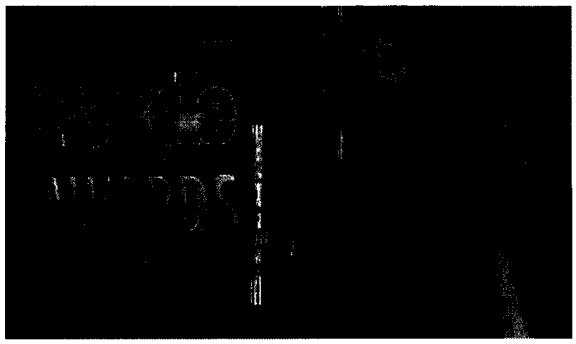

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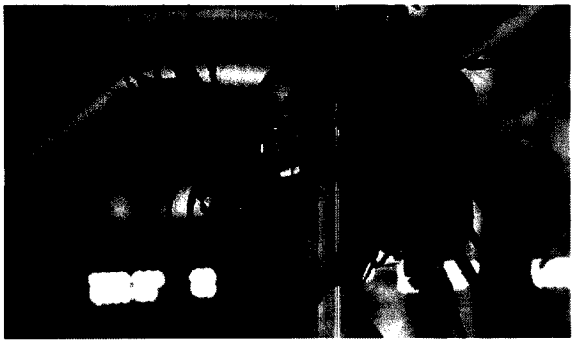

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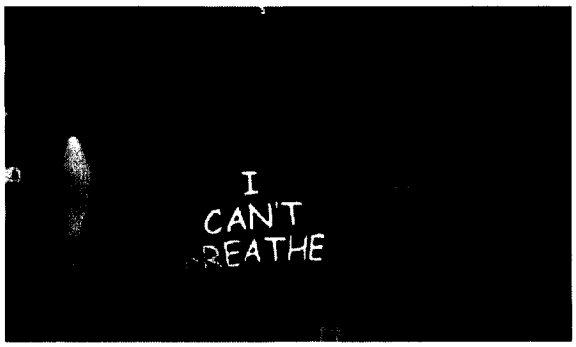

LeBron James' 'I can't breathe' T-shirt the latest display of politics on the playing field (/multimedia/collection/politics-playing-field/)

Cleveland Cavaliers superstar LeBron James on Monday night during pregame warmups wore an "I can't breathe" T-shirt, referring to Eric Garner, who died after a New York police officer placed him in a chokehold during an arrest for selling loose cigarettes. The shirt, one of several featuring the slogan that have been seen around the league in recent days after a grand jury declined to indict the officer last week, is just one in a long history of political statements made by athletes on the playing field. Here are some others.

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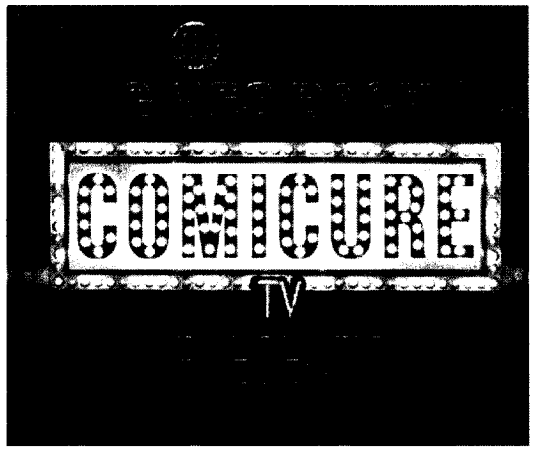

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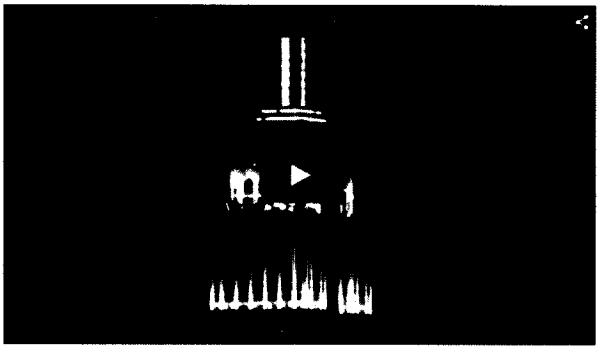
Alicia Keys lights up Empire State Building with special LED show

By Daily Dish on [redacted] 1:18 PM



R&B star Alicia Keys was bursting with pride on Monday night when the lights of New York's Empire State Building were synchronized to her music.

The singer was invited to flick the switch to light up the skies of her hometown to celebrate this week's release of her new album, "Girl on Fire," and the colorful LED display was timed to the tunes of the title track and Jay-Z and Keys' unofficial Big Apple anthem "Empire State of Mind."

Speaking before the big event, she said, "Everything surrounds the Empire State Building, plus the lights on the Empire State Building reflect the different times of the year and the different things that are happening... It's such a community feeling there, so tonight I get to be a part of a special moment."

Keys watched the special show from a nearby building and expressed her delight at the honour in a post on Twitter moments after it ended.

She wrote, "Watching the Empire State Building light up with GOF and Empire State of mind was BEYOND my wildest dreams!!"

Check out the not-so-great video above.

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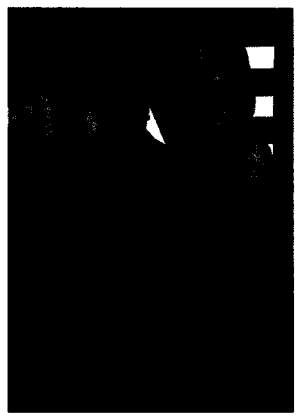

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Associated Press
Published 7:14 pm, Thursday, November 29, 2012

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Malkin and his technical team wanted to test the new lighting system with as few people noticing as possible and chose early Thanksgiving morning.

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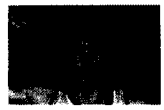
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That seemed the best moment, after most bars close and before dawn.

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They may still have nostalgic value to some who watched them light up New York City for every special occasion from Christmas to the Fourth of July.

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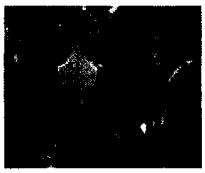

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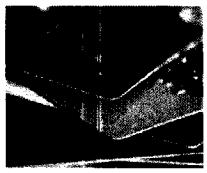

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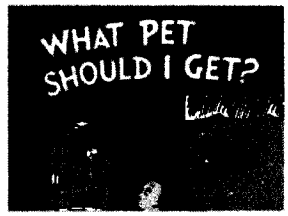

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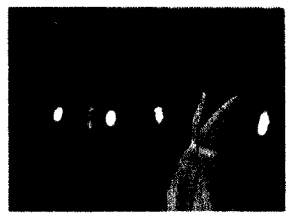

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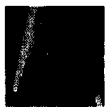

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By Verena Dobnik - *Associated Press - Thursday, November 29, 2012*

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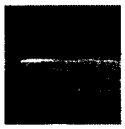

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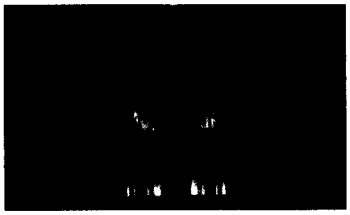

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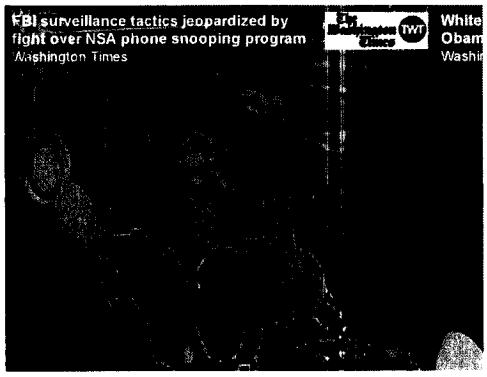

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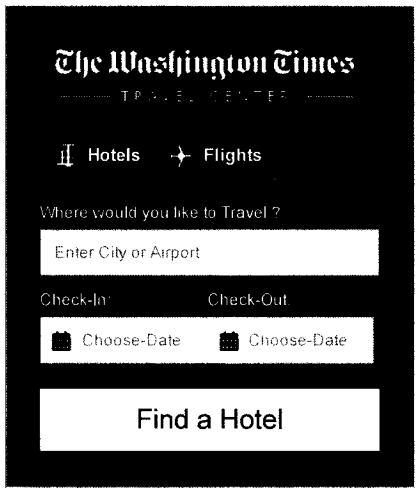

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DAILY DISH

Elizabeth Hurley turns Empire State Building pink for cancer awareness

By Daily Dish on October 2, 2012 2:09 PM

ELIZABETH HURLEY LIGHTS EMPIRE STATE BUILDING.JPEG-08964
Evan Agostini/Invision/AP

British actress/model Elizabeth Hurley turned the Empire State Building pink on Monday in celebration of cosmetic giant Estee Lauder's breast cancer awareness drive.

The star has been the company's celebrity champion for over a decade, and she headed to the top of the iconic skyscraper in New York to mark the campaign's 20th year.

She then flicked the switch to illuminate the building with pink light – the color of the international breast cancer fundraising campaign.

Taking to Twitter.com to thank Empire State bosses for their hospitality, she wrote, "Thanks to the wonderful organizers at the Empire State Building for letting us go up to the 103rd floor. Gulp."

The campaign is especially poignant this year as Estee Lauder boss Evelyn Lauder lost her battle with cancer at the age of 75 last November.

Categories: Elizabeth Hurley

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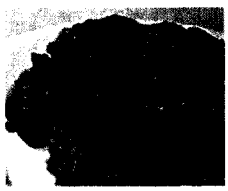

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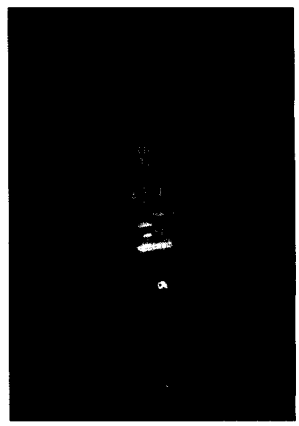

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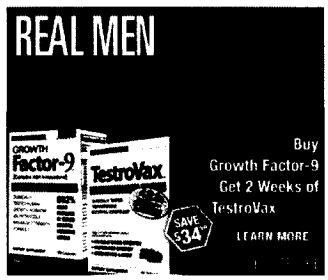

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nall investors hold key to Empire State ıilding's future

By Fort Lauderdale Sun Sentinel
Saturday, Sept. 15, 2012, 12:01 a.m.

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — The future ownership of New York's iconic Empire State Building rests in the hands of a little-known group: small investors such as Aaron and Sima Aihini of Boynton Beach, Fla.

The couple, in their 80s, bought a $10,000 stake decades ago in what was then the world's tallest building. They reveled in taking their grandchildren to the 102-story skyscraper and telling them with pride, "We own it," said Aaron, 80.

"It was really just a small, little door knob (that we own), but it was a great feeling," joked Sima.

About 3,000 investors such as the Aihinis will soon be asked to vote on whether to approve a plan by the building's well-heeled operators to sell stock on Wall Street in the Empire State and 18 other buildings.

The small investors would be giving up certificates they bought in the early 1960s that have provided steady returns, end-of-the-year bonuses. Each certificate is estimated to be worth at least $300,000.

They've even become family heirlooms, passed down from generation to generation.

Michael Caplan of Boca Raton, Fla., doesn't want to give up that safe investment — at least not under the terms of the deal being offered by the powerful Malkin and Helmsley families that run the building.

He doesn't feel the operators deserve half-ownership in the building that was appraised at $2.5 billion last year.

"All I want is a fair shake," said Caplan, whose family restaurant bought the certificate. "And they're diluting the intrinsic value of the Empire State Building by throwing in these other buildings' into the deal.

Caplan has been contacting fellow investors to encourage them to oppose the stock deal. The 68-year-old found many of those investors, mainly Jewish New Yorkers, have retired to South Florida.

Jack Sabith, 84, of Delray Beach, Fla., is not sure which way he'll vote. He and his sister inherited their half of a $10,000 certificate from their mother, who bought it decades ago with her sister.

"It's been wonderful," Sabith said of the certificate's steady returns. "And it was nice to say to my grandchildren, 'I'm part of the Empire State Building.' When they were younger, they were impressed."

Sabith has heard the pitch from building operators that a shift to stock in a so-called real estate investment trust or REIT will be worth more to him. "I had a REIT once that was getting 7 percent, went public and turned out bad," he said.

The Securities and Exchange Commission must approve proposals for the stock sale, a move likely to happen within months. Then, the small investors in the Empire State Building would vote. If 20 percent nix the plan, they can stop the sale. Caplan and others are confident they'll prevail.

That would mess up plans for the Helmsley Trust, which owns about two-thirds of the building's operating company. The trust is supposed to sell off its holdings this year, Caplan said.

But instead of caving to the powerful groups, small investors could buy the Helmsley stake and own more of the renowned building. They could take out a loan against equity in the skyscraper, said Richard Edelman, 57, of Solana Beach, Calif., a small investor who opposes the REIT.

The mortgage remaining on the tower runs about $209 million, less than 10 percent of its appraised value. So the small

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investors could easily afford to borrow and still reap steady returns on their larger stake long-term, said Edelman.

"We're actually on the verge of something wonderful happening for us," said Edelman, of the chance to own more of a building so special that it has its own ZIP code. "The little guy — we figured it out this time."

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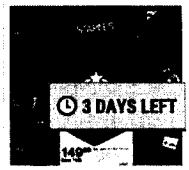

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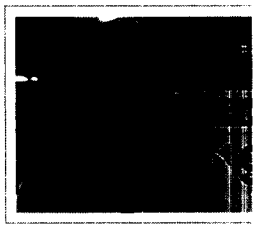
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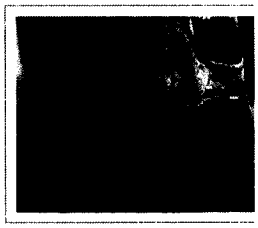
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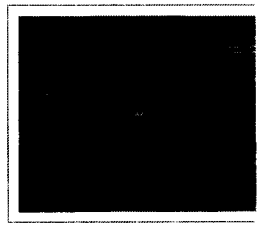
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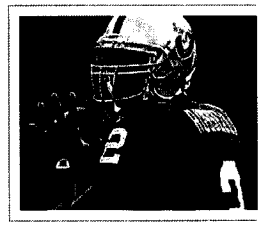
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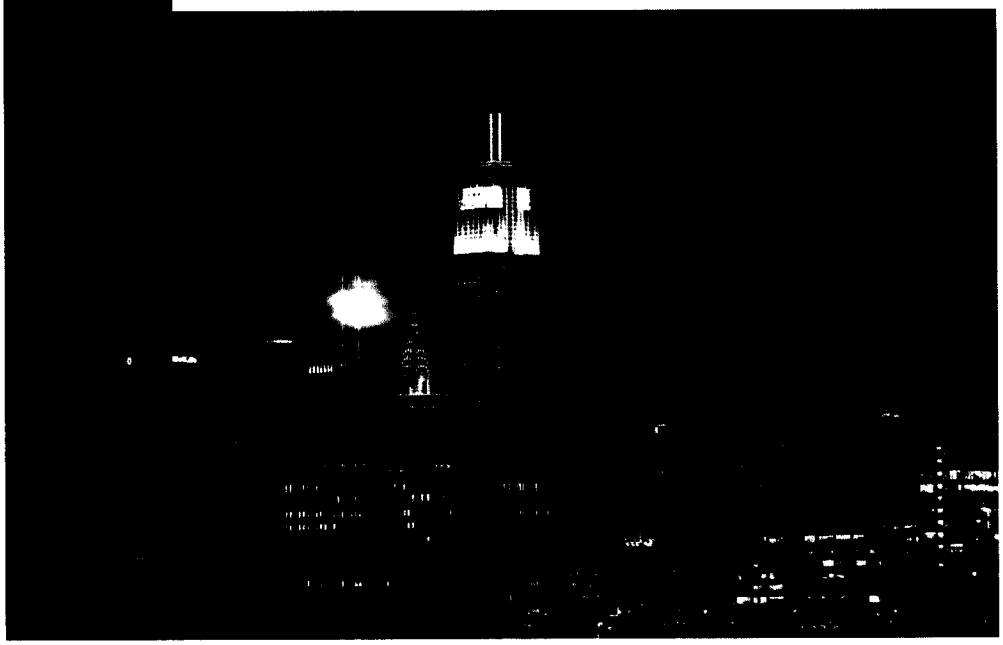

Gary Hershorn/Reuters

"REAL" ESTATE 10.02.13

Empire State Building Sells Shares to the Public

Instead of spending money in the gift store on a replica, fans of the iconic building can now own a portion.

This gives a whole new meaning to owning a piece of history.

The Empire State Building, the most photographed location in the world, has gone public.

Empire State Realty Trust, Inc., which owns the Empire State Building as well over a dozen other buildings, raised $929.5 million by selling 71.5 million shares at $13 on the New York Stock Exchange, making it one of the largest IPOs for a real estate investment trust (REIT). These shares represent roughly 35 percent of the company. So for less than it costs to ride the elevator up to one of the Empire State Building's famed observation decks, you can own a share of the building.

The 102-story skyscraper has long a global icon. King Kong roared from its spire, lovers planned rendezvous at its top, and a B-25 bomber slammed into the building in 1945 after getting lost in the fog.

Unsurprisingly, with a building this big and with so much history, the road to the IPO was not exactly a cake walk.

While the company is controlled by CEO Anthony Malkin and his

family, the building itself has around 3,000 stakeholders, of which 80 percent had to approve recent costly renovations, let alone going public. There were lawsuits galore (some ongoing) and fights dragged into the press. *The New York Times* even compared the wrangling to a "public blood fued."

The building is also the center of a deal involving a titan of New York real estate history, Harry Helmsley. While probably best remembered as the spouse of the "queen of mean," Leona Helmsley, he, along with Malkin's father-in-law, Lawrence Wien, bought the building in 1961 from rags-to-riches industrialist Henry Crown. A huge portion of the money raised by the IPO will actually be going to buy out the remaining interest held by Helmsley's trust.

And while sentimentality may get a lot of investors through the front door, there actually is a solid revenue stream—beyond the rents paid by hundreds of tenants. Admission to the observation decks, which costs $27 (or $67 to bypass the lines), brings in a huge chunk of money. So even though it's the smallest of New York's publicly traded REITs, it has a separate source of cash unaffected by the office, retail or residential market. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, the two observation decks pulled in $92 million last year.

Those revenues, which have always propped up the building financially, will be key. The 80-year-old building has a far lower occupancy rate than competitors in Midtown (78 percent versus 90 percent). Long considered less than desirable for office space (it was once called the "Empty State Building"), it has managed in recent years to attract new tenants like the red-hot tech company LinkedIn, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., and foreign companies like Coty and Turkish Airlines. And, while Midtown is still the preferred spot for large banks, companies have begun to look to other neighborhoods like Chelsea and SoHo to attract different types of employees.

For decades, the Empire State Building was known for the views it could provide visitors. Now it is offering the public a look inside at its own financials. And so far, the public likes what it sees. In midday trading shares were up about 2 percent from the offering price.

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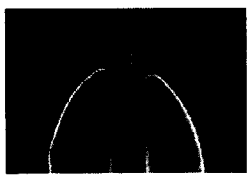

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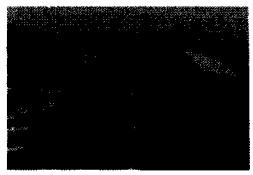

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'Male Enhancement' Pills Made My Son Disappear

Timothy Hamlett was a promising, Ivy League track star. Then he started taking supplements—and things went terribly wrong.

To celebrate her son's 21st birthday on Feb. 1, Katherine Hamlett went to a high school track meet in the Armory building on Manhattan's Upper West Side. She didn't really care who placed or won. What mattered was she was in the same spot on the same day where her son Timothy, a University of Pennsylvania track star, won his race a year ago in record time.

Today, Timothy Hamlett is missing. Nobody knows if he's alive, hurt or worse.

Hamlett's parents believe the young man's mental state fell into a tailspin because of an addiction to energy supplements, many of which include male enhancement pills.

"Our son did not experience any issues until he started taking these supplements," Katherine Hamlett said. "And people look at us cross-eyed and I know there's a lot of skepticism. But if you look at the history he goes all the way through school—no issues whatsoever and then he starts taking these supplements and everything in his life, literally everything in his life changes."

Before he vanished, Hamlett was a promising junior majoring in philosophy at University of Pennsylvania and thriving as a lightning-footed sprinter "with his whole life in front of him."

With few leads, Timothy Hamlett's parents are praying for a miracle. "No

matter how this journey ends—it may be that our son is no longer with us or through God's grace, his life has been preserved. That's what we're hoping for," his mother told The Daily Beast.

Dressed in an Adidas track jacket, True Religion jeans, and sneakers, Hamlett left his house at around 6:30 p.m. on a leafy block in Teaneck, New Jersey, a day after Christmas. He told his parents that he was off to visit a friend nearby. Instead, he planned on visiting another friend across Hudson River in Manhattan. Hamlett headed over the George Washington Bridge on a jitney. He hasn't been seen since entering Manhattan.

"Something wasn't right," his mother said. "Now we're looking at a person who is isolated. This was a supplement-induced psychosis."

The Teaneck Police say the young man likely entered a park near West 174th Street. On Dec. 29, both Hamlett's wallet and his iPhone turned up when some local kids playing nearby the park at the time came clean.

As they wait for closure, Archibald and Katherine Hamlett began combing through their son's life. A key moment that quickly emerged: September 2013, when Timothy Hamlett began buying all kinds of supplements off Amazon and eBay. A laundry list of them, provided by Katherine Hamlett, include: Pygeum, Cordyceps, and Ginseng Panax. But he was also taking Vitalikor Male Enhancement, Big Jim, Twins Male Enhancement Huge Penis Enlargement (a kind of homeopathic Viagra), whose black bottle with yellow cartoonish husky man and pair of small, round friends comes with the tagline vowing to "really turn a boy into a man."

Supplements are already under scrutiny. This month New York state's Attorney General Eric Schneiderman unveiled a damning scientific study exposing supplements sold at big box stores like Target and Walmart are mislabeled and chock full of questionable ingredients. "The old adage 'buyer beware' maybe be especially true for consumers of herbal supplements."

These pill companies would be better off printing question marks on their label rather than hawk fiction, experts told The Daily Beast. "What you're taking is anybody's guess," Paul Offit, chief of the Division of Infectious Diseases and the director of the Vaccine Education Center at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, said. "You're assuming what's on the labels is in the bottles."

Offit said some of Hamlett's supplements were stimulants. When it comes to penis enlargement the placebo effect is at play. "I think it's fair to say if you're buying a product that says 'Penis Enlargement' that you're buying into a certain

myth," Offit added.

Could taking these pills make someone do something seemingly crazy—like, say, disappear? Edgar Miller, deputy director of Johns Hopkins Institute for Clinical and Translational Science, told The Daily Beast that it can't be counted out.

"Do a fistful of herbs and spices and supplements cause a psychosis? I don't know these particular supplements," he said. "It sounded like some of them might be hormonally active and then the question is can hormones cause problems like that? Possibly."

Miller stresses that the bigger concerns in taking these kinds of pills are liver and kidney failure.

Before Timothy Hamlett got hooked on the pills, he was known to have an intoxicating personality. "His social skills are top-notch," Katherine Hamlett, a 50-year-old attorney, said. "He had an edge about him and a wit and a style... There was no one that he could not engage and make them feel comfortable in their space. I don't care what demographic, ethnicity or race."

Then, after popping supplements for a year, the wisecracking Hamlett disconnected. "Something wasn't right," his mother said. "Now we're looking at a person who is isolated. This was a supplement-induced psychosis."

Initially, Timothy Hamlett was supplement-free. But that changed, his father said, when he ran a particularly competitive indoor championship track meet. During this 2013 race Timothy Hamlett took a spill and was spiked by a rogue Harvard College runner, his parents said.

"Someone from Harvard spiked him," his mother added. "I can remember him distinctly calling me saying 'I got injured. They're taking care of me. But I got spiked.'"

The injury left a six-inch gash on his left leg between Hamlett's knee and thigh. Archibald Hamlett is convinced his son was "stepped on twice" at full speed.

The injury was a significant moment for Timothy Hamlett. Soon after Hamlett was on supplements like cordyceps, which is a fungus extracted from caterpillars in elevated parts of China. His father asked his son why he was taking it and the son replied, "It's not banned."

Hamlett recovered from the spike incident and ran the outdoor season that year but the rigors of the racing took a toll. "After taking the cordyceps my son starting believing in these supplements and what he was doing," said Archibald Hamlett, a 55-year-old retired Port Authority cop. At first the diet seemed to be working. "He had gone from high school running a two-minute 800-meter to almost three years of training in less than a year," the elder Hamlett added.

"Some of the ones where it's dietary or male enhancement—someone of his age wouldn't need that," the father said. "But if you look at the situation where you need stamina and strength for long distances—these things give you some get-up-and-go or more fight and determination."

The pep delivered by supplements were one thing. But so was the expectations of the coach. Under the attention, Hamlett switched from the 400 meter race the to 800 meter. "He looked at Timothy as a prodigy and was expecting a lot out of him. And he was expecting a lot out of himself. That's why he changed from the 400 to the 800. That's a lot of pressure."

When Timothy Hamlett began missing practice and his grades dipped his father says he tried to intervene to get him to kick the pills. "I tried to get him a therapist and they performed a diagnosis," Archibald said.

The family ordered an MRI to determine if Timothy Hamlett had a potential brain cyst, but the results were inconclusive.

And despite the therapist and help his parents supplied their son, he mostly shrugged it off.

All the while, Hamlett's emotional imbalance ranged from hostile to aimless. "He was talking to a friend he's known since freshman year and asking him 'What's your name? What's your major?'" his mother recalled. "Then later in the conversation he asks again, 'What's your major?'"

Another instance involved Timothy Hamlett in almost a manic state and showcasing schizophrenic symptoms. "He's not engaging with his roommates. And he's staying in the bathroom for long amounts of time. And talking to himself."

Ultimately they yanked their son out of the Ivy League institution to come home and get help.

Once home, Timothy Hamlett was dealing with past lapses. He was defending against criminal mischief and aggravated assault charges after getting nabbed back in May for allegedly riding his bicycle and chucking bricks at multiple homes and several parked cars around his Teaneck neighborhood. "There was a backpack he was wearing on the night he was stopped and it had a residue that when we sent it out to the state lab came back positive," Teaneck Police Detective Lt. Andrew McGurr told The Daily Beast.

Property damage alone was serious but the brick-tossing spree also struck a woman who was "laying on her couch" in her house and was injured from the shards of shattered glass or a broken piece of mortar. "She was hit in the face causing a laceration right above the eye," McGurr said.

Hamlett's attorney, Jason Foy, said he was confident that his client would beat the rap. "He matched a description and they say he had brick residue in his book bag," Foy told The Daily Beast. "But they didn't find Timothy with a brick and no one said 'Oh, that's the guy who threw the thing in the window.'"

"They're going to have a tough time proving the case—much less worry about jail," Foy added.

Asked whether the impending charges, which were awaiting a grand jury hearing, could have caused Hamlett to abscond, his lawyer said impossible. "This is not the case you run from."

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Jeb Bungles Facts, Pronunciation in His Big National Security Speech

Trying to sound presidential, Bush instead came off like a confused former governor.

Likely presidential candidate Jeb Bush delivered a nervous, uncertain speech on national security Thursday, full of errors and confusion.

Seeking to differentiate himself from his father and brother, both former presidents, the former governor of Florida asserted, "I am my own man."

But that man who emerged on stage at the Chicago Council on Global Affairs did not sound well-versed in foreign policy.

Bush's clunky, rushed delivery paled in comparison to the hazy facts in the speech and vague answers he gave during a Q&A session following his remarks.

Speaking of the extremist group based in Nigeria that has killed thousands of civilians, Bush referred to Boko Haram as "Beau-coup Haram." Bush also referred to Iraq when he meant to refer to Iran.

Further, Bush misrepresented the strength of ISIS, saying they have some

200,000 men, which is far greater than U.S. intelligence community's estimates. Last week National Counterterrorism Center Director Nicholas Rasmussen pegged the fighting strength of ISIS at between 20,000 and 31,500.

"Governor Bush misspoke," Bush aide Kristy Campbell told The Daily Beast after the speech. "He meant 20,000."

Referring to the leader of the so-called Islamic State, Bush referred to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as "the guy that's the supreme leader or whatever his new title is—head of the caliphate."

Bush was also short on describing how he might combat the threat of ISIS. "Taking them out" in partnership with regional allies was about as specific as he got.

"We have to develop a strategy, that's global, that takes them out," Bush said. "First, the strategy, you know, needs to be restrain them, tighten the noose, and then taking them out is the strategy."

"First, the strategy, you know, needs to be restrain them, tighten the noose, and then taking them out is the strategy."

Unlike senators who have more opportunities to delve into international affairs, governors tend to have a steeper learning curve when it comes to beefing up their foreign policy credentials ahead of a presidential run.

And for all his bluster about being different from his brother and father, Bush didn't really espouse a particularly unique worldview.

The similarities in doctrine shouldn't come as a surprise since a list of his advisers in *The Washington Post* reads like a who's who of hawks from the George W. Bush and Reagan administrations.

Bush teddid coin a new term—"liberty diplomacy"—and spoke of the need for the United States to be engaged around the world. Bush also endorsed the National Security Agency's mass surveillance of Americans, which began under his brother following 9/11, as "hugely important."

At times Bush veered into talk about trade and the economy—two topics he was obviously more comfortable talking about than issues of national security. As Bloomberg noted Wednesday, Bush has exposure to foreign markets as an advisor to Barclays PLC, he lived in Venezuela and led trade missions to dozens of countries as governor.

The best-received lines from Bush were the gauziest.

"We shouldn't be as pessimistic as we are. We're on the verge of the greatest time to be alive," Bush said. "We're in our ascendancy as a nation, we just have to start acting like it again."

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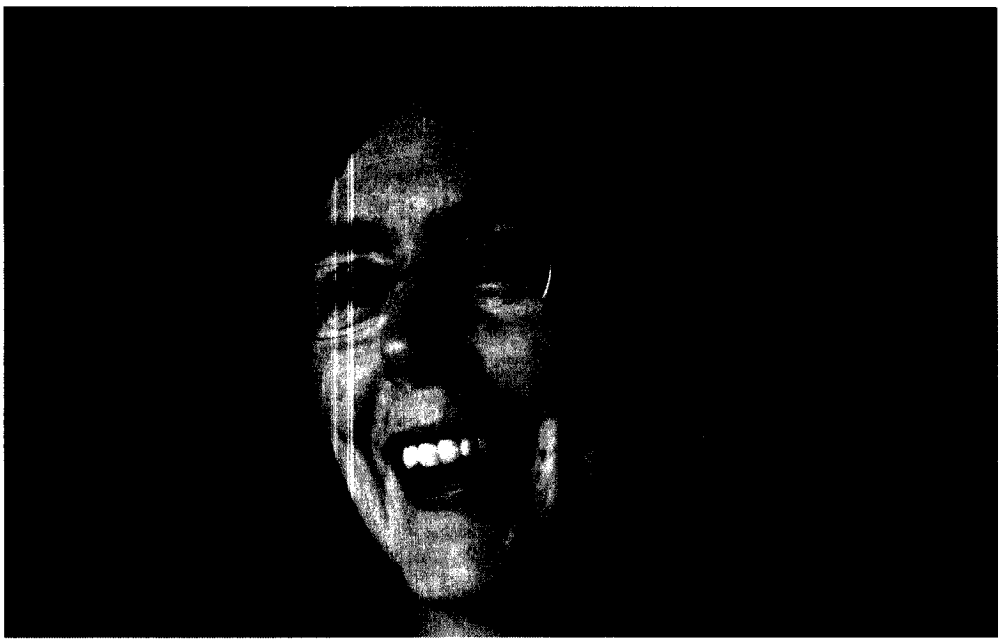

Michael Lloyd/The Oregonian/Landov

FIRST BISEXUAL GOVERNOR 02.14.15

Bisexuality's Watershed Political Moment

Polls show that bisexuality is the least accepted of all sexualities. New Oregon Governor Kate Brown, who is openly bisexual and married to a man, could help change perceptions.

On February 18, former Oregon Secretary of State Kate Brown (D) will become the first publicly bisexual governor in the United States. Brown's swearing in comes on the heels of Democrat John Kitzhaber's resignation of the governorship Friday following allegations of corruption and influence-peddling lobbied against both him and his fiancée Cylvia Hayes. But what's bad news for Kitzhaber is great news for the future of LGBT political representation in the United States.

And it's even better news for bisexual Americans who are sorely lacking public

visibility at a crucial moment in LGBT history.

Brown's unplanned ascension to the governorship is an important step forward for LGBT politicians, especially on a state level. The House of Representatives has had openly LGBT representation since Barney Frank came out in 1987 and it took until 2012 for Wisconsin Democrat Tammy Baldwin to become the first publicly LGBT U.S. Senator.

But the only governor to have ever come out as LGBT is former New Jersey Democrat Jim McGreevey, whose coming out speech was coextensive with his announcement that he would resign the governorship in the face of a sexual harassment lawsuit. If anything, it will be challenging for Brown to fare worse than McGreevey in her new spotlight as an LGBT governor.

But Kate Brown is more than just a tick through a political checkbox—the consequences of her new position go far beyond Oregon.

The occasion of the first openly bisexual governor of the United States is a cultural watershed for bisexual people in the United States, who have historically been better represented by celebrities like Bowie than by politicians like Brown.

With same-sex marriage in the United States—which has traditionally been represented as an exclusively gay or lesbian issue—seeming all but inevitable in 2015 and public attention quickly turning to what *Time* has called "The Transgender Tipping Point," the "B" in the LGBT is at risk of becoming lost in the shuffle. Brown's assumption of state leadership in 2015 is a particularly fortuitous opportunity to keep bisexual people in the conversation surrounding LGBT equality, as the country's focus shifts to the last two letters of that ubiquitous acronym.

Brown's governorship comes at a surprising moment when bisexual people are much more reluctant to be out than their gay and lesbian counterparts. According to the 2009 National Survey of Sexual Health and Behavior, over half of all LGB people in the United States identify as bisexual. Despite this clear majority within the LGBT community, bisexual people are much less visible.

Almost half of bisexual employees are completely in the closet at work, as compared to only a quarter of gay and lesbian employees. And according to a 2013 Pew survey only 28 percent of bisexual people are out to"all or most of the important people in their life" as compared to the majority of gay men and lesbians who are out.

This underrepresentation of bisexual people in personal and professional spheres is even more visible in the world of U.S. politics. In 2012, the *Advocate* could only count five openly bisexual state officials including Brown out of the then-90 or so LGBT state-level legislators. That's a lot less than half.

Since that time, former Arizona State Senator Kyrsten Sinema has become the first out bisexual congresswoman but that's the highest an openly

"Almost half of bisexual employees are completely in the closet at work, as compared to only a quarter of gay and lesbian employees."

bisexual person has climbed until now, making Brown the highest-ranking openly bisexual public official in U.S. history.

Given the reported prevalence of bisexuality relative to homosexuality, there are almost certainly bisexual politicians who are still in the closet. In the political realm, however, where sexual orientation is not just a matter of discrimination but a factor in one's very electability, it's not surprising that very few of them have chosen to come out.

But why are bisexual people, in particular, lagging so far behind in terms of their willingness to come out?

Brown's own story contains one possible answer: Many bisexual men and women fear social exclusion from both straight people as well as lesbians and gay men.

In an essay for a collection about out elected officials, Brown recalls receiving pushback from all sides when her sexual orientation became public knowledge. Her straight friends perhaps predictably perpetuated the stereotype that bisexual people just can't pick a side—but more alarming is that her friends in the lesbian and gay community "called [her] half-queer."

Even her parents told her: "It would be much easier for us if you were a lesbian."

"Some days I feel like I have a foot in both worlds, yet never really belonging to either," Brown wrote at the time.

Feeling excluded from both sides of the sexual aisle is a common experience for bisexual Americans. In fact, according to the above-referenced 2013 Pew Survey, LGBT Americans perceive bisexuality to be the least accepted sexual orientation, although bisexual women tend to fare far better than bisexual men.

Bisexuality is certainly the least understood sexual orientation in a culture accustomed to only seeing sexuality through a binary lens, and it remains surrounded by particularly pernicious cultural myths—ones perpetuated by both gay and straight people.

These myths have long affected Brown's career.

When Brown was first outed, for example, Bill Markham, an older colleague in the Oregon House reportedly joked: "Guess that means I still have a chance?" While it would be easy to dismiss Markham's alleged comment as a familiar form of sexual harassment, it is also noticeably tinged by the stereotype that bisexual people are more promiscuous and hence more approachable.

The *Oregonian* also reports that, in 2008, a Portland LGBT magazine advised Brown to "butch it up" if she wanted to be taken seriously as an LGBT public official. For the many bisexual women who feel invisible in LGBT circles because they present "femme" and are therefore read as straight, this injunction to "butch it up" is a familiar one, often experienced as a subtle cultural pressure even when it remains unspoken.

And today, the fact that Brown is currently married to a man, Dan Little, is reportedly being raised to question her allegiance to the LGBT community. Bisexual people with opposite-sex partners—and perhaps particularly bisexual women with male partners like Brown—often feel excluded from lesbian and gay communities, either because they are dismissed as "straight" or because they are perceived to have too much privilege to be meaningfully invested in the cause.

Brown may have a long track record of supporting pro-LGBT legislation in Oregon, but she will likely have to work twice as hard as a lesbian politician to be read as an advocate, simply because her spouse is a man.

But by becoming the first bisexual governor, Brown now has more power than ever to be influential in helping to end these same forms of prejudice. In addition to reporting that bisexuality seems to be the least accepted orientation, LGBT Americans also told Pew that "well-known public figures who are open about being LGBT" is the second most helpful factor in "making society more accepting of people who are LGBT." That's second only behind people getting to know LGBT people on a personal level.

So far, the U.S. has seen its fair share of bisexual celebrities—Gore Vidal, Pete Townshend, Angelina Jolie, Megan Fox, and Margaret Cho have all borne the label—but bisexual public figures in other spheres are fewer and further between. The only LGBT politicians that Pew respondents could point to as indicators of progress were either gay or lesbian.

There's a dire need for more bisexual public figures and Brown, however unwittingly and literally overnight, has become the right woman for the job.

Kate Brown has just become the most well-known bisexual politician in the United States. What she will do with this newfound status remains to be seen but her governorship could not have come at a better moment for the many bisexual Americans who look at their elected officials and see no one like them.

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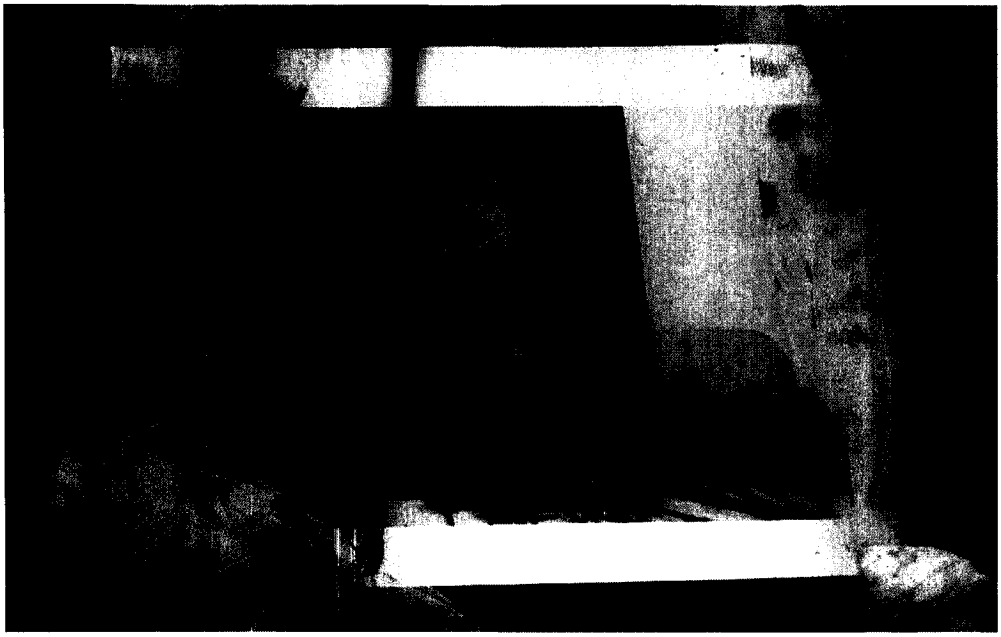

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FEMICIDE 02.18.15

THE DAILY BEAST

Thomas Seibert

The Thwarted Rape and Gruesome Murder That's Shaken Turkey

The slaying of a university student spotlights Erdogan's contradictions, passing laws that protect women while extolling a culture that treats them as inferior.

ISTANBUL — The brutal murder of a 20-year-old university student has horrified Turkey, with protesters filling the streets and politicians discussing the return of the death penalty for her killer. But divisions about the role of women in society remain as deep as ever in this conservative Muslim country, and, sadly, a concerted effort to stop the killing of hundreds of women by men every year is unlikely to emerge.

On February 11, Ozgecan Aslan, a psychology student from the southern Turkish city of Tarsus, took a minibus to go home from the university city of Mersin. When she did not arrive there, her parents called the police. Aslan's charred body was found several days later in a valley near a picnic area close to a highway linking Tarsus to the capital Ankara.

Police were led to the body by the driver of the minibus, Suphi Altindoken, after they found blood stains and Aslan's hat in his vehicle. According to news reports, Altindoken told police he had tried to rape the young woman, who was the only passenger left on the bus, and stabbed her with a knife when she fought him with pepper spray and scratched his face with her fingernails.

After using the knife, Altindoken reportedly hit Aslan on the head with an iron bar to make sure she was dead and cut off her hands to destroy DNA

evidence of his skin under her fingernails. He then unloaded the body near the picnic area and burned it with the help of his father and a friend.

As the three men were put in pre-trial detention, women rights activists and other protesters took to Turkey's streets by the thousands and politicians called for the most severe punishment for the accused. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan sent his two daughters Esra and Sumeyye to see the Aslan family and called the suspected killer "a villain." Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu vowed to "break the hands" of all men who harassed women, while Economics Minister Nihat Zeybekci suggested Turkey should re-introduce the death penalty, scrapped last decade to improve the country's chance to became a member of the European Union.

During his tenure as prime minister between 2003 and his move to the presidency last year, Erdogan introduced tougher sentences for rapists and changed laws that had enabled courts to show leniency towards men accused of killing their wives with the argument that the killers had somehow been provoked by their victims. Ankara also improved chances for women to receive police protection when under threat from a violent husband or partner.

But the Erdogan government failed to stop the increase of cases of deadly cases of domestic violence. Bianet.org, a website funded by European institutions that tracks cases of violence against women, says 281 women in Turkey were killed by their husbands, ex-husbands, partners or family members last year alone, which amounts to more than five victims every week. Since 2010, Bianet has counted 1,134 cases.

Women's rights activists say the government is not tackling root causes of the violence, like a trend favoring male dominance in society. As a matter of fact, Erdogan stands accused of being a macho himself, albeit one driven by religious motives.

Last November, Erdogan said men and women could never be equal and stressed that Islam saw women primarily in their role as mothers. In a speech following Aslan's murder, he repeated his view that, "Allah has entrusted women to men" for protection, a position criticized by feminists as an insult to women because it implied male superiority. Erdogan shot back by saying feminists "have nothing to do with our faith and our culture".

Erdogan's demand that every Turkish family should have at least three children has also angered activists. Health Minister Mehmet Muezzinoglu, a member of Erdogan's Islamic-conservative Justice and Development Party (AKP), said earlier this year that women "should seek no career except for the career of motherhood."

Government critics say that kind of discourse makes it difficult to deal with the social issues behind the violence and other problems that women face. Only 29 per cent of women in Turkey have a job, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), far below the OECD average of 57 per cent. Reluctance by thousands of Turkish families to send girls to school is another disadvantage. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) says one out of five women in Turkey is illiterate, as opposed to one out of ten

men. While almost all Turkish boys are sent to school, about 8 percent of girls are not.

Following Aslan's murder, Prime Minister Davutoglu said the case was a watershed and that his government would begin to address the "mentality problem" behind the wave of violence against women in his country. Davutoglu did not give details, but Mustafa Akyol, a columnist specializing in political Islam, suggested the government should look at cultural factors. "This is a deeply patriarchal nation in which many men feel entitled to dominate women," Akyol wrote in the English-language newspaper Hurriyet Daily News on Wednesday. "While punishing the monsters among us in the heaviest terms, we also need a national soul-searching to eradicate the culture that helps breed them."

But there are few signs so far of the conversation that Akyol wants Turkey to have. Following the Aslan murder, some pundits in the pro-government press criticized women coming forward with experiences of sexual harassment in a Twitter campaign called *#sendeanlat*, or tell your story, advising them to "shut up and see a doctor." In a reference to Aslan, who dressed in a Western style and did not cover her hair with the Islamic veil, Nihat Dogan, a popular singer known as an AKP supporter, said women in miniskirts should not complain of being harassed by "perverts stripped of moral values by the secular system."

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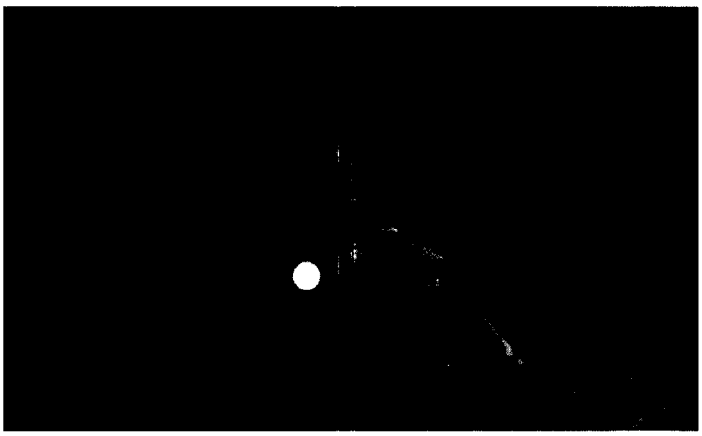
theguardian

Yeah Yeah Yeahs become first band to shoot video atop Empire State Building

Karen O says filming single on skyscraper's 86th-floor viewing platform was 'iconic moment'



All-time high ... performing on the Empire State Building was the 'American dream', says Karen O of Yeah Yeah Yeahs. Photograph: Mario Anzuoni/Reuters

Sean Michaels

Monday 24 June 2013 07.21 EDT

Yeah Yeah Yeahs have become the first band to shoot a music video at the top of New York City's Empire State Building. The clip for Despair - a small part of which has been posted online - was made in the early morning, 373m off the ground, before the tower's viewing platform was open to the public.

"It's like the American dream for us, singing your song on top of the Empire State Building," singer Karen O told the New York Times. "It's hard to do something like that and not feel like it's symbolic ... Feeling like: man, where were we 10 years ago, when we were sitting around in some punk-rock dive bar, thinking about what to name our band ... and now here we are at the top."

It was certainly "an iconic moment", she said. But it was also the 34-year-old singer's first visit to the summit of the legendary skyscraper. The same was true for the video's director, Patrick Daughters. "I don't like heights," he explained. While Yeah Yeah Yeahs performed on the 86th floor, a camera crew circled in a helicopter. "It was plenty loud," Daughters said. "I don't think they had to worry about the neighbours."

Although bands have applied before to shoot videos at the 23rd-tallest building in the world, nobody had met the production requirements. "[The review] was not casual," said Anthony E Malkin, president of the Empire State's operators. "[The video] had to be

appropriate for the building." But Malkin is still surprised it took 84 years for the first video to happen. "Credit to [Yeah Yeah Yeahs] for having the gumption to ask."

"It [was] definitely not just another cool day in the life of the Yeah Yeah Yeahs," Karen O said. "Anything I say is not going to do justice to how cool it was."

Despair is the latest single from Mosquito, Yeah Yeah Yeahs' fourth studio album. It reached No 9.

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Empire State Building IPO Would Let You Buy A Share Of World Famous Building (VIDEO)

Posted [redacted] 11:30 am EDT | Updated 04/09/2013 1:18 pm EDT

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You, yes you, could soon have the opportunity to buy a piece of the Empire State Building.

Malkin Properties-- who bought the iconic skyscraper in 1961 and created a group of some 2,800 owners-- is heading a push to put ownership of the building into a Real Estate Investment Trust with 18 other New York City buildings, and then sell shares to the public, ABC News reports.

In order to land what would be a one billion dollar public offering, the Malkin family needs 80 percent of the current owners to approve the plan. Last week, The Real Deal reports, Malkin told investors they'd secured 94 percent of the votes needed. A March deadline for voting was extended.

The Malkins have previously argued the deal, according to ABC, would "deliver needed liquidity, aid capital appreciation, increase distribution and render management more accountable and more transparent."

Those against the IPO say it will give too great a chunk of the new company to the Malkin family.

Correction: *A previous version of this article incorrectly stated "the plan would offer up 13 million shares in the REIT, at 10 to 12 dollars per share." Those numbers apply to the public offering for Fairway market, not the proposed Empire State Building REIT. You can read their SEC filing here.*

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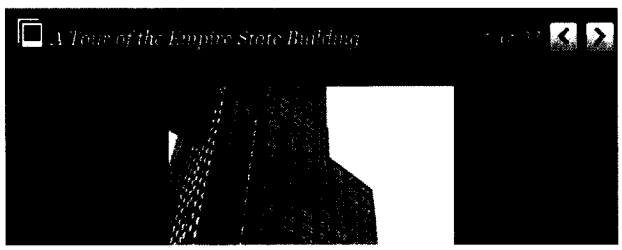

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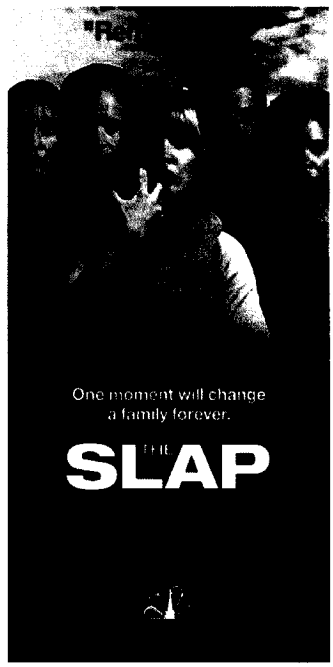

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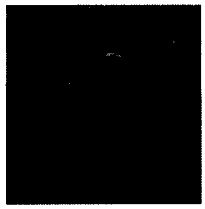

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Paula C. (PCCNYC)
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I know a couple of people who are "owners" of the ESB now, and they receive a check every year for that.
9 APR 2013 5:38 PM

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rikster
250 Fans Buy the ticket take the ride

... have the ownership papers right here..just sign on the dotted line ..and give me your cash...
9 APR 2013 8:23 PM

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Ainsi_sera_groigne_qui
122 Fans Cut to the vexas?

Really sad thing is that the ESB has never lived up to it's potential as an office building.

Opened during the Great Depression the ESB suffers from the fact it is not located near any of the main transportation hubs (Grand Central Terminal, Penn Station, Port Authority, etc..) and IIRC there are few years if any the building really made

serious money. Can remember holding several office jobs in the 1980's in the place and thinking "what a dump". I mean for such an iconic place and all that.

Wonder if the place would be like if partially converted into residential space?

Don"t laugh! From 34th Street south to 23rd Street between say Park and Sixth Avenues has become "very" residential over the past "Bloomberg" era.
9 APR 2013 10:32 PM

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shirvereeze
SUPER USER 68 Fans ♥

the real king kong is now at the esb
10 APR 2013 10:24 AM

★ FAVE · SHARE · MORE

Leslie H. (gp341)
304 Fans ♥

Yes, IPO good idea. Let's sell them time shares as well. Wait, let's start a 50 50 raffle. Oh, a few condo's too, yeah, good idea. Buy now and we'll throw in a piece of the Brookline Bridge.
10 APR 2013 10:28 AM

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METROPOLITAN M

the_middle_class
172 Fans ♥ Anybody got a witty micro-bio I can use?

I thought the picts would show some of the inside of the ESB that the public does not get to see. Not just a bunch of touristy observation floor shots.
10 APR 2013 11:36 AM

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themasterpuppeteer
77 Fans ♥ You can't handle the truth!

No thanks.
10 APR 2013 4:15 PM

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A Nasty, Epic Real Estate Battle With Stakes 102 Stories High

Todd Heisler/The New York Times

The Empire State Building's managing family has proposed a $5.2 billion deal to the landmark's hodgepodge of investors.

By CHARLES V. BAGLI and JULIE CRESWELL
Published: April 28, 2013

On the day it opened in 1931, the Empire State Building carved out a special place on the New York skyline, but it has also been at the center of a succession of battles for control by equally larger-than-life figures, including Donald J. Trump and Leona Helmsley.

Enlarge This Image

Sandy Huffaker for The New York Times

Richard Edelman and other investors say the proposal will enrich the Malkin family while endangering other shareholders.

Now, the 102-story tower is the prize in yet another epic battle, which will play out in court starting on Monday.

On one side are the New York real estate barons Peter L. Malkin and his son Anthony E. Malkin, who control the landmark tower but are minority owners. They are within a whisker of landing the deal of a lifetime, valued at $5.2 billion, that would offer to the public shares in 19 properties in the New York area that they oversee, including the crown jewel, the Empire State Building.

The offering would catapult the Malkin family into the elite of Manhattan real estate,

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PERSONAL SAVINGS

valuing their stake at an estimated $730 million and installing Anthony Malkin as chairman of a major new company, Empire State Realty Trust.

But standing in their way is an eclectic group of dissenters led by the California businessman Richard Edelman and Andrew S. Penson, a speculative investor who owns Grand Central Terminal. They argue that the deal may harm the value of the investors' shares and expose them to tax liabilities and the vagaries of the stock market, all while enriching the Malkins.

This week, the conflict will reach a critical juncture when the court will either upend the Malkins' plans altogether or disallow a legal challenge and remove a major roadblock.

For more than a year, the Malkins have painstakingly persuaded 75 percent of the building's roughly 3,000 stakeholders to vote in favor of going public, just shy of the required 80 percent.

As they have campaigned, the vote has turned into a public blood feud. Unlike the typical battle involving a dozen institutions that own the bulk of the stock, this one requires an investor-by-investor appeal. The hostility has shocked even longtime observers used to occasional bouts of mudslinging in the world of New York real estate.

"I'm amazed at the level of enmity," said Barry Vinocur, the editor at a trade publisher, REIT Zone Publications. "I can't recall ever seeing anything like it."

The Malkins argue that the new company would provide a modern corporate structure, allowing investors to more easily buy and sell their stakes and enhance value over time.

Anthony Malkin described those opposed to the deal as "a small group of big holders" who offered investors "only a dead end, with all of the many downsides of the current archaic structure."

In the heat of the battle, the Malkins have accused Mr. Edelman and his followers of lying and spreading misinformation, and their legal forces have fired off numerous cease-and-desist letters. The opposing investors have tried to rally opponents through a Web site and by holding periodic conference calls.

All of this back-and-forth has left some of the current Empire State Building stakeholders flummoxed.

Meyer Shlafmitz, 83, a retired steel salesman who lives in Queens, owns a single share in the building. He has changed his vote twice, most recently voting in favor of the offering.

"It's a he-said, she-said kind of thing," Mr. Shlafmitz said.

The foundation for the current dispute was laid in 1961 when Harry B. Helmsley, a storied figure in New York real estate, and his partner, Lawrence A. Wien, bought control of the Empire State Building from the billionaire industrialist Henry Crown. Peter Malkin, who was also involved in the deal, is the son-in-law of Mr. Wien; Anthony Malkin is Mr. Wien's grandson.

To help finance the deal, the group sold 3,300 units in the building priced at $10,000 a unit.

For many of the original investors, some of whom bought more than one share, the Empire State Building embodies romance, a treasured investment and an echo of an era when New York's rising middle class nervously put all their meager savings into a tower that touched the sky.

Mr. Shlafmitz says he still remembers the day in 1961 that his father, a watch repairman, purchased a half-share in the Empire State Building for $5,000, nearly all the money he had.

"His hands shook when he wrote out the check," he said. "He was very fearful that

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something would go wrong."

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This article has been revised to reflect the following correction:

Correction: May 1, 2013

An article on Monday about a legal battle over a proposal to allow the public trading of shares in the Empire State Building misstated the surname of one investor and described incorrectly how she came to own her stake in the building. She is Nancy Felsten, not Felton, and she acquired her part through a family trust; she did not inherit it from her father, who is still living. The article also referred incorrectly to her immediate family. She had one sibling, who is deceased, not "siblings."

A version of this article appears in print on April 29, 2013, on page A1 of the New York edition with the headline: A Nasty Epic Real Estate Battle With Stakes 102 Stories High.

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SFGATE http://www.ctpost.com/local/article/Greenwich-mogul-makes-play-for-Empire-State-4473610.php

Greenwich mogul makes play for Empire State Building

Bill Cummings Published 4:14 pm, Monday, April 29, 2013

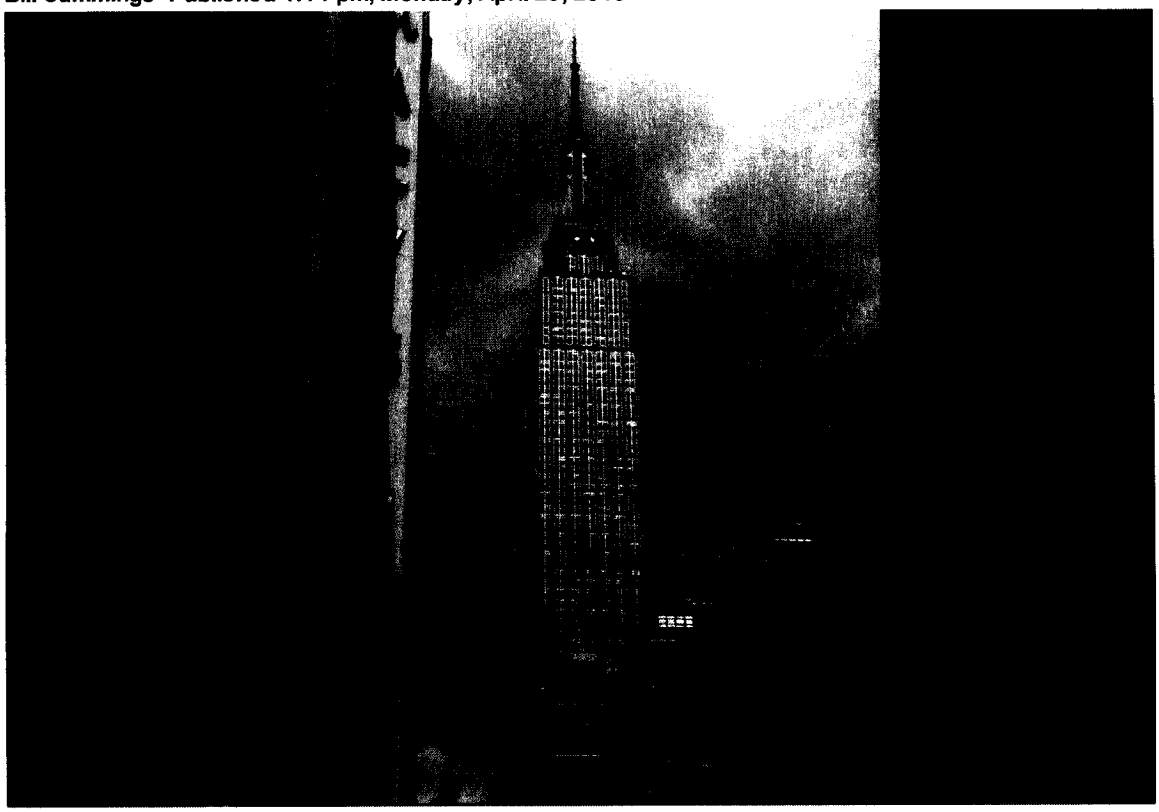

IMAGE 5 OF 5

The Empire State building looms over the skyline in New York City. Photo by Spencer Platt/Getty Images

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Greenwich real estate baron Peter Malkin wants to add the Empire State Building -- one o world's best known and most storied skyscrapers -- to his portfolio of office towers in Connecticut and New York.

For Malkin, it's a deal worth $5.2 billion that could place him at the pinnacle of Manhattan's rea estate elite.

Malkin, who controls the Empire State Building but is now a minority owner, wants to roll the famous 102-story skyscraper into his Connecticut and NYC portfolio, creating common ownership through a real estate investment trust. That trust would be public with shares sold on the New York Stock Exchange.

MORE INFORMATION

Peter Malkin owns 15 office buildings in New York City, Westchester County and Connecticut, including First Stamford Place, StamfordMetro Center and MerritView in Norwalk.
Malkin Properties also controls or owns nearly two dozen retail and residential complexes in New York and Connecticut.
Value of the Empire State Building deal: $5.2 billion.

But small investors say it's not a good deal for them, and they are arguing in court that the proposal, while enriching the Malkin family, would make them poorer. They don want the Empire State Building mixed in with Malkin's other properties or allow shares to be sold on the stock market.

"We are being cheated," said Thelma Shafran, an 82-year-old New York City resident who, along with her mother, purchased 2.5 shares in the Empire State Building in 1961, when the ownership team of Lawrence Wien and Harry Helmsley bought the property.

Shafran said the "Empire State Building is such a symbol of New York -- you kind of trash it whe you dump it in with a bunch of buildings in Connecticut. No name, no-architecture buildings; it takes away the mystique."

The latest offering would increase the Malkin family's stake in the towering Art Deco icon to an estimated $730 million. Anthony Malkin, Peter's son, would become chairman of the new company, Empire State Realty Trust.

The main obstacle comes from a group of minority owners who have asked a New York state judge to block the deal. A hearing was held on Monday and a decision could come today.

Those opponents, led by California businessman Richard Edelman and Andrew Penson, who owns Grand Central Terminal, argue the deal could lower the value of shares and expose investors to tax liabilities and the ups and downs of the stock market.

The 82-year old Empire State Building was the world's tallest building until the World Trade Center was completed in 1973. The building has played a central role in classic movies such as "King Kong," "An Affair to Remember" and "Sleepless in Seattle."

Peter Malkin is well known in Greenwich. He founded and serves as president of the Greenwicl Tree Conservancy and is active in environmental issues. And not all of his real estate holdings are gargantuan: he's now converting a former Greenwich Avenue post office into a retail cente

He often attends Greenwich town meetings and is not shy about expressing his views. Malkin recently argued for a ban on leaf blowers, saying they cause pollution, and he wants the power

company to bury electric lines to avoid widespread power outages during storms.

Malkin owns 15 office towers in New York and Connecticut, including First Stamford Place and MerritView in Norwalk. His company, Malkin Properties, also controls or owns nearly two dozen retail and residential complexes in New York and Connecticut.

On Monday, Malkin declined comment on the court case or his Empire State Building proposal which has drawn unusual anger from small investors.

"The hearing was today and the judge indicated we should expect his opinion tomorrow," Malkin said in a voice mail message left in response to calls for comment.

To finance the deal, Wien and Helmsley sold 3,300 units in the building for $10,000 a unit.

Many of the original buyers were far from wealthy and represented average people hoping for a slice of the American dream.

"This is very personal for me," said Shafran, who was born the year the Empire State Building was completed. "It was just regular people who financed it. The original investors were not wealthy. I feel there is historical significance in the way the building was financed."

The Malkin proposal requires approval by 80 percent of about 3,000 stakeholders and he's close to achieving that level of support. Shares owned by investors voting against the new arrangement would be purchased for $100, unless those owners quickly changed their vote.

Malkin has spent months courting investors, usually personally calling them to make his case. Although some described his approach as that of a "pushy salesman," Shafran said Malkin was very polite.

"Everyone received a call from Peter," she said. "They are very nice people. It was a very pleasant conversation."

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SFGATE http://www.stamfordadvocate.com/news/article/Suit-says-IPO-bad-for-Empire-State-Building-5095011.php

,Suit says IPO bad for Empire State Building investors

Associated Press Published 5:48 pm, Thursday, December 26, 2013

NEW YORK -- Thousands of stakeholders in the Empire State Building lost more than $400 million in potential profits when the managing owners rebuffed potential buyers in order to sell public shares in the iconic skyscraper, a new lawsuit says.

By spurning all-cash offers for the tower and instead packaging it with lesser-known office properties into a publicly traded stock, father-and-son real estate magnates Peter and Anthony Malkin, of Greenwich, put their interests ahead of those of the building's longtime investors, lawyer John Rizio-Hamilton said Thursday. He represents one of those investors, who filed the suit Tuesday seeking class-action status on behalf of roughly 3,000 people who hold Empire State Building shares that were sold privately in 1961.

The Malkins' company, Empire State Realty Trust, said through a spokeswoman that the suit's claims were "wholly without merit, and we will respond to them in court."

The suit, first reported Thursday by the Daily News, marks the latest legal challenge over the October public offering that ushered the tower immortalized in "King Kong" and "Sleepless in Seattle" into the New York Stock Exchange.

Completed in 1931, the 102-story skyscraper was the world's tallest building until the World Trade Center supplanted it in 1972. When the Empire State Building changed hands in 1961, the buyers sold shares at $10,000 each to help finance the deal. Some investors were everyday New Yorkers who pulled together just enough cash to get partial shares.

This year, Peter and Anthony Malkin spearheaded a public offering plan that combined the skyscraper with 11 other properties in their portfolio in New York and Connecticut. After a $55 million settlement in May resolved a lawsuit from some of the Empire State Building stakeholders opposing the IPO, shares began trading publicly in October at $13 a share. The stock was trading at about $15 a share Thursday.

The new suit says the $13-a-share price valued the skyscraper at $1.89 billion -- but when severa developers came forward between June and September with cash offers as high as $2.3 billion, the Malkins turned them down.

"We have concluded that it is in your best interest to proceed with the consolidation (with other properties) and IPO," the Malkins told the investors in a September letter, according to the suit

But really, the IPO was only in the Malkins' best interest, the suit says. They stood to gain more than $300 million from fees and a profit-sharing provision of the IPO, while giving the other properties the cachet of being associated with the Art Deco landmark, the suit says.

But the Empire State Building shareholders would have been better off with a sale to one of the developers, the lawsuit says.

"They would have had a bid in the hand, in the form of cash -- and a bird in the hand that was bigger than whatever benefit they realized in the IPO," Rizio-Hamilton said by phone.

The suit seeks unspecified damages.

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1 comment

600 set for race to top of Empire State Building

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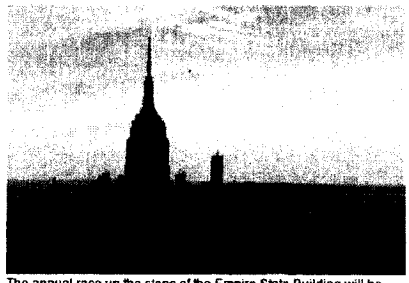
By The Associated Press on February 06, 2013 at 6:27 AM

Print

Sponsored by: New Jersey Lottery

NEW YORK — It's a race to the top — well, to the 86th floor, anyway.

People from around the world are taking part in a vertical race — up 86 flights of stairs at the Empire State Building. That's a total of 1,576 steps, starting at the lobby and finishing at the observation deck.



The annual race up the steps of the Empire State Building will be held tonight.

John O'Boyle/The Star-Ledger

The annual Empire State Building Run-up is being held tonight.

More than 600 people are registered for the event, including some world-class elite athletes. Seven-time champion Thomas Dold of Germany is going for his eighth victory in a row. Among the women, four-time winner Cindy Harris of the United States will be taking part, as well three-time winner Suzy Walsham of Australia.

The run-up used to be held during the day before being switched to evening hours last year to allow more participation. The event is put on by the New York Road Runners, which also puts on the annual New York City Marathon.

Like the marathon, start times are staggered. The elite men and woman start before the general field, and participants in the general field are released one at a time several seconds apart to avoid crowding.

The Empire State Building race is among the more high-profile tower climbs in the world. Participants are coming from around the United States, as well as countries including Belgium, Japan and Papua New Guinea.

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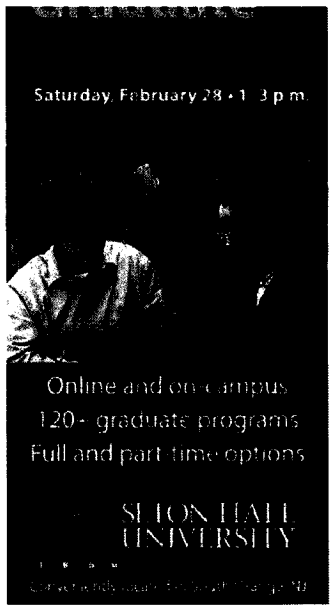

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Australians First Up in Empire State Building Run

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Published: February 6, 2013

Australians won the top spots in the men's and women's races in the annual Empire State Building Run-up on Wednesday night. Mark Bourne won for the first time with a time of 10 minutes 12 seconds. Suzy Walsham won the women's division for the fourth time in 12:05.

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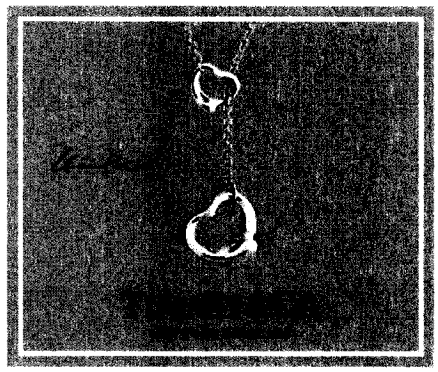

A version of this brief appeared in print on February 7, 2013, on page B13 of the New York edition with the headline: Australians First Up.

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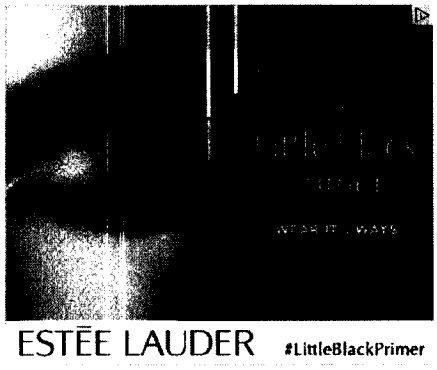

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Empire State Building weddings

February 15, 2013 11:29 AM

IMAGE 1 OF 5

Newlyweds Danielle Brabham, 39, and Michael Lynch, 41, from Miami Shores, Fla., kiss while posing for pictures on the Empire State Building viewing platform after their Valentine's Day wedding on Thursday, Feb. 14, 2013 in New York. Brabham and Lynch were among three couples chosen for the 19th Annual Weddings Event, "Love is in the Air," designed by celebrity designer Preston Bailey, after submitting their personal love stories to the Empire State Building's Facebook page.

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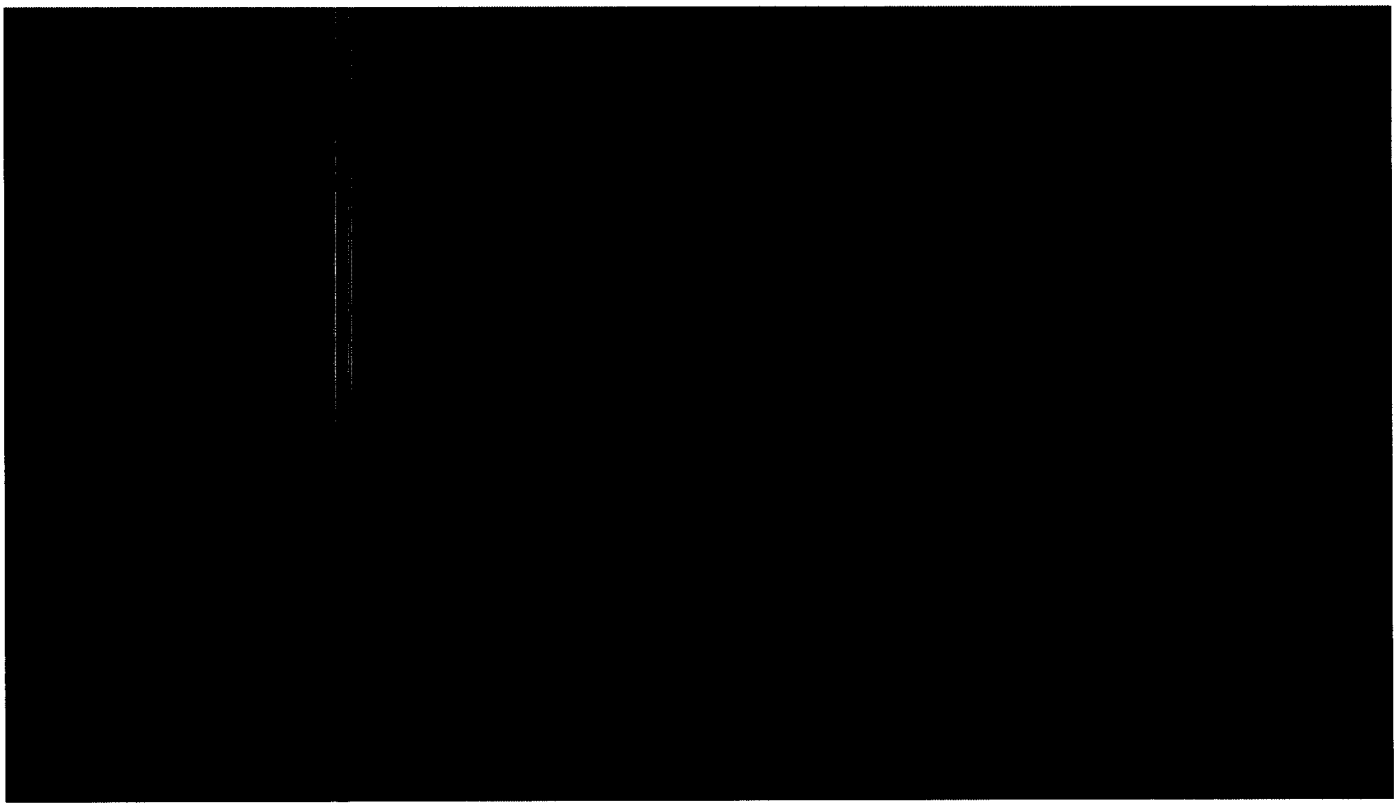
The $85 million tourism machine called the Empire State Building

Rafat Ali, Skift



Empire State Building by sunset. Rafat Ali

SKIFT

ESB is facing increasing competition from the observatory at Rockefeller Center and an observatory being built at One World Trade Center, but its

position as the preeminent New York City icon remains.

— Rafat Ali

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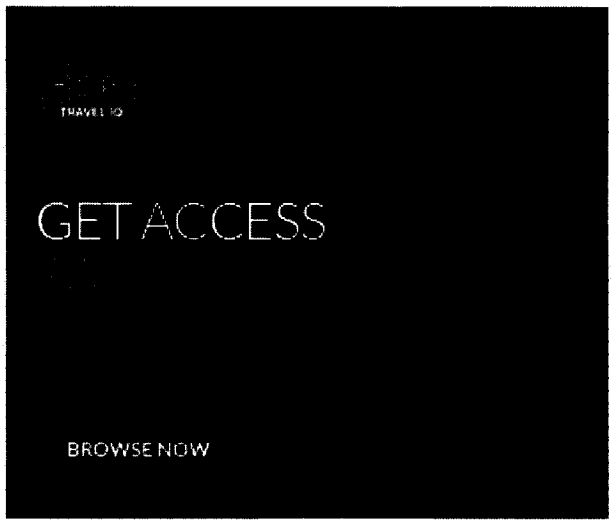
Last week the Securities and Exchange Commission gave Empire State Building Associates, the company that controls the iconic Empire State Building in New York, the go ahead to proceed with its posible IPO and raise as much as $1 billion. The updated S-4 filing has some fascinating numbers on how big a tourism behemoth that the observatory on top of ESB is. And we've excerpted some of the numbers below:



- The Empire State Building offers panoramic views of New York from its 86th and 102nd floor observatories.
- For 2007 through 2011 and for the nine months of 2012, the number of visitors to the observatories was approximately 3.67 million, 4.03 million, 3.75 million, 4.03 million, 4.06 million and 3.24 million, respectively.
- About 8-10 percent of all domestic and international tourists coming to New York end up going on top of ESB, and that's not counting most that gawk and photograph it from outside.
- The number of admissions to the observatory for the 12 years from 2000 through 2011 increased at an aggregate growth rate of 16.4%.
- For 2007 through 2011, the building increased the average ticket revenue per admission from $15.47 to $17.96 and for the nine months of 2012, the average ticket revenue per admission was $19.61. The average ticket revenue per admission has increased for each of the 12 years

from 2000 to 2011 at a compound annual growth rate of 9.3%.

- It generated approximately $68.5 million and $80.6 million in revenue from its observatory operations for the nine months ended September 30, 2012 and the year ended December 31, 2011, respectively, representing approximately 40.1% and 40.5% of the Empire State Building's total revenue for these periods.
- At this rate, the total revenues may touch $85 million for 2012.
- Over the past ten years, the number of visitors to the observatory, on average, has been slightly higher in the third quarter and slightly lower in the first quarter of each year.
- Total revenue and operating income from the observatory's operations have exhibited positive growth in all but two years from 2001 to 2011 (2001 and 2009), representing a compound annual growth rate for total revenue and operating income (including concessions revenue) of 12.4% and 12.5%, respectively.
- The observatory has demonstrated strong performance despite competitive pressures as total revenue and operating income (including concessions revenue) increased by over 25.0% in 2005 and over 11.0% in 2006, despite the opening of the Top of the Rock observation deck at Rockefeller Center in November 2005.

12. Observatory Operations

The operations of the Empire State Building Observatory are summarized as follows:

	Years Ended December 31,		
	2011	2010	2009
Income:			
Admissions	$ 72,992,182	$ 70,030,303	$ 63,310,227
Ancillary income	[illegible]	570,793	1,159,349
Credit card and other sales fees	(1,116,105)	(730,504)	(623,881)
Total income	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Operating Expenses			
Payroll and related costs	[illegible]	15,051,314	14,326,402
Advertising	2,589,864	2,516,693	2,315,290
Commercial rent and other taxes	[illegible]	758,493	392,487
Repairs and maintenance	457,918	539,669	330,518
Professional fees	[illegible]	451,760	417,168
Administrative	522,311	804,381	524,132
Other expense	—	16,837	—
Total Operating Expenses	21,209,225	20,139,147	18,305,997
*Operating Income	[illegible]	[illegible]	45,535,698
Income Tax Benefit	1,200,000	1,890,000	
Income prior to income received directly by Empire State Building Company LLC	$ [illegible]	$ [illegible]	$ 45,535,698
Revenue received directly by Empire State Building Company LLC			
Observatory license fees	[illegible]	4,727,697	4,631,885
Photography income	2,590,487	2,535,254	2,331,751
Audio tour income	[illegible]	[illegible]	684,283
Other income	760,365	863,501	158,610
Observatory income, net	$ [illegible]	$ [illegible]	$ 53,341,427

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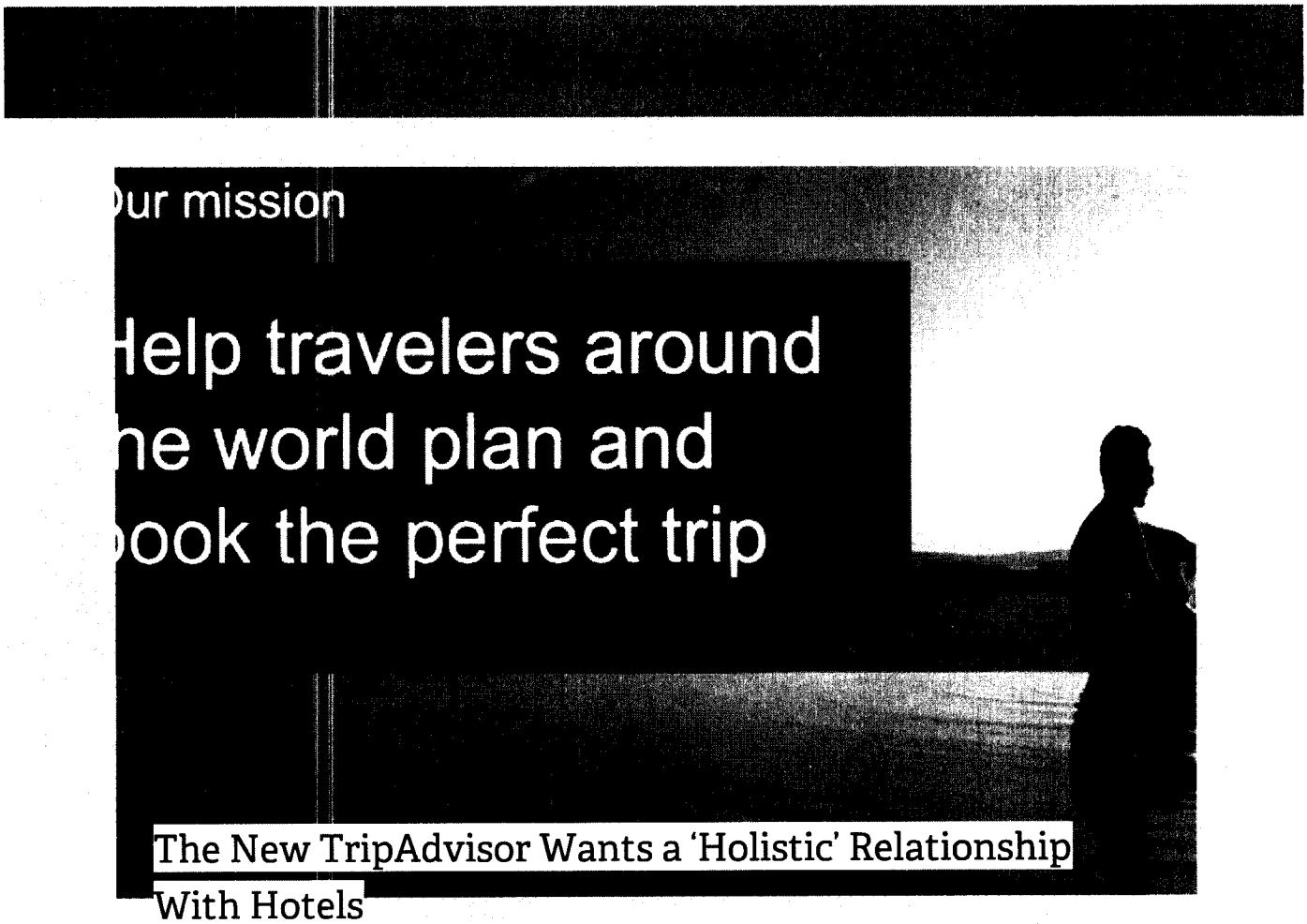

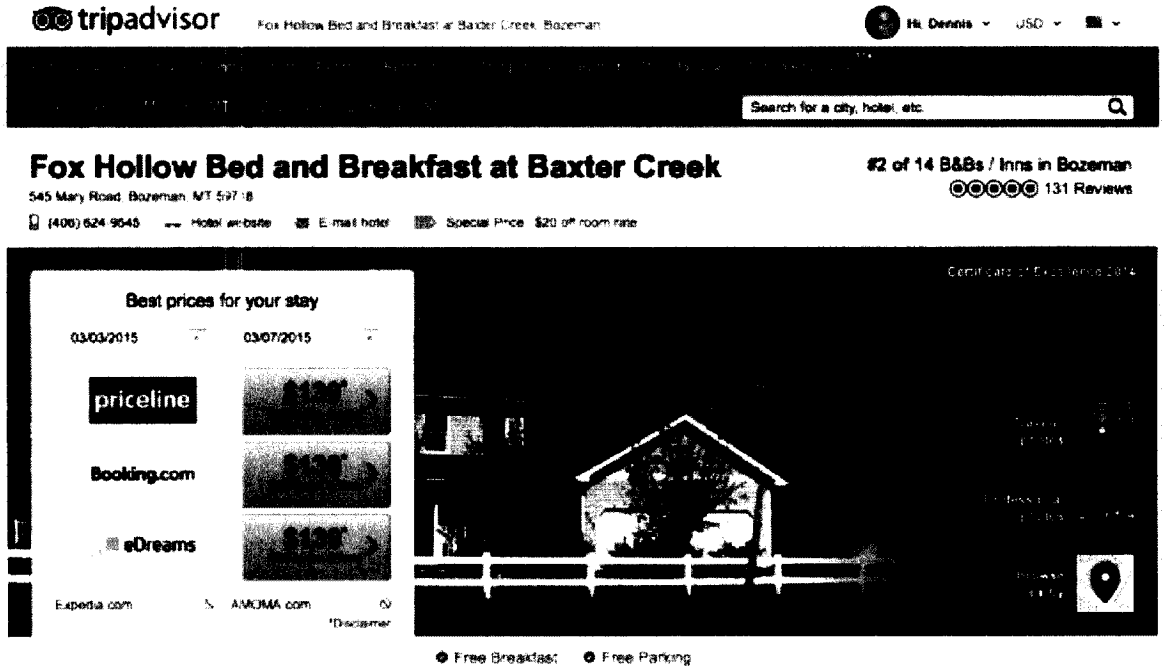

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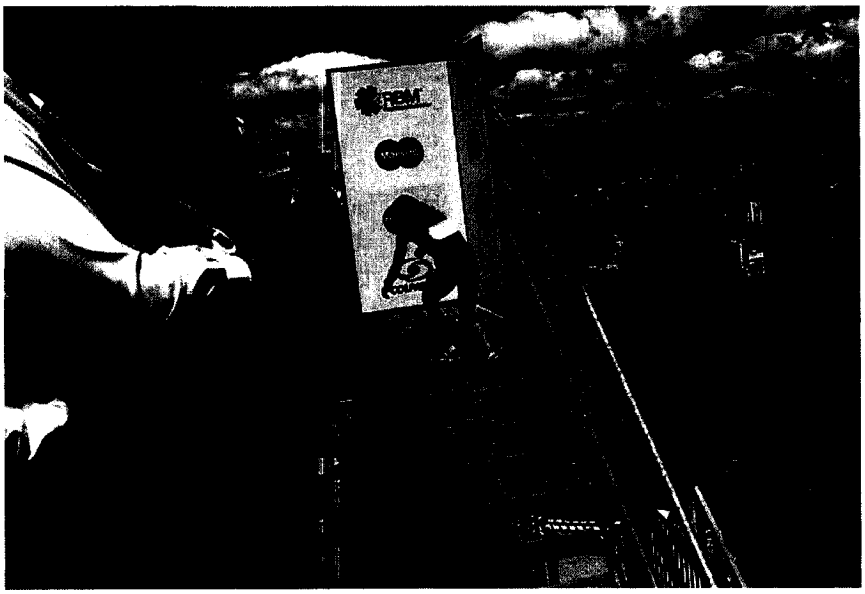

Stephen Ferry/Redux for The New York Times

A runner climbs a 48-floor building in the Ascenso Torre Colpatria race in Bogotá, Colombia.

By BILL DONAHUE
Published: January 25, 2013 35 Comments

When you watch the video from the start of last February's Empire State Building Run-Up, an 86-story stair race, one man stands out. Thomas Dold, a 28-year-old German wearing Bib No. 1, is already a few inches ahead when the starting horn blasts. His shins are canting into a run, and with his left arm he's pushing at the chest of a runner to that side of him. A split second later, his right arm juts up to block more runners.

All around Dold, the racers are wincing, for what's coming is harsh. There are 1,576 steps ahead of them, 10 to 12 minutes of suffering. And before that, less than 10 yards from the start, there's a door to get through. It's standard size, 36 inches wide, and everyone, Dold especially, wants to be the first one there. The jockeying is desperate. In 2009, Suzy Walsham, an Australian, was shoved into the wall next to the door. "The impact was so great," she says, "that I initially thought I had broken my nose and lost teeth." She fell and was trampled before she rose and ran on to victory. "I get super nervous and anxious whenever I start" at the Empire State Building, says Walsham, who has won the women's division three times and will be one of about

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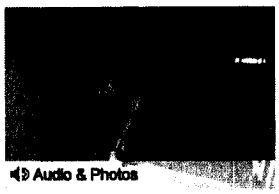

Stairway to Hell

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PERSONAL SAVINGS

650 competitors at this year's race, which takes place Feb. 6. "I really dread the start."

What the racers may dread even more, however, is the sight of Thomas Dold dashing up the stairs two at a time, yanking along on the railings. Dold has won Empire State (known as Esbru among the stair-racing community) a record seven consecutive times. He is the only person in the world who makes a living at stair racing (his sponsors include a German health care company), which makes him the lord of an obscure but nonetheless codified sport. According to the World Cup rankings on towerrunning.com, Dold finished 2012 in first place, with 1,158 points, 157 more than the runner-up, Piotr Lobodzinski of Poland. Four hundred of those points came from his victory at Esbru, tower racing's unofficial world championships, and its oldest contest, dating to 1978. Another 156 stair races, held in 25 nations, generate World Cup points as well.

Dold also sits atop the Vertical World Circuit, a championship tour of eight celebrated races — among them, Esbru — and he is a minor celebrity on YouTube. In one clip, you can see a smiling Dold sprinting stadium steps at a photo shoot for a print ad. In another video, from the Corrida Vertical, a 28-story dash in São Paulo, the announcer cracks, "A shortcut to win the race is break Dold's legs . . . or giving him some sleeping pills." Dold wins and, as he crosses the finish line, still running, peels off his plain white race jersey to reveal a sleek undershirt emblazoned with his Web address, run2sky.com.

In New York last year, Dold may have gotten away with a false start; the video is fairly incriminating. "I was moving before the start," he told me recently. But then, he said, he caught himself and stopped. So he was actually at a disadvantage, he said, "moving backward when the others are moving forward."

In interviews, Dold is chipper and exudes supreme confidence. "I can run backward faster than most people can run forward," he boasts. (He is in fact one of the world's premier backward runners, having completed a heels-first mile in 5:46, a world record.) At times, he lapses into the third person, like a major-sports star, or Donald Trump. "It's all about beating Dold," he told a German reporter not long ago, summing up the stair-racing world. "That's the goal for hundreds of participants."

Most of the important stair races happen in Europe and Asia. A tiny cadre of die-hards — roughly a dozen men and three or four women — travel the globe chasing minuscule cash prizes. The largest single prize, in Taipei, is less than $7,000. Esbru offers no prize money. The race sites are often architecturally significant: the Messeturm tower in Basel; the Palazzo Lombardia in Milan; the Swissôtel in Singapore, designed by I. M. Pei. "There's something very elemental about climbing an iconic building," says Sproule Love, a New Yorker who has finished third at the Empire State Building three times. "You can survey the area and see how far you have come."

Still, the stair racers don't experience architecture so much as stairwells. I assumed their races are characterized by a mind-numbing sameness, but Walsham assured me I was wrong. "Some stairwells turn to the left," she said. "Some turn to the right. Sometimes the stairs are shallow, sometimes they're steep. And the number of floors always varies."

Walsham, who works in Singapore as a manager for a computer-security firm, spent about $12,000 traveling to races last year. In the United States, a small contingent of stair climbers are shelling out similar sums to get to the 100 or so American races offered each year. When I went to Los Angeles recently, for the 51-story Climb for Life race, I met Daniel Dill, who flew in from Texas, happy to pay the $50 entry fee and the requisite $100 donation to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation for a race that would take him less than 13 minutes. Dill, a large man dressed in articulated-toe sneakers, brought with him a special warm-up tool, an Elevation Training Mask. It was designed for Mixed Martial Arts fighters, he said. "It's supposed to stimulate red blood cells and open up the lungs."

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Bill Donahue has written for The Atlantic, Wired and Byliner. He lives in Portland, Ore.

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Editor: Dean Robinson

A version of this article appears in print on January 27, 2013, on page MM18 of the Sunday Magazine with the headline: Stairway to Hell.

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Readers shared their thoughts on this article.

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Climb to the Top NYC

I hope they'll be at Climb to the Top at Rockefeller Center on March 3 - put on by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society! Would love to see stair-climbing legends as I try to just make it all 1,215 steps to Top of the Rock.

Jan. 28, 2013 at 2:34 p.m. RECOMMEND 1

Jonathan Angelllll Soho

This year will be my 6th and FINAL time competing in this race, what I like to call "The StairWay to Hell" http://greatist.com/fitness/stairway-hell-86-stories-pain-suffering-char...

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nate brooklyn

sounds like a good sport to promote at subway exits

Jan. 28, 2013 at 2:31 p.m. RECOMMEND 1

McS portland, me

Big deal. So, this is a significant part of life? Running upstairs. Been there, with marathons, ultras, stairs, cross country, and I have to say that it's all just

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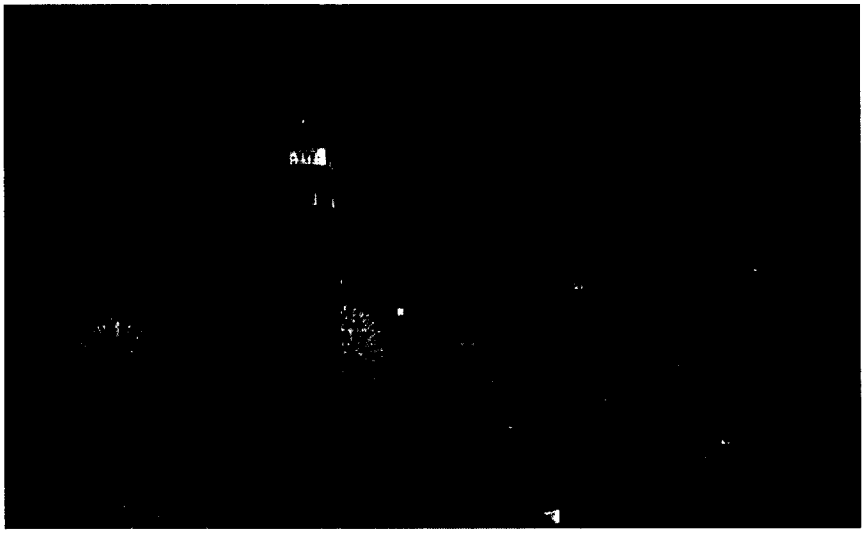

John Minchillo/Associated Press

While the sky lighted up during Macy's Fourth of July fireworks show, the Empire State Building had a bright display of its own.

By MARC SANTORA
Published: July 5, 2013

The Empire State Building threw itself a bit of a dance party on Thursday night.

As fireworks exploded in a spectrum of colors over the Hudson River for the 37th Annual Macy's Fourth of July Fireworks Spectacular, it was a new light show atop the world-famous building that caught many people's attention.

Whether it was grand or garish is a matter of opinion, but it was certainly different.

When a new LED lighting system was installed on the building in 2012, it promised the opportunity to light up the skyline with 16 million colors. There have been several light shows since then that showed what the system could do. But on the Fourth, when all eyes were turned skyward, it seemed that every one of those colors illuminated the building at some point.

"I know the Macy's fireworks are amazing but the Empire State Building lights are stealing the show!!" Damien Basile posted on Twitter.

Multimedia

Empire State Building Lights (via YouTube)

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PERSONAL SAVINGS

The music for the program, called "It Begins With a Spark," was chosen by the singer Usher, and the light show was created by the lighting design artist Marc Brickman to mirror the fireworks.

When the new lighting system, from Philips Color Kinetics, was installed, it replaced an older system that required colored gels to be placed on top of static lamps to light up the building.

Now, the colors can be programmed remotely to change at the stroke of a key. They also glow up to eight times brighter than the old lights.

The building's owners have promised to maintain strict standards on how the new lights will be used. For instance, no advertising is allowed.

However, the Fourth of July offered an opportunity to show off a bit.

"Partnering the world's most famous building with the world's most famous fireworks spectacular can only happen in New York City," said Anthony E. Malkin, whose family controls the building, in a statement. "As the iconic feature of the New York City skyline, we are honored to have this opportunity to add our unmatchable LED lights to the celebration."

For those who prefer a more subdued palette, the schedule for lighting on the building calls for white/white/white until the end of the month.

A version of this article appears in print on July 6, 2013, on page A14 of the New York edition with the headline: A Landmark Now, in 16 Million Colors.

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Skyline-defiling signs targeted by council chief

By Bob Bauder
Monday, July 22, 2013, 11:06 p.m.

Pittsburgh City Council President Darlene Harris wants to stop Downtown building owners from erecting signs on top of their properties.

Harris said the signs, including company names and logos, clutter the city skyline and detract from its aesthetic splendor. The lifelong North Side resident proposed legislation that would prohibit signs erected 40 feet or higher on Downtown buildings.

Real estate brokers say the legislation is discriminatory and could hurt building marketability. But one developer said he understands Harris' concerns.

"I don't, as a developer, feel at all worried about having to conform to a reasonably crafted signage requirement that limits signs to something that doesn't disrupt the continuity of the visible landscape," said Mark Minnerly, director of real estate development for Downtown-based Mosites Co.

Harris said signs are destroying the city skyline and do not mesh with historic city architecture.

"Architects did not intend their artful creations to be pylons for billboards," she said. "This is the city's artwork. It shouldn't be a bunch of advertising."

Existing signs would be grand-fathered under the legislation, which amends an ordinance. Council has scheduled a preliminary vote for Wednesday.

Jason Stewart, executive vice president of Jones Lang LaSalle, a commercial real estate firm with 400 clients Downtown, said rooftop signs provide optimum exposure for companies in the Pittsburgh market.

"The allure won't be as great to relocate to another building and to reinvest in other space Downtown," he said.

Jeffrey Ackerman, managing director of global real estate firm CBRE Inc.'s Downtown offices, said the legislation is discriminatory because existing signs would be permitted.

"Many real estate owners or occupiers of space would be opposed to it," Ackerman said. "It's more of a fairness issue. You're not playing with a level playing field."

Harris has been a proponent of limiting advertising in the city and co-sponsored legislation last year to tax billboards. The legislation, which passed, places a 10 percent levy on revenue generated by billboards.

Lamar Advertising, the largest advertiser in the city, responded by posting at least 12 billboards around the city that criticized Harris and her co-sponsor, Councilwoman Natalia Rudiak.

She said other cities, including New York, have enacted similar restrictions.

"Can you imagine a sign on top of the Empire State Building?" she asked. "I think it's time to draw the line."

Bob Bauder is a staff writer for Trib Total Media. He can be reached at 412-765-2312 or bbauder@tribweb.com.

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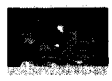
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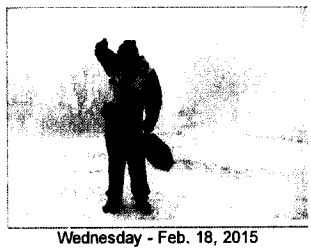
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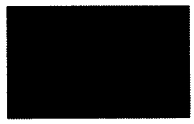

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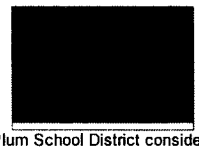

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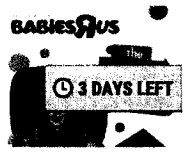

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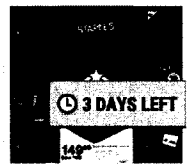

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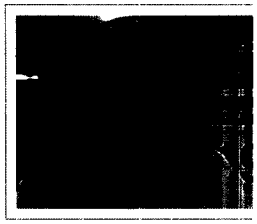

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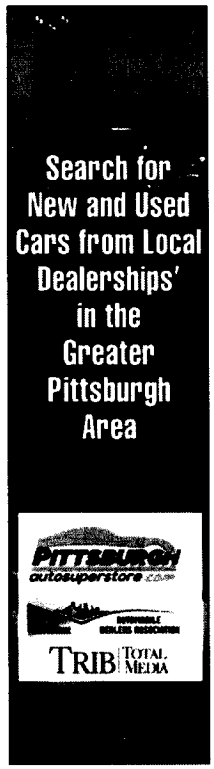

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SQUARE FEET

A New York Landmark Moves Toward an I.P.O. Despite Legal Appeals

Todd Heisler/The New York Times

Significant risks lurk in the fine print of a public offering involving the Empire State Building.

By JULIE CRESWELL
Published: June 4, 2013

Investors hoping to own a piece of the Empire State Building may soon get their chance.

Despite the fact that legal questions are still swirling around the deal, it is expected that the planned public offering of the 102-story tower will proceed.

"I think they'll likely move forward with the I.P.O. as soon as possible," said Eric Jensen, a lawyer with Cooley L.L.P. "They just have to disclose all of the risks so investors know what they're getting into," he added.

As fine print goes, there are some pretty big risks, including the possibility that the whole public offering could be undone.

Last week, stakeholders that own the Empire State Building voted in favor of a plan to sell it as part of an initial public offering that is expected to raise as much as $1 billion.

But the wrinkle in the deal is a lawsuit brought by dissident stakeholders who argued that certain provisions of the deal violated New York State law. A judge ruled a few weeks ago that the vote was legal, but the dissident shareholders filed motions for a stay of the ruling and an appeal of the ruling.

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A lawyer for the dissidents, Stephen B. Meister, said the stay should be decided any day now, but that the appeal would probably not be heard until late fall. He has questioned how the public offering could go forward if a judge could later rule that the vote was invalid, potentially undoing any public offering.

"From a disclosure standpoint, describing how an I.P.O. could be unwound after it is done is tough," said Steve Thel, a professor at Fordham Law School. "But from a strategic standpoint, if you don't move forward with the offering, that allows the dissenters to win even though they've lost in court."

So far, Peter L. Malkin and his son Anthony E. Malkin, the real estate barons whose stake in the public company could be worth about $730 million, are mute on their next move. In an e-mailed response to questions about the public offering and the legal challenges, a spokeswoman for their firm, Malkin Holdings, said it would follow securities rules and "process towards an I.P.O."

The Malkins, who control the Empire State Building but are minority owners, lobbied vigorously to persuade 80 percent of the building's approximately 3,000 stakeholders to vote in favor of a plan to sell to the public shares in Empire State Realty Trust. The trust will combine 19 properties in the New York area that they oversee, including the Empire State Building.

The dissident investors are also uncertain about what happens next.

In a conference call with fellow investors last week, several individuals said they were moving to vote in favor of the offering, fearing that they could otherwise receive much less for their shares.

Now that the Malkins have exceeded the 80 percent approval hurdle, anyone who voted against the proposal will be sent what is called a forced consent letter, giving them 10 days to switch their vote to yes or risk receiving only $100 for their share. The offering values the shares at about $323,000 each.

That clause was the basis of the dissident lawsuit, which argued that under New York State law, the Malkins should pay "fair value" for all of the shares. In late April, Justice O. Peter Sherwood in State Supreme Court in Manhattan rejected the investor group's challenge. That ruling has been appealed.

"It's been quite a roller coaster for us," said Richard Edelman, the California businessman who campaigned against the public offering in the conference call. "It may not be over. It may be over. That's going to be decided, I believe, by the appellate court."

This article has been revised to reflect the following correction:

Correction: June 10, 2013

An article on the Square Feet pages Wednesday about progress toward an initial public offering of a group of properties including the Empire State Building referred imprecisely to the amount of time shareholders who voted against the offering have to consider switching their vote. While they have 10 days to take action, those 10 days are from the time they receive what is known as a forced consent letter, which is sent after 80 percent of shareholders agree to the offering plan — not 10 days from the time the approval vote reaches that threshold.

A version of this article appeared in print on June 5, 2013, on page B10 of the New York edition with the headline: A New York Landmark Moves Toward a I.P.O. Despite Legal Appeals.

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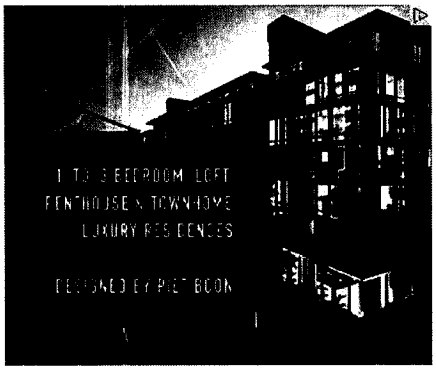

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SFGATE http://www.greenwichtime.com/local/article/Empire-State-Building-bids-complicate-IPO-plan-4637450.php

Empire State Building bids complicate IPO plan

Tim Loh Published 7:30 pm, Friday, June 28, 2013

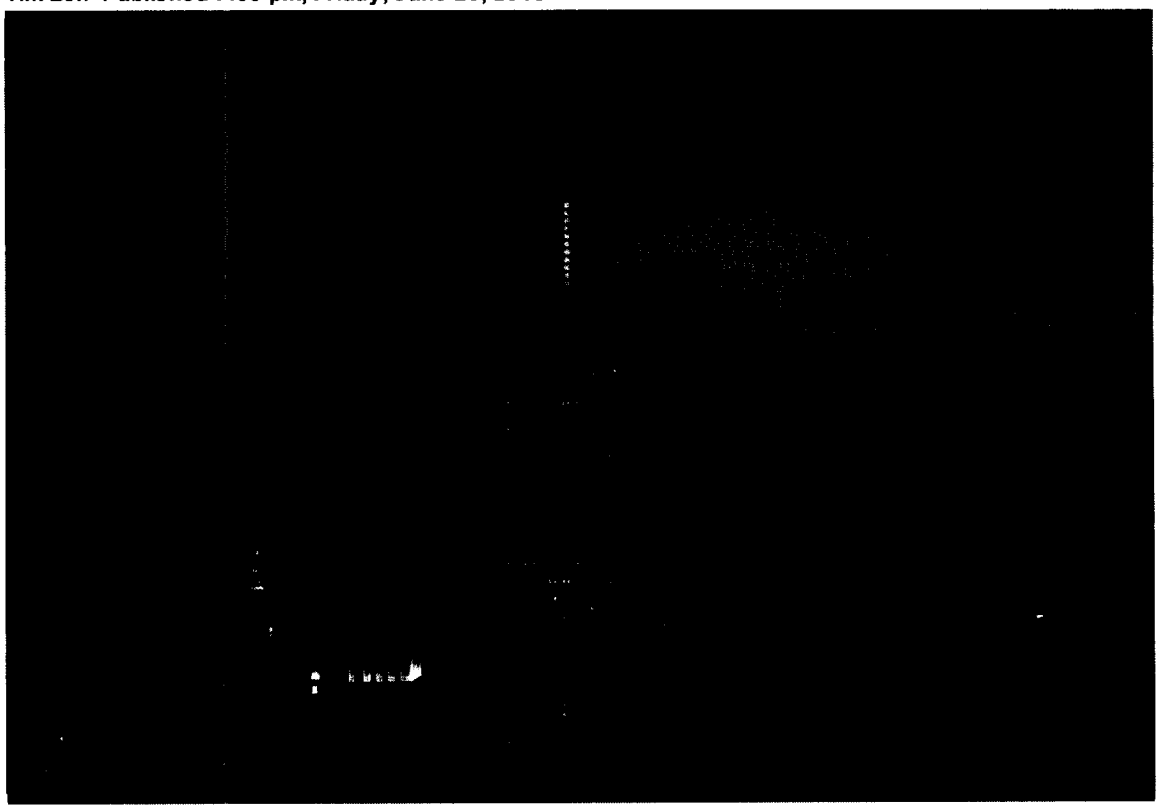

IMAGE 2 OF 2

Greenwich commercial property moguls Peter Malkin, and his son, Anthony Malkin, who control the Empire State Building, have received three unsolicited bids worth at least $2 billion each to buy the New York City landmark.

Well-heeled investors put a new twist in the long-running drama over the ownership of th Empire State Building, offering several different multi-billion dollar bids in recent days to buy the Manhattan skyscraper outright.

For now, the building is under the control of Greenwich commercial property moguls Peter an Andrew Malkin, the father and son pair who have a minority stake in the building and have bee pushing for more than a year to take the ownership public.

They want it to be the crown jewel of a publicly traded real estate investment trust comprised o 19 properties in Greater New York, including Fairfield County.

But even as plans move forward on that front, the three offers represent a legal hurdle.

"We received last week two unsolicited bids to purchase the Empire State Building, one for $2 billion and one for $2.1 billion," the Malkins informed the building's roughly 2,800 stakeholder this week in a letter filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

"We are reviewing the offers and their terms. We consider all matters, including unsolicited offers, consistent with our fiduciary duties, to form a judgment on what action is appropriate."

On Thursday evening, they received a third offer, an amount worth "north of $2.1 billion, all cash," said Jason Meister, a real estate broker at Avison Young, who submitted the proposal to the Malkin family.

That offer came from Thor Equities, which is run by Joseph Sitt, a large New York landlord who owns office and retail properties in Manhattan, Mexico City and Europe, according to The Wall Street Journal.

Meister also submitted the $2 billion offer from a company owned by Rubin Schron, a New Yor City real-estate investor who owns part of lower Manhattan's Woolworth building.

That offer included a $50 million non-refundable deposit, Meister said.

"Both offers I have submitted," Meister said by phone Friday, "allow for investors to stay in the deal, which is critical when evaluating the bids."

According to The Wall Street Journal, which cited "people familiar with the process," the other offer came from a consortium that included investors Philip Pilevsky and Joseph Tabak.

For the Malkins, getting to this point alone has taken more than a year. There have been behind the-scenes battles and courtroom challenges from a small group of the building's stakeholders who are opposed to the real estate investment trust.

In May, however, more than 80 percent of the stakeholders voted to approve the plan, which cleared a contractual hurdle to get the IPO process started. Over the past two weeks, the minority of stakeholders still opposed to the plan received 10-day buyout notices, affording the chance to either change their minds or risk losing their ownership units.

There are about 3,300 ownership units in the Empire State Building, reportedly valued at $320,000 apiece. Per contracts, the buyout would offer just $100.

The Malkins declined to comment for this article, referring to the letter filed with the SEC: "We do not intend to issue a comment until after our review," the letter states.

Meister, the broker, and his father, Stephen Meister, an attorney representing some of the aggrieved Empire State Building stakeholders, argued Friday that the unsolicited bids are significant.

"It becomes a question of what will those (real estate investment trust) securities trade for? How will the market value those securities? And how does that compare to the cash offers?" Stephen Meister said in a phone interview. "(Peter Malkin) has to stop the process of the IPO and analyze this and come forward with his analysis."

Stephen Meister lost a court battle this spring challenging the legality of the $100 forced buyout That paved the way for the public offering, in part, because 100 percent of stakeholders are ultimately needed to bring about the real estate investment trust. Without the buyout provision unanimity appeared potentially impossible.

Meister, however, is appealing that ruling -- and argued Friday that he has a trump card.

"In my appeal, which challenges the legality of the $100 forced buyout, (Peter Malkin) says no one is really getting bought out," Meister said Friday in an email. "If he does a forced buyout he blows that defense."

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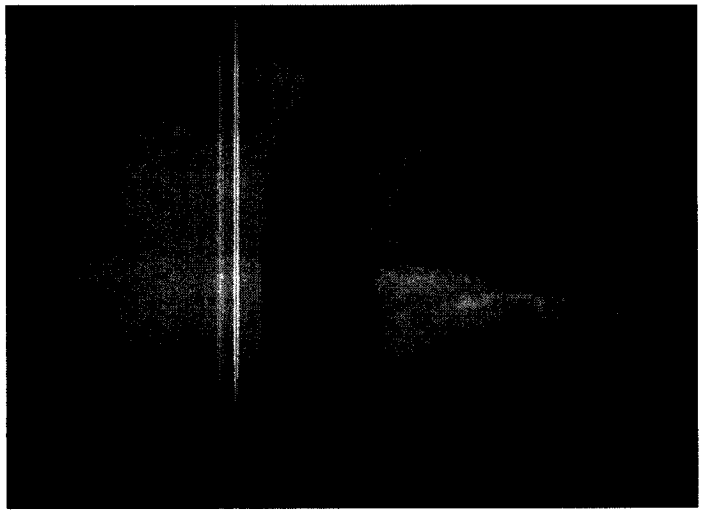

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King Kong clinging and climbing to top of Empire State building tower.

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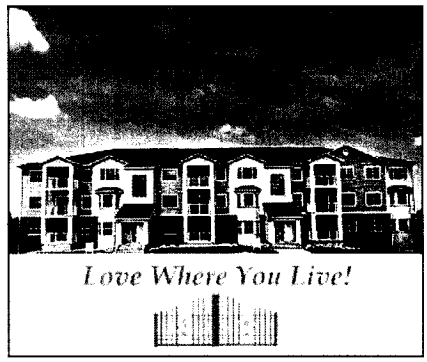

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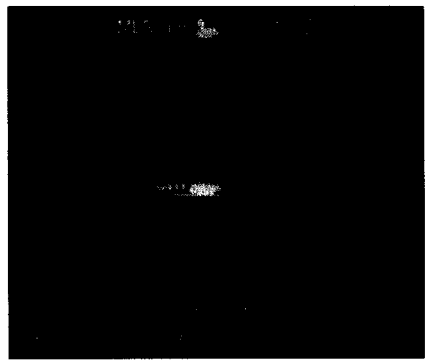

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Judge clears way for Empire State plans

Updated 7:13 pm, Thursday, May 2, 2013

Associated Press

NEW YORK – A Manhattan judge on Thursday backed a $55 million settlement in a court battle over the Empire State Building, effectively clearing the way for a plan to let the public buy shares in the famous New York City landmark.

Judge O. Peter Sherwood told lawyers at a court hearing that he would formally approve the settlement in the coming days with a written ruling.

"I'm satisfied that the settlement reached is fair," Sherwood said.

The settlement stems from a long-running dispute over plans by Greenwich residents Peter Malkin and his son Anthony to offer the public shares in their holdings in Manhattan and Connecticut, including the iconic 102-story skyscraper. The offering is expected to raise $1 billion for a new company called Empire State Trust Inc., which would be publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange. The Malkin family's stake in the trust would be valued at $730 million.

The Empire State Building's controlling investors need the approval of 80 percent of smaller shareholders – which they almost have – for the offering to go forward and the lawsuit settlement to kick in.

"We are pleased by the court's ruling and are proceeding with our solicitation with the intention of closing as soon as we reach the approval threshold," Malkin Holdings said in a statement Thursday. "The fact is that far more investors support this transaction than oppose it. We are focuse on delivering the majority what they want as quickly as possible."

A lawsuit alleged that the building's owners misled non-controlling investors about the proposal to sell the public shares in a new company that would own the building – an accusation the defendants denied.

The plaintiffs also had claimed the initial public offering would place an unfair tax burden on them. Along with creating a $55 million settlement fund, the deal will allow the investors to defer taxes on capital gains.

Both sides had reached a tentative settlement late last year. But final approval was held up by the objections of a small group of investors who still oppose the initial public offering.

There was no immediate response on Thursday to a message left with a lawyer for the opponents.

Some of the country's marquee buildings, including the General Motors building in New York and the Embarcadero Center in San Francisco, are owned by publicly traded companies. But the IPO for the Empire State Building is viewed as a rare chance for investors to own a piece of history – ar Art Deco icon visited by millions of tourists each year and featured in films like "King Kong" and "Sleepless in Seattle."

When the Empire State Building changed hands in 1961, the buyers sold 1,100 shares at $10,000 per share to help finance the deal. Some of the 3,30 investors were ordinary New Yorkers who pulled together just enough cash to buy partial shares.

Earlier this week, Sherwood rejected a challenge by the handful of holdouts to the IPO who argued a decades-old provision – one that would allow th Malkins to buy them out for $100 a share if they voted against the plan – was against the law. The proposed public offering values the shares at more than $300,000 each.

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102 Floors, 10 Million Bricks and One Tangled History

By CHARLES V. BAGLI
Published: May 4, 2013

The Empire State Building stands as an enduring symbol of New York City — and of the mayhem and legal conflict to which New York City real estate titans are prone. The most recent conflict, however, seems to be inching toward a resolution.

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A Nasty, Epic Real Estate Battle With Stakes 102 Stories High (April 29, 2013)

Last week, Peter L. Malkin and his son Anthony E. Malkin, who currently control the Empire State Building, drew closer to their goal of bundling the 102-story tower with 19 other properties to create a $5.2 billion company called Empire State Realty Trust that would offer shares to the public.

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The Malkins, whose stake in the new company is valued at $730 million, have spent the last year trying to convince shareholders to approve the consolidation. In what has turned into an ugly public feud, some shareholders have opposed the plan, saying that while it would be a rich deal for the Malkins, it could expose other investors to the ups and downs of the stock market.

But on Tuesday, Justice O. Peter Sherwood in State Supreme Court in Manhattan rejected an investor group's challenge to the initial public offering. Two days later, he approved a $55 million settlement between a separate group of dissenting shareholders and M[illegible] Holdings. Stephen Meister, a lawyer for some stakeholders in the Empire State Buil[illegible] has vowed to appeal both decisions.

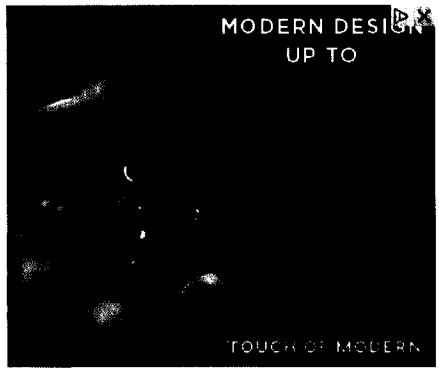
So far, more than 75 percent of the 3,000 shareholders in the Empire State Buildin[illegible] voted in favor of the Malkins' deal; they need 80 percent. If the Malkins succeed, it will cap a long history of struggle to control what was memorably described in film as "the nearest thing we have to heaven in New York."

1930 Construction starts, eventually employing 3,400 workers, using 10 million bricks, 57,000 tons of steel, 473 miles of electrical wire and 200,000 cubic feet of Indiana limestone.

1931 The $41 million Empire State Building opens on May 1, with Gov. Franklin D. Roosevelt and former Gov. Alfred E. Smith, president of the Empire State Company, addressing more than 2,000 guests.

1933 King Kong ascends the 102-story tower (at least on film).

1945 On July 28, a B-25 on a routine flight to Newark crashes into the north side of the fog-shrouded skyscraper, leaving a gash between the 78th and 80th floors and killing 14 people.



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1951 In a deal valued at $34 million, the estate of John J. Raskob, who owned a controlling interest until his death in 1950, sells his stake to a group headed by Roger L. Stevens and Col. Henry J. Crown. The group sells the ground, or title, to Prudential Insurance Company for $17 million.

1954 Colonel Crown buys out his partners, becoming the sole owner of the building.

1961 Harry B. Helmsley, Lawrence A. Wien and his son-in-law Peter Malkin buy control of the building in a $65 million syndication deal. Mr. Wien raises $33 million from more than 3,000 small investors who paid $10,000 for a single share in Empire State Building Associates; that entity subleases the building to a company controlled by Mr. Helmsley and Mr. Wien. At the same time, the group resells the land, or title, to Prudential Insurance for $29 million.

1991 Prudential sells the building's title for $42 million to Oliver Grace Jr., who was secretly acting on behalf of Hideki Yokoi, a Japanese hotelier then serving a prison sentence in connection with a deadly fire at one of his hotels.

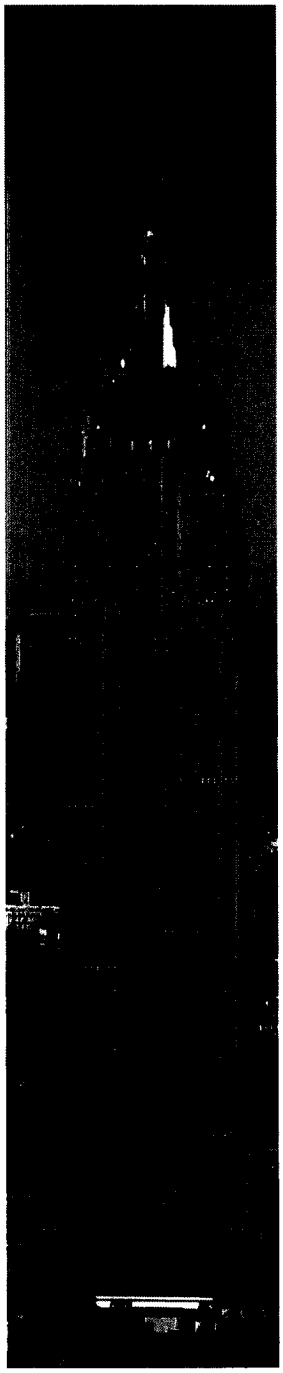
1995 Donald J. Trump, acting in concert with Mr. Yokoi's daughter, Kiiko Nakahara, sues Empire State Building Associates, contending that Mr. Helmsley and Peter Malkin had turned the landmark tower into a "high-rise slum." The legal battle would go on for seven years.

1997 Mr. Helmsley dies on Jan. 4. A nine-year struggle for control begins when Peter Malkin and his son Anthony Malkin sue Mr. Helmsley's widow, Leona, and her husband's former partners at Helmsley-Spear.

2002 Having failed to break the lease, Mr. Yokoi, Ms. Nakahara and their agent, Mr. Trump, sell the title to the Malkins' partnership, Empire State Building Associates, for $57.5 million.

2006 The Malkins wrest control of the property from Helmsley-Spear.

2008 The owners embark on a $550 million upgrade of the tower and begin replacing hundreds of small tenants with higher-paying corporate tenants like Skanska, Lufthansa and LinkedIn.



Richard Drew/Associated Press

2012 The Malkins file plans to form a $5.2 billion publicly traded real estate investment trust comprising 19 properties in the New York area, with the Empire State Building as the centerpiece. A small group of investors opposes the consolidation.

This article has been revised to reflect the following correction:

Correction: May 12, 2013

An article last Sunday about the legal case surrounding creation of a realty trust whose properties would include the Empire State Building misstated the middle initial of a member of a group that bought a stake in the building in 1951. He was Roger L. Stevens, not Roger I.

A version of this article appeared in print on May 5, 2013, on page BU3 of the New York edition with the headline: 102 Floors.

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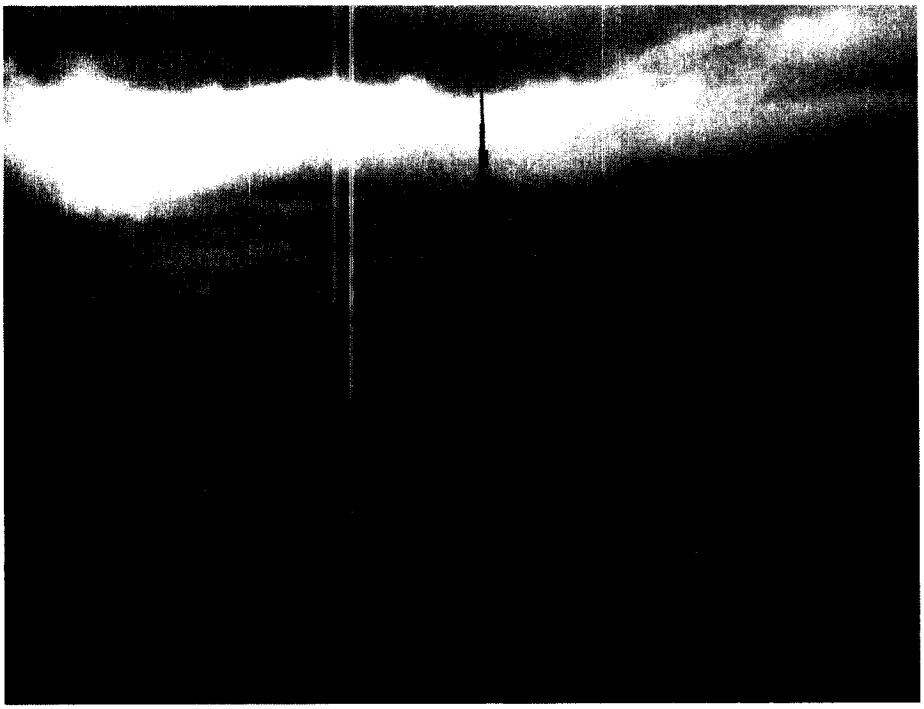

A plan to roll the Empire State Building into a real estate investment trust is a whisker away from obtaining the necessary investor approval for a stock offering allowing the public to own a piece of the iconic skyscraper, according to a regulatory filing on Thursday.

Investors holding 99.3 percent of the Empire State Building units needed to approve the plan for an initial public offering have voted for it, according to the filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

The plan calls for the building to be the centerpiece of more than 18 properties in Empire State Realty Trust Inc.

The latest update on the vote comes in the wake of a court decision upholding a provision that would force a unitholder to vote for the deal or sell back the unit for $100 once investors holding 80 percent of the units vote for the plan. That would enable the 100 percent backing needed under the original 1961 agreement.

So far votes representing 79.6 percent of the units in the Empire State Building have been in favor of the plan.

Two other buildings require similar unitholder approval to be included in the REIT. As of Wednesday, investors in 250 East 57 St. have approved the plan, according to the filing.

The REIT so far has received the 98.8 percent of the votes needed for 60 East 42nd Street, also known as One Grand Central Place, to be included.

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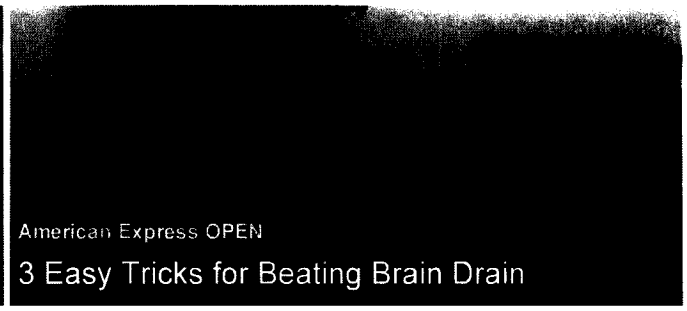

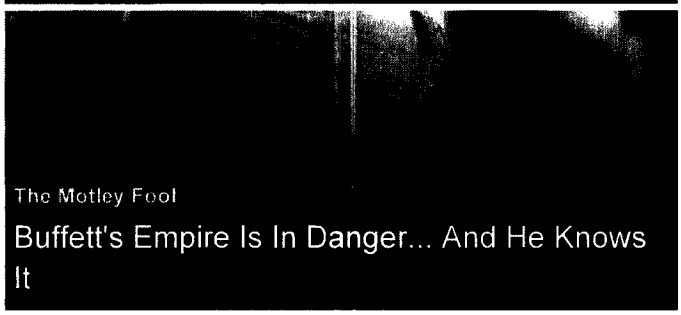

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Kevil Oleary 2 years ago

LOL will the suckers and bagholders pease form a line ... that's it, you will own the empire state building excluding the rights to tourist income and anything else of value. But hey its the empire state building .... shall we shall $10 a share? Get in quick its gonna pop! LOL

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This Timelapse Will Spin You 360° Around The Empire State Building

Daniel Goodman, provided by
BUSINESS INSIDER
Published 11:16 am, Saturday, May 18, 2013

While it is not the tallest building in New York, the Empire State Building is one of the most recognizable in the city's skyline, and its nightly light show can be spotted around the city and even in New Jersey.

We used this 360° building capture photo technique to create a timelapse video of what it would be like to spin around the most iconic building in NYC. Watch below.

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Produced by Daniel Goodman

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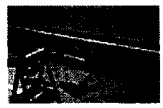
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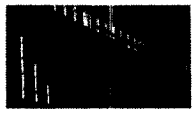

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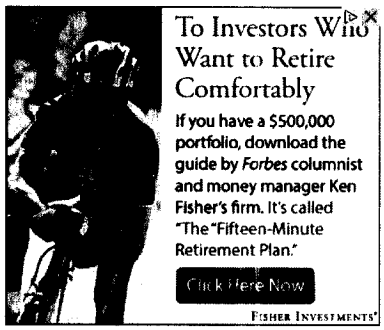

New York

The company that owns the Empire State Building is a step closer to going public.

According to a Securities and Exchange Commission filing, more than 80 percent of shareholders approved a plan to turn the privately held company into a publicly traded real estate investment trust.

The plan, spearheaded by father-and-son real estate magnates Peter and Anthony Malkin, could raise up to $1 billion by selling stock in a new company. It will be called Empire State Realty Trust.

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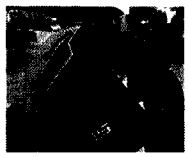
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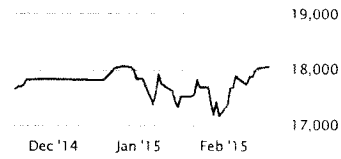

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