

# Travel Scene



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C&E Thursday, June 28, 1990

## Day-trippers gamble on Atlantic City

By Charlene Mitchell  
special writer

Need a vacation but can't take the time? That's the dilemma people are facing today as workdays get longer and time out periods are few.

If you want to get away from it all without spending much time or money, Hamilton, Miller, Hudson & Payne Travel of Southfield may have your problem solved. With its one-day jaunts to places like Atlantic City, N.J. and Nassau, Bahamas you can spend the day away from home without having to pack a bag.

For \$99 with advanced reservations, you can leave Detroit Metro Airport in the morning and return just after midnight. The time between flights is spent having a ball.

The cost includes roundtrip airfare, a \$15 meal coupon and transfers to and from the airport in Atlantic City. Also, to get you started in the casino, Hamilton Miller gives every traveler \$30 in quarters. If you don't want to play the slots with the money, it's yours to keep.

The \$15 meal coupon is good at any of the restaurants at Tropworld and there's plenty to choose from including over-sized deli sandwiches, gourmet seafood or steaks grilled before your eyes.

If you travel in a group or with a friend, you can spend time chatting on the way without bringing work up.

IF YOU decide to go alone, as many do, it's fun meeting others who are trying to "get away" for the same reasons.

"They go because it's a lot of fun," said Ron Payne, vice president of Hamilton Miller. "We get a lot of repeaters with this trip. Senior citizens and other groups who go about twice a year."

There is a variety of travelers on these trips — from senior citizens and families to couples and singles.

"That's why we use Tropworld as our hotel," Payne said. "Everything is there, from the casinos and restaurants, to the big indoor amusement center for the kids."

The trip is great for groups and companies that give their employees the day off to spend together.

Mel Farr Automotive Group, based in Oak Park, sponsored a trip with 37 auto salespeople, managers and dealership executives.

"I thought it would be fun for me to do something unusual with the people who work for me," said Mel Farr, president of Mel Farr Automotive Group and owner of three Oakland County dealerships.

"We spent about \$100 in the slot machines and won over \$400 before we stopped," said a 57-year-old woman who traveled with her daughter. The duo took their winnings to the shops on The Boardwalk and purchased several souvenirs with cash left over to brag about.

NOT EVERYONE was so lucky. Tony Turner, Mel Farr car salesman, will attest the hazards of a trip like this. He and Bill Botzen, a co-worker, sat at one casino table for four hours hoping to hit the jackpot.

"I lost a bundle, don't tell my wife," Tony joked.

Rico Kirkland of Detroit received a one-day trip as a gift from his mother-in-law.

"It's my first time here and it's a lot of fun," Kirkland said. "I just hope I don't lose too much money."

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## Pack up the kids and go

By Daniel Alpert  
special writer

It was four years after I wrote an article about budget touring in Scandinavia that I ran into the editor who published it. He asked me when I might submit another story.

"My wings are clipped," I explained. "Doreen and I are into bringing up Hilary, our 1-year-old daughter."

Another four years passed, and despite our desire to wander, along came our son, Neil. It would be awhile before we could have a meaningful family vacation. We knew we'd have to edge our way back into the kind of travel we love, exploring new places on our own, but this time with children. Now, our step-by-step plan seems to be working and may help other parents get back on the road again.

### BUILDING STAMINA

Those treks along I-94 to visit Grandma and Grandpa in Chicago are not the trips that I could write about. But like any drive of more than four hours to friends or relatives, they give even a pre-toddler a sense of distance between rest areas, anticipation of stopping for a snack and excitement of getting to where you're going.

For the slightly older child, we learn packing limitations and the thrill of endlessly examining and re-telling maps and the magic moment of crossing a state line. All of this exposure provides context for trips to come without the added pressure of actually touring each destination if you don't want to.

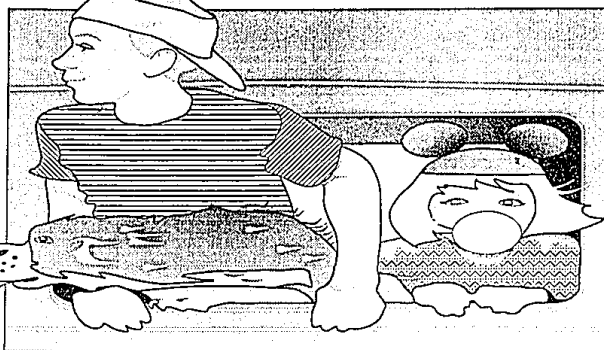
### CAN YOU SAY MOTEL?

After the basic drive has been mastered, it's time to check out and into a motel. The goal here is to balance excitement with sleep. It may not work, so a single overnighter is the way to try it.

For our overnight trip, we drove to Sea World, south of Cleveland, checking into a nearby Knight's Inn at what was supposed to be a 14-year-old Neil's afternoon nap time. He went wild.

This was Fantasyland to him. The whole family in one room! Suitcases to pull apart! Running back and forth between TV and the heating/cooling unit, turning dials and pushing buttons. Just opening a drawer and discovering a Gideon Bible brought cries of "Book! Book!"

We were not the first visitors to get to Sea World the next morning, but knowing that our vacation would end that night helped keep us going through what was actually an enjoyable visit. More importantly, the real mission of exposing the youngest to "Phase II" of travel had been accomplished and somehow survived.



TAMMIE GRAY'S staff artist

### KIDDIE VACATIONS

If Neil "over estimated" a room at Knight's Inn, what word can describe experiencing Disney World at age 2?

From the excitement of Metro Airport, to the plane ride, to the buses and rental cars, to the Big Park itself, this was a quantum leap in vacationing.

With our previous motel experience still fresh in our memories (I had taken videos) we decided that two adjoining rooms at a more distant but less expensive Quality Inn would be the logical self defense.

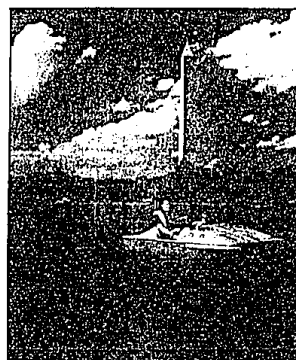
Neil could be put to bed in one room while Doreen, Hilary and I stayed in the other room. Then after he fell asleep in the crib, Hilary could be moved into the bed in that other room. It worked, and in the morning, I walked in to find them both in his crib, munching Cheerios and watching Sesame Street.

This setup is fine, but too unnecessarily costly to be anything more than a temporary solution to a young traveler's excitement. Our next attempt would be one room for two nights.

### CUE NIAGARA FALLS

Driving across southern Ontario into New York State gave the children more new areas to color in their maps of places they've been. Now that Neil was 2½, and we'd worn off a bit of the novelty of motel rooms, the four of us checked into one motel room along the highway that leads to the town of Niagara Falls, Ontario.

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DOREEN ALPERT

Vacation veterans, Dan and Neil Alpert, 3, paddleboat on the Tidal Basin in Washington, D.C. From this point on, the fearless Alpert foursome is ready to see the world.



DOREEN ALPERT

During the early stages of travel, Hilary, 8, and Neil, 2, enjoy Niagara Falls with their dad, Dan Alpert. At this point, travel stamina has been established and sleeping is possible even with the excitement of staying in a motel room.

## Golfing is a BEAR at resort



Crossroads

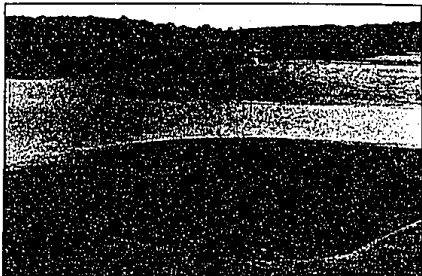
Iris Jones

In our family we have a saying about golf. As you go out the door with a club in your hand, somebody yells, "golf your age!" This gets easier as you get older so by age 60 you hope to score 60, for nine holes that is.

With this background in mind, you will not be surprised that I don't golf. The Bear, the course designed by Jack Nicklaus at Grand Traverse Resort near Traverse City. The Bear is the scene of several major golf events this summer, allowing those of us who golf our age to watch in amazement as "real golfers" do their stuff.

The Michigan Open has been played this week and culminates on June 28. The Ameritech Senior Open runs July 16 through 22. The Michigan Bell Showdown, which pits various winners against one another, will be held August 16.

THESE EVENTS are for Golfers with a capital "G." Those of us who golf with a lower case "g" stand at



MICKY JONES

The deep sand traps at The Bear golf course at Grand Traverse Resort are a golfers nightmare.

the sides with our mouths open and watch. We are the ones behind the ropes, the spectators who scatter quickly when the pros occasionally hook the ball into the crowd.

If you ever wondered how people grow up to be "real golfers," meet Pat Chisholm of Birmingham. Pat started playing golf at Brother Rice High School, graduated in 1982 and promptly started playing golf for

Florida Southern.

I met him at Tretoops, the course designed by Robert Trent Jones Sr. at Sylvan Resort near Gaylord. I stood on the sixth tee, looking straight down a steep hill of grass to the green and hit a ball that disappeared across the tretoops, never to be seen again. Pat was working at Tretoops, training with pro Rick

Smith, and getting his dreams in order.

Pat wanted, and still wants, to be a pro golfer. He is willing to take the hard work and the lumps that go with the dream. He hasn't managed to qualify for the PGA yet but he has been playing mini-tours in Florida and getting better.

He qualified for the Buick Open last summer, lasted 36 holes, and will try again this summer. He also qualified for the first phase of the U.S. Open which started with 6300 contenders. He was still in there when the number got to 500, but he didn't make it to the final count of 94.

If you were one of the spectators at the Michigan Open this week, you saw Pat Chisholm playing The Bear. Those of us who golf our age may shudder at the water holes and the deep grass-faced bunkers, but Pat is a Golfer and he'll keep playing until he makes it.

If you prefer to watch from the sidelines, you can still get tickets to the Ameritech Senior Open, which begins with practice rounds July 18 and 19, continues through the Pro-Am play July 18 and 19 and climaxes with the Ameritech Senior Open Friday, Saturday and Sunday July 20, 21 and 22.

Ticket prices per person per day, are \$3 in advance and \$5 at the gate



MICKY JONES

Pat Chisholm of Birmingham tees up on the 8th hole of the Robert Trent Jones Tretoops course near Gaylord.

for the practice rounds, \$5 and \$8 for the Pro-Am and \$10 in advance and \$15 at the gate for the Ameritech Senior Open. Buy tickets at Michigan AAA outlets, any PGA pro shop, northern Michigan Shell gas stations, northern Michigan golf resorts, Pro Golf of Traverse City or at Grand Traverse Resort.

For more information, or to buy your ticket with a credit card, tele-

phone (313) 540-8155. And when you are watching some poor soul get out of a bunker at The Bear, remember this. Jack Nicklaus designed The Bear, and he qualifies for the senior circuit this year, but he won't be there for the Senior Open. He'll be overseas playing in the British Open. Some people will do anything to get out of playing that course.