

Travel Scene

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Chicago broadcast museum

\$19.95 makes you a Mort Crim clone

By Mike Michaelson

If you've ever wondered how you'd look and perform behind a news-anchor desk, live out your fantasy at the Museum of Broadcast Communications in Chicago.

And your favorite co-host can slide into the anchor chairs at the MBC NewsCenter and read the news from the Teleprompter as the news-tape rolls.

You'll also introduce the weather man, superstar WGN's Tom Skillman, and read the sports scores, so you can make sure the Cubbies, or your team, win.

You'll feel like a professional newscaster as a floor manager helps you with a blue-blazer bearing the MBC crest, clips on a tiny microphone and positions you on the set.

You get a copy of the script for a quick once-over and instructions about when to break and which camera to look into. Then it's, "Good evening from the MBC NewsCenter. I'm (your name) and these are the top news stories."

The result is a 15-minute newscast, complete with opening music and credits introducing "Chicago's

newest news team." There's corresponding footage of floods and fires, of Mayor Richard M. Daley and Michael Gorbachev.

WGN sports announcer Harry Caray yells his trademark "Holy Cow" as you voice-over footage of Hymie Sandberg sneaking a home run into the bleachers at Wrigley Field. To close, there is the obligatory humor piece ("Finally, a story about a couple who met and were married at a roller rink"), with a spot for your own ad-libs. The finished product even has actual commercials plugged in.

After taping, you can critique your TV debut on a screen in the technicians' booth. The helpful technicians are communications students.

If your performance pleases, you can take home on videotape your 15 minutes of fame. Cost is \$19.95, with no obligation to buy, although most would-be newscasters do.

Tapings begin at 10 a.m. and occur 20 minutes before each hour thereafter. Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Reservations are accepted, and usually necessary.

If you regard a commercial break as a signal to raid the fridge or for



This is the Edgar Bergen display at the Museum of Broadcast Communications in Chicago. Here, the venerated ventriloquist is honored with the display of Candy Bergen's "brother," Charlie McCarthy, Mortimer Snerd, and Effie Klinker. Another exhibit

display pays homage to "Fibber McGee and Molly," the quintessential radio comedy that was broadcast weekly from 1935 to 1950.

Belly laughs usually result from the screening of a British beer commercial featuring an impromptu song-and-dance routine by two staid pub patrons.

of hours of television and radio tapes, all of which are accessible for research, study, or purely nostalgic

entertainment.

There's a user-friendly computer

Please turn to Page 6

Tourists asked to be nice to nature

Betty Holden-Hengert of Russell's Travel Services in Laramie encourages her clients to follow the "10 commandments of eco-tourism" recommended by the American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA). ASTA is an international travel trade association representing 1,000 travel agency professionals in 25 countries.

In the coming decade, tourism will be the world's largest industry, with some half-billion people traveling each year. The resulting environmental, cultural and ethical impacts on destinations will be profound," she said.

Environmentally stressed areas already suffer from water, air, noise and visual pollution. Endangered plants, animals and habitats demand our attention.

As fellow passengers on the planet Earth, all travelers share a responsibility of respect for other cultures and concern for the natural resources so that they may be enjoyed by generations to come."

According to Holden-Hengert, environmentally-aware travelers can prevent much potential damage to Earth by following the "10 commandments":

1. Leave only footprints, take only photographs and memories.

2. Respect the frailty of the environment. Realize that all of us must be willing to help in its preservation.

3. To make vacations more meaningful, take time beforehand to learn the customs, manners and culture of the area. While on a trip, learn more about the area, talk to local people.

4. Respect and support local cultures, religions, traditions, crafts, services, customs and the privacy and dignity of residents, especially when taking photographs.

5. Never litter. Carry litter bags with you. Leave your surroundings cleaner than you found them.

6. Do not buy products made from



According to the "10 commandments of eco-tourism," travelers should "never touch animals." While that might be hard to resist where

cute monkeys are concerned, Big John the alligator in the Okefenokee Swamp Park at Waycross, Ga. shouldn't have a problem.

Environmentalists say growth of tourism threatens planet

AP — It's vacation time, 2001 A.D. Your great-grandchildren pack camping gear into their jet car and head for the woods. After skimming miles and miles of highway, they reach the forest.

They park, unpack and enter a sort of futuristic Noah's Ark, a glass-enclosed environment containing what's left of Earth's trees and plants.

It's not an unlikely scenario, according to environmentalists concerned about cumulative effects of acid rain, deterioration of the ozone layer and industrial exploitation of the forests.

Additionally, there's concern that current increases in tourism to remote and ecologically fragile areas essential to Earth's overall environment — areas such as the Antarctic, the Amazon and other rain forests, the Galapagos, Afri-

ca and wildlife preserves and trails in the Andes and Himalayas — will cause irreversible environmental damage, ultimately on a planet-wide scale.

We want travelers to experience this, but they must respect and protect the area and we have to make sure that the future might be brighter if travelers assume responsibility for preserving nature and the environment.

As founder of Ecotourism, a Maryland-based, non-profit foundation dedicated to preservation of island and ocean environments, Naveen says an avid advocate of responsible tourism, or ecotourism, as a means of countering deterioration of our planet's fragile ecosystems.

The Antarctic and other unspoiled areas are so awe-inspiring they change people's outlook," Naveen says. "It's natural to become

Stuck in Florida, airline broke and a war afoot

I was aboard an Eastern Airlines flight between Cancun, Mexico, and Miami, Fla., when war broke out in the Middle East. And I was in Boca Grande, Fla., with an Eastern ticket in my hand, when Eastern went out of business.

I can't leave home for five days without disaster striking at home or abroad.

My travel agents have discouraged their clients from buying Eastern for several months because the airline had been in bankruptcy since December. They worked hard to get the best of all the tricks available, but it is no fun to be stranded when an airline goes out of business.

I bought my ticket on Eastern because it was the best. My sets were fully refundable when they stranded me in Florida. I was looking for a way out.

I called a spot that Friday evening to my travel agent, Chuck Rogers, of Rogers Travel, who was wintering in the sun. He said, "I'll get you a flight to the 11 o'clock news. The wait is going to be every minute."

He was right. Eastern had stopped flying. The 11 o'clock news was on. American Airlines had agreed to honor Eastern tickets.

As it turns out, most airlines are flying Eastern tickets.

You are going to be stranded, it's better to be stranded in Florida than in Fla. Aviv, but I still had to call for work the following Monday morning. I started dialing air-

lines for hours. I sat listening to automated voices saying, "All of our reservations are held, our first available departure is at 11 a.m. This would be followed by 30 minutes of silence. I was continually assured I had been on the line and would be called back.

Finally I went to bed and resumed dialing. I was asleep with the phone pressed against my ear when a voice started me out of my reverie.

CROSSROADS

Iris Jones

I made a reservation and when I reached the Fort Myers airport Sunday I joined a line that approached a sign reading, "Passengers with Eastern tickets, come on in and my ticket is valid." I had been a registered host many, many times and had been so lucky I called Longtime Leader of Leader Travel, Inc., in Brighton. She didn't have many stranded Easterners because she always tells her clients when an airline is in bankruptcy and what the ticks are.

If they are flying very soon after buying the ticket it's one thing, but the x's reserve six months ahead of a bankrupt airline they may never get out of Michigan," she said.

What has the war done to business travel? Not a lot, except that a lot of travel right now. Many business travelers have canceled international flights. Most vacation trips to Europe are scheduled for spring and summer, and the planes are canceled yet.

Darlene had a travel problem herself. She was scheduled to fly to Sydney, Australia, and board the cruise ship Royal Viking Sea, but she canceled.

There are 60 countries on the official warning list right now. Two of them are the Philippines and Thailand.

I also called Nancy Devereaux of Air World Travel in Westland. She had not encouraged her clients to fly Eastern, so the only calls she received were from people who had bought their tickets directly from the airline and needed to be rescued. She gave them the address for Eastern Airline Refunds, Eastern Airline, Inc., Miami, Fla., 33148.

Please turn to Page 6