

Travel Scene

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Chicago broadcast museum

\$19.95 makes you a Mort Crim clone

By Mike Michaelson
special writer

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.

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

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

You'll feel like a professional newscaster as a floor manager helps you on with a blue blazer bearing the NBC 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 when to wait to look into. Then it's "Good evening from the NBC NewsCenter. I'm [your name] and these are the top news stories at this hour."

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 Garofalo.

WGN sports announcer Harry Caray yells his trademark "Holy Cow" as you voice-over footage of Ryne Sandberg smacking 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-lies. The finished product even has actual commercials plugged in.

After the 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 on 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 Andy Bergen's "brother," Charlie McCarthy, Mortimer Snerd, and Effie Klinker. Another exhibit

some rapid-fire remote channel-shuffling, stop by the kiosk that screens 100 of the funniest commercials.

Many are foreign. You'll see dry British humor and continental frankness at work, as well as some of America's best, including regional commercials that may be new to you. Those for Alaska Airlines are especially creative.

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

pub patrons, and from an Eliza Doolittle in reverse, a hilarious attempt to teach a woman with rounded upper-lip curves to speak Cockney.

Unquestionably, this museum of memories, with its displays of vintage radio and television sets and its special exhibits, is great fun. But there is a serious side.

Its mission is to preserve valuable tapes that were being lost and to recognize the many contributions of midwesterners to American broadcasting.

Museum archives house thousands

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

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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 Hadden-Hengert of Russell's Travel Service in Livonia encourages her clients to follow the "10 commandments of eco-tourism" recommended by the American Society of Travel Agents. ASTA is an international travel trade association representing 21,000 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 Hadden-Hengert, environmentally aware travelers can exercise much potential damage 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

It's vacation time, 2091 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 wildlife.

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-

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

Paul Naveen, an author of "Wild In—Spartanman, Institution Press, 1990, \$29.95, a book about Antarctica, says the future might be brighter if travelers assume responsibility for preserving nature and the environment.

As founder of Oceanica, a Maryland-based, non-profit foundation dedicated to preservation of island and ocean environments, Naveen is an avid advocate of responsible tourism—or eco-tourism—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

a naturalist once you've witnessed the Antarctic's majestic snow and looked a person in the eye.

Now, he says, travelers to experience this "fantasy must respect and protect the area and wildlife. Numbers of visitors should be limited. Tours must be run by environmentally concerned companies led by experienced guides. Otherwise, these areas could be destroyed."

Case in point: An Argentine ship that carried two passengers on 11-day Antarctic cruises sank in fog, spilling about 250,000 pounds of fuel. No one was injured, but thousands of some 2,000 penguins were seriously polluted with fuel, some consequences that cannot yet be assessed.

For more information, contact Oceanica at 2124 Route 97, Crossville, Md. 21224.

Stuck in Florida, airline broke and a war afoot

I was aboard an Eastern Airlines plane 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.

Most travel agents have discouraged their clients from buying Eastern tickets in recent months because the airline has been in bankruptcy since. The airline had earmarked a portion of the cost of all the tickets it sold for its own benefit to be used when an airline goes out of business.

I bought my ticket on Eastern because I had been told that Eastern tickets, even very old ones, were fully refundable. I was told I could stand in a Florida airport. I wasn't looking for a refund, I was looking for a way out.

I spent that Friday evening in a hotel. Chuck Rogers of Miami, who was wintering in Boca Grande, called me at 11 o'clock news. The airline was going to rise every minute and Eastern had stopped flying. The airline had filed for bankruptcy.

I was going to be stranded in Florida for a while, but I still had to get to work the following Monday morning. I started dialing air-

line numbers. I sat listening to the automated voices saying "all of our flights are busy, our first available flight will be..." This was followed by 10 minutes of silence. I was eventually assured I had been put on the list and that I could get to work the following Monday morning.

I was asleep with the phone pressed against my ear when a voice started in mid-sentence. "American Airlines, this is..."

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. American honored my ticket and I flew home."

I wondered how many other people had been so lucky. I called for one Leader of Local 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 risks are.

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

What has the war done to business? People are very reluctant to travel right now. Many business travelers have cancelled international flights. Most vacation trips to Europe are scheduled for spring and summer, and they haven't cancelled 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 cancelled.

There are 60 countries on the list of failed 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 were to be rescued. She gave them the address for Eastern refunds. Eastern Airline, Inc. Passenger Refunds (MIAAH), Miami, Fla. 33148.

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