Some take Web sites too seriously



It's almost a status symbol with some people. And every company, big and small, now seemingly has an online presence. But a whole lot the sites are nothing but self-serving puffery.

Have you noticed?

So. wanna have some fun with hose who teld. days.
It's almost

puffery.

Have you noticed?

So ... wanna have some fun with those who take their Web sites much too scriously?

A reader named Linda Burns sent along a great way to have fun and play a harmless online prank. It involves a site that turns any Webpage into a Valley Girl sport. When you go to the Valley Girl site, it will have a box that says, "enter the URL here."

Type in the URL, or Internet address of some site you're familiar with, like, say, your employer's fyou want to get some Gife giggles going. Or, if you want, try www.pcmik.com, as Linda did.

Then watch what happens. This page changes it to a site filled with Valley Girl isms. When my site was processed through the Valley Girl translator, it changed from the online home of High Tech Reporter Mike Wendland' to "the on-dweebnet home of High Tech

Stud Poppy Wendland."
Hmmm.
Try it with your own site, you'll see what I mean. Don't worry, it's just temporary. It doesn't really change anything on tho server. It just looks like it does.
You can even e-mail a copy of the site off to friends.
First, go to the valley girl-type site. The address is: www.80s. com/Entertainment/ValleyURL/. Then, type in any URL you choose.

you choose.

"I typed in some real stuffy ones," says Linda, "and suddenly those stuffy sites become very humorous. You'll have to try it to appreciate how funny it is."

Other fun sites

Other fun sites

Here are some other fun sites readors, radio listeners and TV viewers sent along this week:

• Coupon savings — (www.supermarkets. com) · This is a great way to save at the supermarket. Just like the coupons you get at the newspaper, these online versions can be printed out and then clipped. The version I checked had \$35 in coupon savings for every day products. Besides national discounts, just type in your zipode and you'll get a list of local supermarkets offering even more savings.

• Online stories — (http://www.digitalstoryteller.com/YITI) · If you're into photojournalism, this is a site you'll

come back to many times. It's maintained by the National Press Photographers Association and, besides their often stunning pictures and stories, they shave insights and feelings in diary-form as they carry out their projects.

• Online bookmarks.

• Online bookmarks - Computers and are always misplacing bookmarks, then bookmark this site and forget about the others. This site lets you set up and keep all your favortie Net bookmarks as a file on their server.

You can organize, categorize and file them by the hundreds if you want and then, use this as your home page when you go online. No matter what computer you use, you've always got all your bookmarks. Best of all, its free CyberFairs—(www. This site is run by the clubbal Schoelnet Foundation and you'll be absolutely amazed my wide and schools required for the radictional science for the tradictional science of the control of of the con

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DOJ vs Microsoft – (http://www.usdoj.gov/atr/cases3/micros/1763.htm) On the other hand, if you stay awake nights worrying about the evil Microsoft empire, this site will adfuel to your fears. It contains the complete 52-page text of the Department of Justice antitrust complaint against the software mplaint against the software

Mike Wendland overs the Internet for NBC-TV Newschannel stations across the country and can be
seen tocally on WDIV-TV4, Detroit.
His "PC Talk" radio show airs
Saturday and Sunday afternoons
on WXXT-Radio AM1220. His latest book "The Complete No Geek
Speak Guide to the Internet" is
available in book stores or through
his website at
http://www.pemike.com

Mitta from page B4

By the way, it might interest you to know how the father of standard deviation Abraham de standard deviation Abraham de Moivre started an experiment that eventually led to the calcula-tion of standard deviation. This

that eventually led to the catcularion of standard deviation. This information is presented in the accompanying box.

Since 1970, Standard & Poor's 500 index has recorded a standard deviation of 16.9, meaning that 95 percent of the time, its annual return should fall within two times the standard deviation of 16.3 percent about the mean annual return of 14.2 percent, or from -18.4 percent to 46.9 percent. Put differently, assuming a normal distribution of 52 results, in about five years per century the annual return should be more than 48.8 percent or be less than -18.4 percent. Of course, past performance is not a guarantee of future results.

As a potential investor, you

to of future results.

As a potential investor, you must ask yourself if this is the kind of variability, or risk, that you can stomach and survive. If you can, then stick around, enjoy the wild ride, and hope to get the average return as a reward.

But should you despair if you can't handle this much volatility? Not necessarily. You can always find a fund with a lower standard deviation. It would give you a smoother ride, but you would also

settle for a lower return as part of the less risky packet.

It should be pointed out here that it's not hard to find standard deviation's shortcomings. A fund operating in a stable sector can have a low standard deviation for years. However, if that sector's conditions suddenly tank, the fund can follow. That happened in 1994, when interest rates leveled and low-risk mortgage funds of

fund can follow. That happened in 1994, when interest rates leveled and low-risk mortgage funds collapsed. Still, standard deviation offers a sound way to compare funds that operate in the same sector and to evaluate funds across different sectors. Let us now turn to an appealing alternative. Over the long hadf; some tortoises have been skillful enough to keep pace with the hares. Such a result is achieved by using what has widely come to be known as the Asset Allocation Strategy. By diversifying between stocks, bonds, and money market instruments, in the long run, comparable returns can be expected to be achieved by lowering the portfolio's standard deviation. Is that important to you? It is, if you don't like volatility and believe, as most investors do, that we have already entered a new ern of more short-term volatility. And that is the compelling reason to pay close attention to standard deviation.

Jobzilla'

from page B4

putting more people to work
than at any time in our history.
As the Governor said this morn
ing, Michigan is dobzilla.

For the 37th consecutive
month, Michigan's unemployment
rate was below the national rate, Aprile national rate was
4.3 percent. "Our unemployment
rate has been lower than the
national rate for more than
three years," Rothwell noted, "a
record that indicates we are not
riding the wave of the economy,

but helping create it."
Michigan's expanding economy
has generated a high demand for
construction workers, even during the normally slow winter

ing the normally slow winter months.

April, which usually is a strong construction month, again showed a surge in con-struction jobs, leading the state's overall climb in industry jobs. The state's seasonally adjusted industry jobs totaled 4,518,000 in April.

Cowboy from page B4 team hits the sack tucking them-selves into sleeping bags laid out

selves into sleeping bags laid out under the stars.
Day two dawns with a hearty breakfast and a trip to the corral where the teams are introduced to their horses. They spend the morning learning to saddle and bridle their horse and taking short rides in the yard. After lunch they saddle up and head out for a two hour ride across the ranch in preparation for day three's journey.

ranch in preparation for day three's journey. The assignment the next day is to move 50 to 100 cattle across 12 miles. Saddling up with food and supplies following in a covered wagon the team begins their cattle run. The herd moves at about two miles an hour and they do eight miles that first day. Cummins said. Then they are fed. We supply all the meals and do the cooking. That evening the team and the events of the day pointing out what he had beeved in management styles.

pointing out what he has beserved in management styles.

The main idea is for the group

The main idea is for the group to go out and become a real team. The guy that's the boss in the office may not be able to be the leader of this cattle drive. Cummins said. Another guy that its in a lower level in the office may just know how to handle the cattle and the trainer will explain to the team that it's a good thing. good thing.
"The beauty of this is that it's

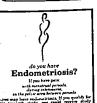
"Ine beauty of this is that it's totally foreign to anything that they do in the office and yet from the team aspects of it this is exactly what they do in corporations. They have to work together or it will fall apart," Cummins said.

said:

'The team has to know how to get the herd moving, keep them together, push from the back but manage to keep the cows in the middle of the trail. All of that takes cooperation from every person on the squad.

'It's basically like the movie 'City Slickers' they had to pull tagether as a team or they would have lost the herd," Cummins





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said. "And sure that was a comedy that was contrived but what would have happened if they didn't work together?"

Cummins points out that this is not a die hard excursion and that those who are too sore to saddle up for the final ride are welcome to board the chuck wagen.

wagon.
Day four has the team logging the last four miles and delivering the herd. Then they return to the ranch, usually a two hour ride, a begin a huge celebration.
This is a lot more than a day

at the Marriot spent in meetings about team building," Cummins said. "You get to know each oth-ers strengths and weaknesses

and I think that bonds these groups together because the trip is something they will always

is something they will always remember."

The cost of the unique team building venture is \$24,150 for a group of 10 and that includes a trainer. The tab is \$18,100 for ten people without the trainer. Cummins said private organizations making the trip for pleasure aren't apt to be interested in booking the trainer. He expects his first corporate client to leave within the next 30 days for their adventure out west.

This is such an expensive program and thero's so much involved with travel and training that I felt that when a group is

spending this kind of money we needed a strong team building company behind us and that's where John came in," Cummins

said.

Currently devoting much of his
time to the Chisholm Trail project, Cummins anticipates the
adventure costing \$1.7 million.
If the Chisholm ride is success-

If the Chisholm ride is auccessful, Cummins plans to hit the Western Trail in the year 2000. It runs from Fort Worth, Texas to Ogalalla, Nebraska.

"Doing all this isn't work to me," he said. "It's like living a dream."

ream. For information about The Great American Cowboy Compa-ny outings call (248)879-3093.



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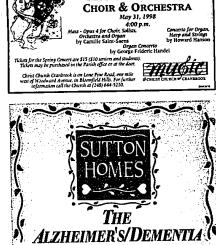
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