

FLASH

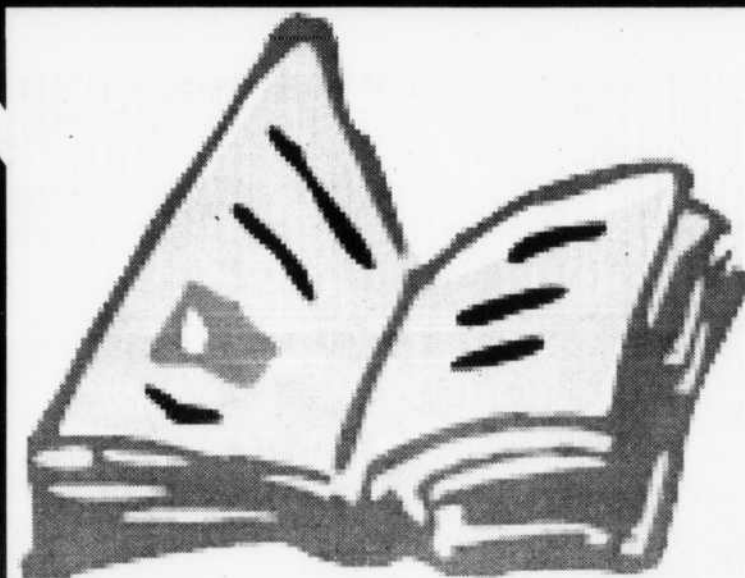
VOLUME 2, ISSUE 3

A SUPPLEMENT TO SIDELINES

Wednesday, October 6, 1999



**Has online
book buying
changed the
way we
shop?**



SIDELINES

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- Page 3** Last week, he was impressed by "Three Kings." Now, "American Beauty" reminds movie reviewer Jared Wilson why he loves movies. Find out why this new movie is so impressive.
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Quote of the week

"'Empire' had the better ending. Luke gets his hand cut off, finds out Vader is his father, Han gets frozen in carbonite and taken away by Boba Fett. It ends on such a down note and that's what life is, a series of down endings."

*-Dante Hicks
from "Clerks"*

'Double Jeopardy' overcomes revealing trailer

NATURAL TALLENT



Aaron Tallent
Staff reviewer

When I saw the trailer for "Double Jeopardy" in movie theaters several months ago, I thought it was probably going to be a movie where the trailer told the entire story.

When I saw it recently, I found that I was partially right. Although the trailer lets you know most of the synopsis of the story, "Double Jeopardy" provides some interesting

scenes and surprises as well.

It tells the story of Libby Parsons (Ashley Judd), a happily married wife and mother, whose life turns into shambles when her husband, Nick, disappears on a weekend yacht excursion.

Things become even worse when Libby is convicted of his murder.

Libby is sent to jail and leaves her son in the care of her best friend. When her son and best friend disappear, Libby tracks them down from jail and inadvertently finds out that her husband is very much alive and has made a new home with her friend.

After Libby's discovery, her son, husband and friend once again disappear. Libby is forced

to serve her time and wait for parole. In prison, she learns of the "Double Jeopardy" rule that comes with the fifth amendment, which says that a person can not be tried twice for the same crime. Libby can kill her husband, and the law cannot touch her.

When she receives her parole after eight years, she is placed in the hands of Officer Lehman (Tommy Lee Jones), a harder, drunker version of Sam Gerard in "The Fugitive." Lehman cuts Libby no slack. She is forced to escape Lehman's parole restrictions to find her husband and son. Lehman is forced to go after her.

"Double Jeopardy" is an entertaining film with some clever scenes. The best scene is



Ashley Judd and Tommy Lee Jones try to get out of yet another tough situation in "Double Jeopardy."

when Libby turns down a college student who is trying to pick her up.

The film also benefits from solid performances by Judd and Jones. The film was directed by Bruce Beresford of "Driving Miss Daisy." The solid script was written by Robert Benton, a well-respected scriptwriter whose credits include "Kramer vs. Kramer." With a talented cast and crew, a solid thriller is expected and delivered.

The main problems with "Double Jeopardy" is that although the trailer does not tell you everything, but it reveals quite a bit. I was not surprised at any of the plot twists until almost 45 minutes into the film.

The great thing about this film is that even though I knew most of the story of the film, I was never bored. "Double Jeopardy" keeps you entertained.

Even though I may have been able to figure out what was going to happen with every scene, it did not hinder my enjoyment of the film.

"Double Jeopardy" shows us that good performances, a solid script and inventive direction can overcome a revealing trailer. It is one of the better thrillers to be released this fall.

STARS: (out of four) ***

30th Anniversary

WAZZ

WMOT-FM 89.5

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Celebrating 30 Years of Public Broadcasting Service to Middle Tennessee

'American Beauty' is truly beautiful

THE MOVIE GUY

Jared Wilson
Staff reviewer

There is a moment of awakening in the critical part of me when a certain scene in a film convinces me of the work's greatness. And by greatness, I don't mean to exaggerate goodness — I've seen several good movies this year, movies that are contenders for my year-end top ten list. By greatness, I mean exactly that — greatness. This has only happened twice this year thus far, and both in the span of one week.

The first was in "Three Kings," as a beleaguered Iraqi drops American lingo like smart bombs while torturing and interrogating a captured American soldier. The exchange was both soft and tense, a verbal ballet underscored with insinuations of impending doom. I was transfixed, awestruck that viciousness had helped convince me of the film's beauty. Moments like these envelope me. I can feel my blood flowing. I smile. I think, "This is why I like movies."

In "American Beauty," I had this feeling from beginning to end, though I wasn't always smiling. Directed by Sam Mendes, "American Beauty" tells the story of the Burnhams, a nuclear family on the verge of the ballistic. Daughter Jane (Thora Birch) is, like most kids her age, typically angst-ridden, but she is atypical. Like most teenage girls, Jane likes boys and wants to be popular, but she emits as much dark as she does light. She isn't afraid to zap unfortunates with her radiating sullenness. She's the only cheerleader who doesn't smile. The Burnham matriarch is Carolyn (Annette Bening),

a ruthless real estate broker for whom appearance is everything. Cold and controlling, she's the Martha Stewart of the underworld. The father is Lester Burnham (Kevin Spacey), and "American Beauty" can be seen, at least in a narrow sense, as

will do anything to have her.

Lester's awakening involves a reversion to his own carefree adolescence. He quits his job, buys the '73 Firebird he always wanted, gets a new job flipping burgers and starts working out (Angela likes

of "molester," and with similar significance comes the name his condescending boss gives him — the only time it is heard in the movie — "Les." The connotation of "less" is not too hidden, and Les constantly attempts to squeeze

straightlaced military man may harbor the darkest secret of all.

The son, Ricky Fitts (Wes Bentley), is a bit of an oddball. A marijuana-dealing techno-geek, he lives vicariously by videotaping his surroundings in the most candid of moments. He is smitten with Jane and easily woos her with his eerie overtures (she is, after all, rebelling). The human moments Ricky catches on film are all reactions, the fleeting instances when our true character shoots through our projected self. Ricky finds beauty in a dead bird, a funeral procession, a homeless woman who has frozen to death and in the unshakable image of the film's chilling climax (I dare not give it away). The fact that he connects these images with the rare moments of verisimilitude he glimpses in his neighbors speaks volumes about their lives.

"American Beauty" is about character and the facades we clothe ourselves with to hide it. It's about our secret identities and the identities we secretly want others to have. The symbol of the rose figures prominently in the film. Lester connects the red bud attached firmly to its stem, organized and rigid, replete with thorns, to his domineering wife. He connects the images of red petals, detached, free, floating in space like flowery pixie dust, with his Lolita, Angela. The rub: roses are beautiful, but they wither. The film's story breathes with its stream of moments — they are absolutely wonderful — and Kevin Spacey's bravura performance pushes "American Beauty" into masterpiece territory. Simply put, this work is incredible.

My grade: A



Kevin Spacey and Annette Bening act in a scene from their new movie "American Beauty," which opened Friday.

his story.

Lester's life is boring and trivial. He has lost his daughter to the distance



Annette Bening stars as Carolyn Burnham.

adolescence imposes between detached parents and their children. His relationship with his wife is routine, sexless and cold. He is an Everyman moving blindly through the minutiae of each day. One day, though, he catches a glimpse of his daughter's cheerleader friend, a nubile nymphet named Angela (Mona Suvari), and his life changes. He decides he

muscles). In short, Lester shirks the oppressive veil of accepted behavior and becomes free. He lives for the first time. In this role, Kevin Spacey is nothing short of phenomenal. He finds the groove between pathetic and sympathetic in his character and rides it out, injecting a gleeful dynamism into the static world of his environment. He relaxes in his chair, wearing his fast-food joint uniform, and pumps his fist into the air, declaring, "I rule." In an Oscar-worthy performance, Spacey's Lester demands understanding, not empathy, but it's hard not to grant him both. He's so moving.

It is difficult to contain my enthusiasm for this film, and I don't want to gloss over its heaviness. With his eye on Angela, one can easily see in "Lester" the connotation

"more" out of his dry existence.

If "American Beauty" is about one central thing, it

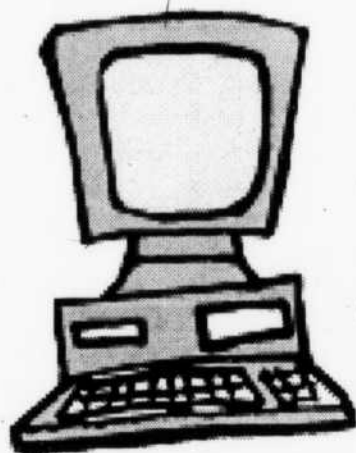


Kevin Spacey stars as Lester Burnham.

is character. Character is who you are when no one's looking, and this film explores the "white-washed sepulchers" of suburbia. The Burnham's new neighbors are the Fittses. The father, Colonel Frank Fitts, is a retired Marine who is strict and potentially dangerous. The underrated Chris Cooper portrays the afflicting dad as magnificently as he portrayed the afflicted son in 1996's "Lone Star." This

Used Booksellers thrive in online market

by Ross Anderson, Knight-Ridder Newspapers



Fox Books, in downtown Tacoma, Wash., was a typical used bookstore: Perhaps 30,000 volumes, a few of them rare but most common and forgettable, all jammed onto pine shelves in a dusty storefront. And there wasn't a computer in sight.

A few weeks ago, a team of movers showed up, packed all those books and carted them off to Powell's City of Books in Portland, Oregon. Now those volumes are for sale on the Internet, ready for shipping to a reader in Indiana or South Carolina desperate for that obscure volume on Carl Jung.

Used and rare bookstores have been swept up in the Internet revolution. And leading the way is Powell's, a Pacific Northwest institution that keeps breaking all the rules and getting away with it. At first glance, no business seems more antithetical to computers and the Internet than secondhand books.

Bookstores, after all, sell a technology ostensibly rendered obsolete by computers. They are Gutenberg's idea trying to eke out a living in the Age of Gates. But look again. While independent booksellers marketing new books lose ground to

chains and Amazon.com, sellers of secondhand books appear to be thriving.

Twenty years ago, the Seattle yellow pages offered 31 listings under "Books, used and rare." This year, there were 108. Used-book dealers enjoy many advantages: low start-up and operating costs, they can thrive in run-down neighborhoods, and they can cater to narrow markets.

In Seattle, shops specialize in poetry or auto-repair manuals or comic books. And for general and specialty used bookstores alike, the Internet has proven to be a crucial device for reaching a silent but apparently lucrative market. Witness Powell's, the \$40 million-a-year empire that occupies a city block on Burnside Street in downtown Portland. It has a half-dozen satellite stores scattered around the city and is still growing. To the first-time visitor, it appears to be standard used-book decor, multiplied by 10. There are six huge rooms honeycombed with 10-foot-high bookcases. The shelves are meticulously organized, labeled, color-coded and tended by a small army of more than 225 workers.

General manager Miriam Sontz, who started as a part-timer 20 years ago, says Powell's succeeded largely because its founders, Walter and Michael Powell, broke the rules. They stacked hardcover books alongside paperbacks, new books with old books. "They took risks," she says. The biggest risk was to get big. The downtown store alone

sells 3 million books a year, roughly half of them used. More than 3,000 people file in the doors each day, some to browse the stacks, others to sell books. Powell's has made money. But it also has shown that the market for used books isn't limited to a few bargain-hunters.

Serious collectors, hobbyists and readers have money and know what they want, but can't find it at Waldenbooks. To serve that clientele, Powell's carries 1 million books, a vast and constantly fluctuating inventory that rarely includes more than two or three books of the same title. Most of their stock is composed of single copies — "one-sies" and "two-sies" as they call them.

The Internet makes the task of getting a rare book into the hands of a far-flung buyer more do-able, says Mark Wessel of the Wessel and Lieberman bookshop in Seattle's Pioneer Square. "We've always cataloged our books," he says. "When computers came along, we cataloged them on computers. And when the Internet was launched, it was easy to add those files to a database and start selling online." In June, for example, he grossed \$5,000 in Internet sales — far more than his in-shop sales.

The Web has worked so well that some shops have closed down to sell exclusively on the Internet. Powell's online sales of used books are doubling each year, says Sontz, with no end in sight. About 85 percent of the online sales are in used books. A glimpse at the stacks of used books awaiting

shipment to online buyers suggests the range of interests. There are four books on Nietzsche ordered by somebody in Iowa, an entire set of Ian Fleming's James Bond thrillers in hardcover, a technical volume on a commercial elevator that hasn't been manufactured since the 1920s, a bundle of five children's books by Walt Morey, seven copies of an out-of-print book called "American Ingenuity" and more.

With Internet sales growing, the major problem confronting Powell's and other used bookstores is not sales but inventory — where to find the quantity and quality of books. Even while buying more than 4,000 secondhand books every day from individuals at the Portland store, Powell's has trouble stocking its shelves.

So there are teams of buyers crisscrossing the nation, buying entire collections from estates, libraries or failing stores like Fox Books in Tacoma. "We looked at the Fox inventory," says Larry Jezek, co-owner of Tacoma Book Center, a 250,000-volume store next to the Tacoma Dome. "But these were books everyone had already seen in Tacoma." Last year, somewhat reluctantly, Jezek and his partner took their business online. Already the Web accounts for more than 15 percent of their sales.

"I've got to admit, it's pretty attractive," he says. "No rent. No licenses. No employees. All you pay is postage." But while the Web is changing how they do

business, it will not replace those musty-smelling, claustrophobic shops that typify the trade. So far, Jezek says, the Internet appeals primarily to shoppers looking for specific books. It doesn't work as well for browsers who want to climb stepladders and pull down that dog-eared volume they never heard of but suddenly can't live without.

Online shopping should free up the "bricks-and-mortar" shops to do what they do best, says Andre Helmstetter, co-founder of usedbooks.com, a Seattle company preparing to launch its own site this fall. "We don't want to turn booksellers into shipping clerks," he says. "We're not replacing the bricks-and-mortar shop, we're embracing it, freeing them up to serve their customers better." The people at Powell's couldn't agree more. Even as its Internet sales mushroom, the king of used booksellers is spending millions on more floor space. In November, Powell's will open a new four-story building at its downtown site, expanding its retail space by more than 50 percent — from 43,000 to 68,000 square feet. So the biggest bookstore will get bigger still.



Internet took its first baby steps 30 years ago

by David Plotnikoff, Knight-Ridder Newspapers

Thirty years have not dimmed our collective memory of Neil Armstrong's walk on the moon. How is it that the other giant leap of 1969 — the birth of the Internet — could be so obscured by the passage of time? For decades, none of the researchers who built and tested that first Net connection have been able to recall the exact date of the transmission.

Although the Net has been the subject of innumerable articles, books and documentaries in recent years, none has been able to establish a birthdate for the mother of all networks. Ultimately, it was the death of one of the Net's founding fathers that brought the date to light. Based on that recently re-discovered documentation and new recollections by individuals on both ends of that first communication, I'm pleased to say that for the first time the Internet has a real birthday — Oct. 29, 1969.

Actually, it has two birthdays — one that's passed and this month. And therein lies a bit of a political problem. Given the propensity for endless debate among historians and Net-geeks of longstanding, it's quite possible scholars could be slugging it out over the date right up until the Net turns 40.

There is a plausible explanation for how such a key milestone could be effectively forgotten for so long: In the race to get the network up and running, that one communication simply wasn't considered terribly important.

"The truth is nobody paid much attention to it," said Doug Engelbart, the computer visionary who oversaw one end of the early network back in '69. "It was more like 'Well, OK, they brought in the motor so we can get our vehicle running.' It was just part of getting the plumbing to work."

The basic outline of the Net's Genesis story is clear: The first node of the Pentagon-funded Advanced Research Projects Agency network (ARPAnet) was installed in the lab of a UCLA computer-science professor, Leonard Kleinrock, on Labor Day weekend of 1969.

If you want to get technical about it, what happened is this: A specialized computer called an "Interface Message Processor" (IMP) was installed in the lab. That machine, a battleship gray Honeywell Model 516 minicomputer (the size of a refrigerator) would act as intermediary between the lab's mainframe, a Scientific Data Systems Sigma-7, and the nascent network.

On Sept. 2, the UCLA team succeeded in moving data back and forth from the Sigma-7 to the IMP, which stood 15 feet away. What followed is slightly less clear. Approximately one month later, the second IMP was installed in Engelbart's lab at Stanford Research Institute in Menlo Park. IMP No. 2 was connected to Engelbart's Scientific Data Systems 940 mainframe.

The two labs — in Los Angeles and Menlo Park — were linked by a leased 50-kilobit-per-second dedicated phone line that enabled both voice and data traffic between the two labs. As many of the researchers who were present at both ends recalled, the first data communication between the two labs' host computers occurred "sometime in October."

Five years ago, as these pioneers prepared to gather in Boston for a 25-year reunion, I spoke to a half-dozen of them and came away with the distinct impression that "sometime in October" would be as close as we'd ever get to the truth.

Prior to that 1994 anniversary, Jon Postel, who went from UCLA to become the Net's ultimate keeper of names and numbers, told me: "You have to understand the context. Here we were doing this little research project that involved a few computer scientists. There wasn't any thought that we were exploring this brave new world or inventing it."

Today the Net is a magnitude larger than it was just five years ago, and the lack of a birthday can't be shrugged off or finessed. The wired world is now such an overwhelming part of mass culture that it demands an anniversary date.

This year, Kleinrock and UCLA's public relations machine were only too happy to oblige. A few weeks back, much to the dismay of some observers who were not affiliated with that university, UCLA announced unilaterally that Sept. 2 would be the Internet's official birthday.

The problem with this declaration is simple: UCLA's IMP was talking to UCLA's own computer, but it was not, strictly speaking, a test of the network. It was the packet-switching equivalent of a single tin can and a string. The Internet would not exist until there was someone on the other end of the line.

Sometime in the weeks after IMP No. 2 arrived at SRI, Charley Kline, a grad student in Kleinrock's lab at UCLA, made the first attempt to log into SRI's machine via the network. For this particular test, his machine at UCLA tried to connect with SRI and execute commands on the SRI machine as if he were right there in the lab. His first attempt to log in (there was no "first message" or e-mail per se, since e-mail as we know it had yet to be invented) caused SRI's computer to crash.

On Tuesday, Kline, now a senior technologist at Cisco Systems in San Jose, related to me how he found himself on the initiating end of the historic connection.

"I was the operating-systems programming kid at that time. So I was the guy who had to write the code to make the IMP talk to the host," said Kline, 51. "I ended up writing something similar to a telnet program (a program that allows a user to log in remotely on a distant system) and trying to log into SRI's computer, making it look as if we were a dumb terminal."

As Kline recalls, a day or two after his first failed attempt, he tried again — and it worked.

The date of that remote log-in was promptly forgotten in the rush to hook up additional nodes.

Last October, Postel, who'd worked alongside Kline for many years, died after complications from surgery. Kline attended three memorial

services in the Los Angeles area for Postel. After the UCLA service, Kleinrock e-mailed his eulogy to attendees — along with some historic images he'd pulled from his archives.

One of the images, a page from a log book for IMP No. 1, caught Kline's eye. He saw, in his own handwriting, the date "29OCT69" and the terse notation that at 10:30 p.m. he "talked to SRI host to host." (Kline notes now that he may have had a previous successful attempt to log in. He's just not sure. The Oct. 29 connection was the one he knows he documented.)

Judy Lin-Eftekhari, a spokesman for UCLA's school of engineering, said Wednesday that the university is "aware of the controversy" over the official birthday.

"We at UCLA are saying it's Sept. 2 because because that's when the first network switch was put into place," she said. "That technology basically enabled the Internet to follow. That's our claim, but we're aware others may see things differently."

Is this an utterly trivial issue? Many of the pioneers who were present at both institutions for 30 years ago seem to think so. I disagree. We must find some mechanism, such as a birthday, to look back on whence we came.

Today it sounds vaguely Marxist, given the gold-rush mindset surrounding the Net, but guys like Engelbart, Kleinrock and their respective teams set out to build a platform for collaborative work — a public resource.

Their core values — cooperation, governance by consensus, open standards — were what enabled the Net to scale up a million-fold without breaking.

We should not wait for the next round of eulogies. We should honor these people and the values that steered them now. Anyone who's life has been touched for the better by the Net has some moral obligation to say thank you. Why not Oct. 29?



The Skinny



Who's playin' where and what's goin' down

Sunday Oct. 10

The Stones River Chamber Players perform in the Wright Music Hall of MTSU. The concert will begin at 3 p.m. For more info, contact the MTSU music department at 898-2469.

Joe Audette's Open Mic Matinee at the Boro from 4 until 8 p.m. Roland Gresham Jazz at 8 p.m.

Monday Oct. 11

Earl and special guests perform a bluegrass showcase at the Boro. Also, 2-for-1 premium draft.

Faces, 2111 E. Main St., hosts Greek Night. Organization with most signups (minimum of 15) wins a free pony keg.

Tuesday Oct. 12

Merl, Chris Pickey and Bicycle take the stage at the Boro. Also, 50 cent draft until 7 p.m.

Faces holds a pool tournament with 2-for-1 drink specials on drafts and "well" and "cell" drinks.

Wednesday Oct. 6

The Nationals play the Boro. Also, \$1 draft from 5 until 9 p.m.

It's beat the clock night at Faces. Specials are: 50 cent "well" drinks at 8 p.m., \$1 well drinks at 8:30 p.m., \$1.50 well drinks at 9 p.m. and \$2 well drinks at 9:30 p.m. Drinks return to regular price at 10 p.m.

Thursday Oct. 7

Gran Torino @ Exit/In in Nashville

The Davenports play the Boro and 2-for-2 hot wings.

Bob Bradley and the Hi Beams play the Sutler, located at 2068 Franklin Rd. in Nashville. The show opens at 8:30 with the Luxury Liners. Admission is \$5.

Friday, Oct. 8

The Spot presents Speech, leader of Arrested Development. He performs at Exit/In, 2208 Elliston Place. Tickets will be available at the door for \$10. This show is 18 and over.

Tickets go on sale for George Clinton and Parliament/ Funkadelic at 328 Performance Hall, 328 Fourth Ave. S. in Nashville. Cost is \$25, and the show 18 and over. The show is Nov. 5 at 8 p.m.

The Charlie Mars Band record release party will be held at Jackleg's in Nashville. Also appearing is the Rebirth Jazz Band. The show starts at 9:30 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 9

The Guy Smiley Blues Exchange takes the stage at the Boro.

It's college night at Faces. You can get \$2 off the cover charge with a college identification card.

**Want your
concerts and
other special
events
mentioned in
FLASH?**

Fax the information to 904-8487, attention FLASH. **Mail** it to MTSU Box 42, Murfreesboro, Tenn. 37132.

E-mail information to stupubs@frank.mtsu.edu
**Deadline is Thursday
for the following
Wednesday's issue.**

MTV brings the 'Road' show to Cheatham County today

Jeremy Rush/ staff reporter

MTV plans to charge into Ashland City Oct. 6th for a taping of the popular show "Real World vs. Road Rules Challenge." The show splits up former "Real World" and "Road Rules" cast members from the first season up to the current and places them in various head-to-head competitions across the country.

The latest installment will be held at the Cheatham County Fairgrounds. Unfortunately, no information about the events can be prematurely revealed because the actual cast members themselves do not even know what lay in store.

"The fairgrounds have put on a variety of events in the past and I've always advertised them on the internet," said Sonya Pedigo, Cheatham County Fair Association Director, explaining why MTV picked Ashland City of all places to host the events.

"MTV apparently ran across the websites when searching for locations for their show. They called, we worked

out the details and here we are."

In the past, Cheatham County Fairgrounds have hosted events such as mud pulls—an event that uses large tractors to pull heavy amounts of weight through mud, demolition derbys, parachute competitions and concerts.

Facilities available at the Cheatham County Fairgrounds include an open-air pavillion, an arena, an exhibit building and a large open field.

After the taping of "Real World vs. Road Rules Challenge," there will be a "Winner Takes All Demolition Derby" open to the public. Participants must pay a \$50 entry fee and have a car ready for competition. The last car running takes home a 100 percent payback. So, if 40 cars enter, that's \$2,000.

The taping begins at 7 p.m. and anyone is invited to come. There will be a \$3 admission fee plus \$1 for parking.

Autographs from the cast members will be available after the event.

DIRECTIONS TO "THE REAL WORLD VS. ROAD RULES CHALLENGE":

To get to the "Real World vs. Road Rules Challenge" from Murfreesboro, take Interstate 24 West to I-65 South. From there, take I-440 to Briley Parkway. Take the White Bridge Road Exit on Briley Parkway. Take a right at the exit, and continue to the Ashland City Exit. Take a left at the ramp, which brings you into Ashland City. Take a right at Bubba's Used Cars. Then, take a left onto Fairgrounds Road. Follow this road until you see the fairgrounds.



Dreamcast Playstation
Brad's Game Corner
 Sega Genesis N64
 Old School Nintendo

Brad Whitaker / staff writer

Playstaion 2 should not disappoint gaming fans

What's up gaming fans? Welcome to another edition of yours truly and his game corner. As always, I'm back with the usual gaming gossip that's floating around.

Unless you've been living under a rock for the past couple of months, then you know that Sega has released the Dreamcast, and right now it looks like it will be the dominant force for some time to come. A few weeks back, I mentioned a little bit about Sony's future plans to compete with Sega's new system with Playstation 2.

For Playstation 2, Sony has pulled out all the stops. Their new Playstation is due out next fall. This may seem like a long time to wait, but trust me friend, it will be well worth it.

To start off, Sony has completely designed a new look for Playstation 2. The only thing that will be the same is the logo outside. One of the first things to go was the gray color. It was replaced with blue and black. According to Sony, this was done to represent the infinity of the universe with blue representing the earth.

The machine also will have a front-loading CD tray and only two controller ports. This is quite a let down for people like myself who were expecting four. I guess this was done as a cost-saving measure.

The back of the system will have an expansion port for things like modems and other clever devices. Another cool feature is the awesome ability to play DVD movies. Now you will be able to watch all your favorite

movies on your Playstation!

One main thing this system is going to be able to do is use old Playstation games that you already own. That's right! You won't have to run out and buy a complete new library of games like you're doing now if you own a Dreamcast.

Everything that you already own for your current Playstation will be compatible with Playstation 2, except for Game Shark and other devices that plugged into the expansion port. So, all the controllers and memory cards that you own will not go to waste.

Playstation 2 also will be faster than the original. So fast in fact, that it might speed up load time of older games. Memory cards for the Playstation hold 256k of memory. Playstation 2 memory cards holds 8 mb. This is more than 30 times the capacity of the old one.

You won't have to be worried about the number of games coming out either. More than 100 companies have signed on to make titles available for Playstation 2. The games scheduled for release with the system are "Gran Turismo 2000," "Tekken Tag Tournament," "Kessen," "Dark Cloud" and "The Bouncer." Future online games are in the works as well.

Sega may well have a firm hold on the video game market for now, but Sony is tight on their heels and will blow Sega out of the video gaming waters. For more information on Playstation 2, keep your eyes right here for all the latest news.

Music review

Creed makes a case for rock

Daniel Ross / staff reporter

Attention fans of straight up guitar rock! Have you been feeling that your music has been ignored by the mainstream lately? Well take heart, because Creed has come to save rock and roll. Not a hint of rap/metal or any traces of bubble-gum pop can be found in this band.

Picking up where they left off on their first release, "My Own Prison," Creed continues the long tradition of unabashed rock on their second release "Human Clay." While not a masterpiece, Creed proves once again that there is a market for fans of the genre. They also leave many questions still unanswered.

Steeped in the tradition of Pearl Jam and Stone Temple Pilots, Creed has suffered at the hands of many a critic for being derivative. On "Human Clay," however, the boys from Tallahassee, Fla., rock a little harder than before.

Mark Tremonti's blazing guitar reveals a shredder coming to terms with his past love of fret board gymnastics. Scott Stapp's vocals still sound very much like Eddie Vedder, but he has shown significant improvement brought about by endless touring. Brian Marshall's bass is a rock of consistency holding down a groove that, sadly, is not prevalent on all the songs. Scott Phillips has also grown to become a solid, if not predictable, drummer.

Creed faced a problem on its first release that is unique to most of mainstream rock. Their lyrics

sounded (gasp) Christian. This so-called problem also seemed to help them attract a following among Christian circles. The sometimes-vague lyrics left many scratching their heads wondering if Christians could rock this hard. For those looking for answers to Creed's spiritual stand on "Human Clay," you're in for another disappointment.

The lyrics are still vague but there is plenty of ammunition given by the band for those who want to label them a Christian band. With words like "Can you take me higher/ To a place where blind men see.../ To a place with golden streets" from the first single, "Higher," Stapp leaves many scratching their heads. However, not all the songs deal with spiritual issues, only most of them.

There seems to be a central theme throughout the album. The problems associated with growing up dominate the subject matter in nearly every song. Besides spiritual issues, Creed tackles a few social issues such as rape on the song "Wash Away

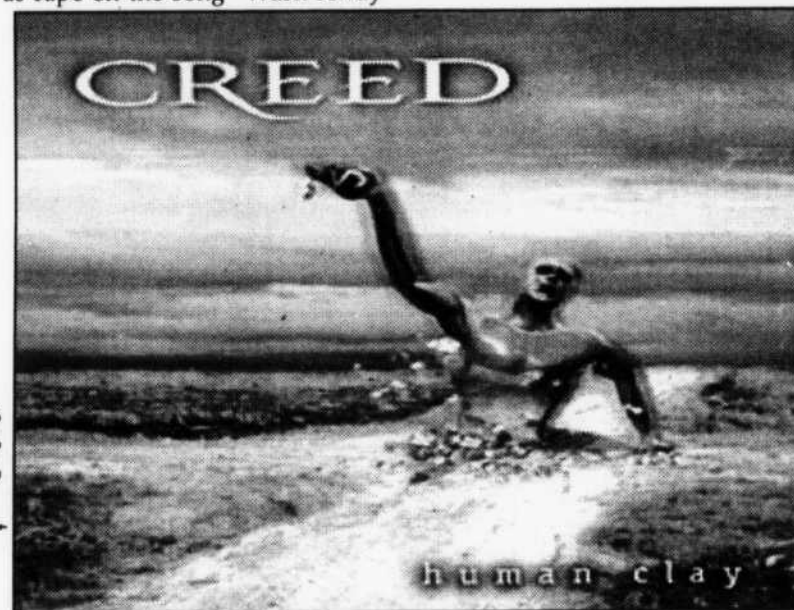
Those Years." Unfortunately the album lags in spots, especially the middle few songs. These songs seem to go nowhere making the listener want to scream "Get on with it!" However, even these songs have bright spots.

Musically, the album is second to none. Full of heavy riffing that would make Metallica proud, Tremonti certainly picked up a few tips from their tour opening for Van Halen. The album is not for those weak of heart or with tender eardrums. One almost needs a pair of earplugs just listening to the album at home. Art rock it isn't.

Although critics decry the downfall of civilization because of hard rock bands, Creed has proven that they are now major players on the scene. In the second track "What If," they answer these critics: "The more you hold us down, the more we press on."

My Grade: B+ and a hard rock fist in the air.

The cover to Creed's latest musical endeavor "Human Clay"



'Dawson's Creek' creator Kevin Williamson graduates

by Luaine Lee, Knight-Ridder Newspapers

Kevin Williamson, the man who took his high school years and parlayed them into the hit "Dawson's Creek," is 34. He's way too old for high school. Never mind, Williamson has graduated with his new ABC series, "Wasteland" (premiering Oct. 7), a continuing saga about six twentysomethings finding themselves in the Big Apple.

"It's autobiographical," announces Williamson. "I moved to New York. I'm from East Carolina University, Greenville, N.C. I went to New York with six of my good friends and, kaboom! these are the adventures." A variety of types make up his roster, including a gay soap star (Dan Montgomery) who hasn't had the courage to emerge from the closet yet. While there are as many as 17 gay characters on TV series this fall, Williamson (who's gay himself) thinks this guy's unusual.

"This character is different in the sense that he's closeted. He's very successful. And we're going to sort of watch, we're going to sort of

deconstruct that whole myth of being a gay actor in Hollywood and whether or not you can come out or not. "What's going to happen when he gets outed? Will he lose his job? Will he get fired? Will he ever be able to find some sort of love and be able to be honest with himself and with the world at large?"

It's a treacherous journey for his sextet, says Williamson, who has experienced his own rough road. "Back in college I bent the elbow too much and it became destructive to my life, and I had to stop. When I stopped, I began to write. Everything happened, it was much healthier." Coming-of-age is a constant theme in Williamson's works, whether it's "Dawson's Creek" or the "Scream" movies. And one of his characters in "Wasteland" is a beautiful virgin. Williamson explains that, too, comes from real life.

"I have a friend, who will remain nameless ... and this is like right

when I was sort of doing the whole "coming-out" thing and trying to be OK with it, trying to understand the gay stuff." And she said, "Well, I'm a virgin too." And she's 27 years old. And I was just floored. "I said, 'What



Kevin Williamson

are you talking about? You're a virgin?" I was so mesmerized by the idea that there was really a walking, breathing virgin at 27 in New York City that I just kept asking her more and more questions. And we got into this whole sort of theory about the second coming-of-age, and how there's a third coming-of-age in your 30s, and a fourth coming-of-age in your 40s. And it's just sort of an endless cycle of

evolving," he says.

For Williamson, everything hasn't been one clear revelation after another. "I look back on my life and there's a period of my life that's just a fog maybe from the drinking; the whole 20s maybe," he says. Still, with "Wasteland" he hopes to recapture what he does recall. "There's a whole journey there. And we're going to do it as the show progresses. First season, second season, who knows what's going to happen? It is our intention to let the (gay) character of Russell evolve and grow in the same capacity as every other character on the show." All the characters on "Wasteland" suffer from the same terminal syndrome that plagues other TV shows: everyone is knock-'em-dead beautiful. Oops — another accident, says Williamson. "When I go into the casting process, I wanted real kids. I didn't want them like all gorgeous and pretty because I was a big geek from the South. I wanted to represent teen-agers as they are."

Marisa (Coughlan of "Wasteland") she comes into my life, and I go, she's so amazingly talented, because I'm looking at the inside. I'm not looking so much at the outside. "Still, Williamson has done inordinately well with casting. His trick, he says, "I try to find stars in life. You know? I don't sit around and go, "Oh, that person's pretty, let's throw them up on a billboard, they'll be a big star." People come in and I look for some sort of quality about (them) just a sadness or some sense of pain, or something that's going on inside these people that connects them to the character."

He also evaluated the human being himself. "I look for people that I want to know. People that, whether or not they're in Hollywood, or if they're in Ohio being the president of the PTA and mother of three, they're going to be a star at it," he says. "I cast people that I'm going to enjoy working with and have a good time with, because they're stars in life."

Horoscopes

By Linda C. Black
Tribune Media Services

Aries (March 21-April 19). Focus on partnerships this week. Take care of your money Monday and Tuesday. Gather up what people owe you. Wednesday and Thursday are play days. The fog clears on Thursday, much to your delight. Wheel and deal on Friday and shop for a bargain on Saturday. Be bold. Race around this weekend and have as much fun as possible. You've earned it.

Taurus (April 20-May 20). Take care of your health this week. Get plenty of rest. Work closely with your partner on Monday and Tuesday. Don't let anybody push you around. An opportunity you've been waiting for could show up on Wednesday or Thursday. Travel and romance look great for this weekend.

Gemini (May 21-June 21). This week you're lucky in love — and just about everything else. Monday and Tuesday could be hectic anyway. There's too much to do! Avoid arguments Wednesday and Thursday. Have fascinating discussions instead. It's an attitude thing. Friday and the weekend are good for household projects and practical matters. Schedule your playtime for late Sunday.

Cancer (June 22-July 22). Keep the home fires burning this week so you can get rid of the trash! On Monday and Tuesday, a romantic commitment could happen quite naturally. You'll be too busy for much of that on Wednesday and Thursday. Learn from your partner and play with your friends from Friday through Sunday, not necessarily in that order.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22). You're smart this week, so study. Stay close to home on Monday and Tuesday. Romance blossoms on Wednesday and Thursday. Rest up so you'll be ready for an overloaded work schedule from Friday through most of the weekend. Eat right and take care of yourself to avoid catching a cold or straining something.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Fantasies might become reality this week. Study something that's got you fascinated on Monday and Tuesday. Make a decision then, too. Fix up your place on Wednesday and Thursday. Plan a romantic excursion for this weekend, starting on Friday. Leave the kids with Grandma.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The focus is on you this week. Get the money you need on Monday and Tuesday. You're amazingly creative on Wednesday and Thursday. Whip your place into shape on Friday and Saturday so you can entertain that special someone on Sunday.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Your hopes, dreams and fears are activated this week. Do your planning Monday and Tuesday and get started on a couple of new projects. Work and, therefore, money should be plentiful on Wednesday and Thursday. Practice new skills with a partner over the weekend and get yourselves ready for competition.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Friendship is your theme this week. Ask friends for help if you need it on Monday and Tuesday. Wednesday and Thursday you'll help them. Together, you could take on a huge project over the weekend. Working together, it'll be more like a party than a problem.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You could become successful this week if you're willing to tackle the tough stuff. Your friends point you in the right direction on Monday and Tuesday. Finish old business on Wednesday and Thursday. You'll be rarin' to go over the weekend. You're hot, so make things happen. That goes for romance, as well as business, by the way.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Travel and higher education are easier this week, except for Monday and Tuesday. Get past frustration first. Celebrate success on Wednesday and Thursday. Clean out the garage over the weekend and get rid of things you've outgrown.

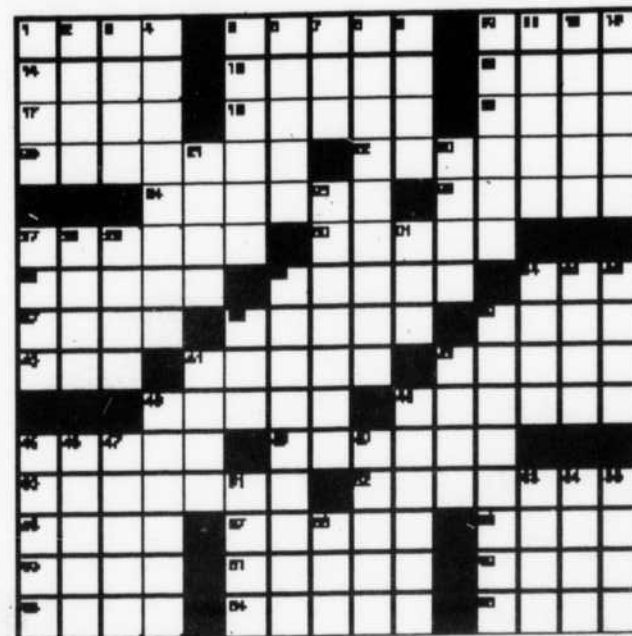
Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20). Buy and sell this week. You'll feel generous, but it's OK to make a profit. Monday and Tuesday are great vacation days. Travel for business looks good. You may be tested on Wednesday or Thursday. Good news — you're more brilliant than usual. This is a great weekend to play with your friends and to learn from them.

ACROSS

- 1 Canine
- 5 Newly-hatched stage
- 10 Ticks on
- 14 "In Douce"
- 15 Inventor Howe
- 16 Father
- 17 Ferus
- 18 Smeckers
- 19 Winter fall
- 20 Revolver, e.g.
- 22 Let forcefully
- 24 Mother of Calcutta
- 25 Different one
- 27 Dam and Device
- 30 64-slope ride
- 32 Telematic table
- 33 Longest river in Europe
- 34 Chip off the old block
- 37 Dance movement
- 38 Small greenish bird
- 39 Farm building
- 40 Disease signal
- 41 Operatic prima donna
- 42 Sponsorship
- 43 Gaffer's ladder
- 44 Fessure
- 45 Combined
- 48 Jump the tracks
- 50 Container for logs
- 52 Pencil ends
- 53 Writer Quinton
- 57 Thick
- 58 Swiss artist Paul
- 60 Back part
- 61 "Park, CO"
- 62 "It's a Fly"
- 63 Case writing
- 64 Cinders
- 65 Beauty and Burlina

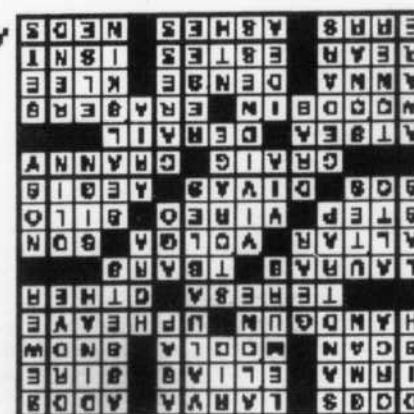
DOWN

- 1 Menu entries
- 2 Puget Sound whale
- 3 Fied
- 4 Bunker
- 5 MacGyver's primates
- 6 By oneself
- 7 John Wayne movie, "Brow"
- 8 Treasures
- 9 Memo acronym
- 10 Plus lectures
- 11 Woman in the kitchen?
- 12 Took the wheel
- 13 Seamstress
- 21 Toothed device
- 23 Brazil round dance
- 25 Closest capacity
- 27 Highland mace
- 28 Choir member
- 29 Shoeshone
- 31 Gone by
- 33 Brilliance
- 34 Indication
- 35 Lens of "Hovins"
- 36 Overly curious
- 38 By way of
- 39 Birthday suit of a walrus
- 41 Dreamy



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10/15/98



- 42 Open showstopper
- 43 Aromatic evergreens
- 44 Fondle
- 45 Cognizant
- 46 Skin cream
- 47 Sub detector
- 48 View again
- 51 Concept
- 53 Otherwise
- 54 Tear
- 55 Hardens
- 56 Final degree

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