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For that we apologize.

SPECIAL REPORT
"Stanta" Claus Is
Coming To Set
With Merriment
And Medication!

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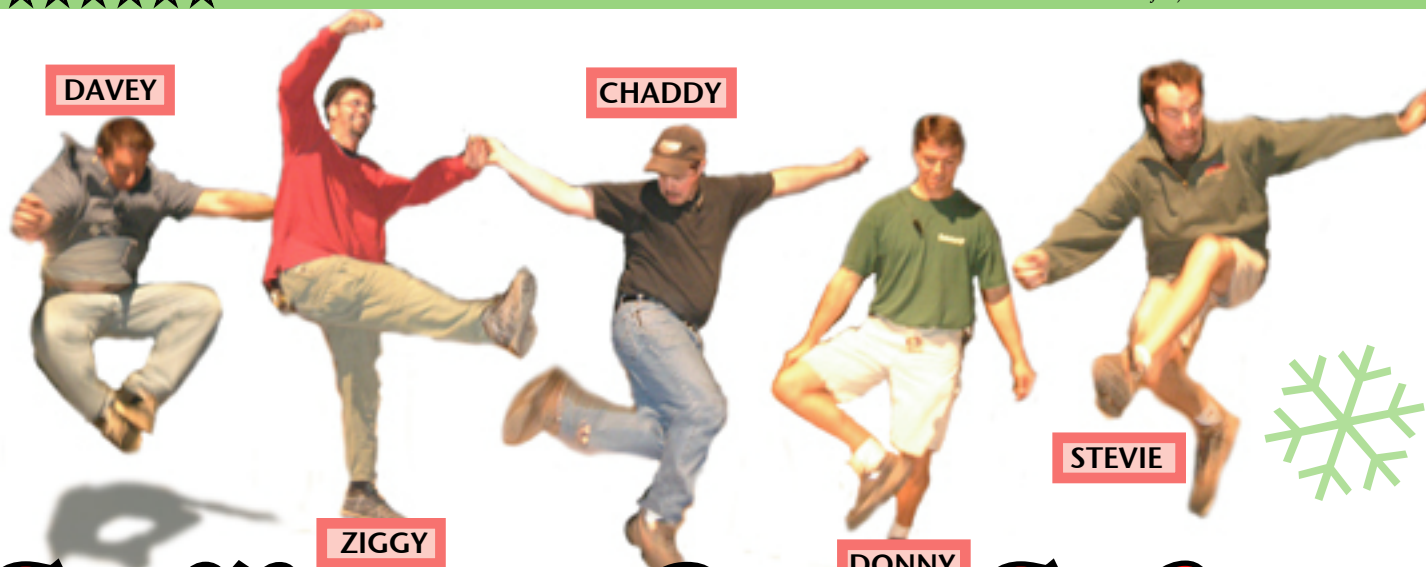
LOWTIDE

A Very Special
Holiday Edition



DECEMBER 2001

From Atlantic to Pacific, Gee the LowTide is horrific!



The Hackettes Return To Atlanta!

New Show "Rigger Dance" Sells Out In 10 Minutes!

That old-time Christmas feeling is returning to the Fox Theatre this December 19th with the return of Steve Crowley and the Hackettes. After a 3 year hiatus the performance troupe is back on the road and better than ever with a brand new production called "Rigger Dance" that infuses a Celtic sensibility into traditional Hackette routines.

"We needed this much time to put the show together," explains Crowley, a veteran of the performance circuit and early proponent of what is now known as the 'electric hack'.

"We've included a great deal more of our most technical routines, from the chest stop to the chicken wing shuffle. Zig's been working on a real show-stopper that we like to call the Ziggy Special. I don't want to spoil it, so let's just say that the boy can bend!"

The newest troupe member Chad Schroeder explains his feelings about the Hackettes, "Well, really, I think the whole thing is kinda gay...but the other guys do it, and I just decided to go along with the flow. You know, whatever it takes to keep the job."

Other performers however, are much more expressive about the show. Donny Fowler explains, "My brother Dale got me started back when I was just learning how to string bandit. It's really improved my attitude at work and my flexibility in general. People used to say that I talked too much, so I think that the Hack has given me focus and perspective."

Canadian member, David McClean was instrumental in the choreography of the latest show "Rigger Dance".

"It's based on the story of a rigging electrician who gets stuck in a condor on Christmas Eve. It's all about how Santa gets him some food and water from Crafty even though his drop line is too short to reach the ground. I cry every time I see the whole thing...man, everybody cries."

Tickets are sold out for this year's performance. Steve Crowley recommends that interested parties go ahead and purchase advance tickets for next year (\$65 per ticket, payable to Steve Crowley). Otherwise, he suggests that you attempt to catch the guys for their daily lunchtime rehearsal where they also conduct a seminar for first timers.

Hackettes Steve Sudge and Wade O'Connor were sidelined this year after a mishap during the rehearsal of a condor-to-condor jump that occurs during the climatic finale.





Lou and Viggs' cartoon counterparts argue throughout the entire film.

Big-Name Animation Director Draws Next Movie From Real Life

Comedy "Viggs' World" Due In Late March

Rob Minkoff knows cartoons. As the director of the smash hit "The Lion King", "Stuart Little" and "Stuart Little 2", Minkoff has reached a stage where he can pick and choose what he wants to work on these days. And his next project is drawing the attention of the Director's Guild since it will feature two of their own as its stars, our very own First A.D. Louis D'Esposito and 2nd A.D. Michael viglietta.

The movie, entitled "Viggs' World", is a psychedelic trip through the world of film production seen through the eyes of Mr. viglietta. The adult content and extreme language will ensure that this cartoon won't be seen by kiddies;

it will be rated NC-17 and will only be released in a select few theatres nationwide beginning next spring. By dint of this most stern rating and limited release schedule it is little wonder that industry analysts predict that this film will be the least financially successful project that Minkoff has done to date.

But no one can dissuade him from completion of the project which has been in production for almost three years. Cost over-runs and union problems have kicked the cost of the film \$15 Million over initial projections and the film has suffered a number of setbacks in the course of production. The biggest obstacle to production was a dearth of available talent. Five major animated films were in production in the United States, seven in Japan and four in Korea. Every animation house in the world capable of doing the project was booked solid. This almost derailed the project until someone remembered the rag-tag band of geriatric artists at Filmation, a company that turned out everything from **Fat Albert** and the **Super Friends** to the live action **Shazam** and the animated **Star Trek** series of the early 1970's.

Says Minkoff, "Those guys were hungry for work, and the price was right. As it turned out, the look we were after was the look they'd been turning out for years. Lately they'd begun to specialize in the industrial hygiene video market where their style of recycled animation, sound effects and limited animation was cost effective and corporately insipid."

The real-life inspirations for the movie are split on their opinions of the rough edit they've both seen so far. Says D'Esposito: "I hate it. I mean, a cartoon...about us...what's it all about? My face is orange and my hair is blue...does my hair look blue to you?"

viglietta is more upbeat. "I like the flashing colors, it's pretty. The one thing that I don't like is that they got Howie Mandell to do my voice. I asked them to change it and they said they would. I want them to get Johnny Depp to do my voice, that's how I should sound...and they're changing it right now [we checked, they're not changing the voiceover]. But otherwise I love it...look, they named it after me! That's so cool!"

D'Esposito seemed to concur saying, "Who is Jimmy? Are you Jimmy? Do the voice, tell me you're Jimmy. We love Jimmy!"



Minkoff discusses the upcoming film during a panel at the San Diego Comics Convention this past spring.

EMPLOYEE-OF-THE-WEEK SCANDAL THREATENS TO TEAR CAMERA DEPARTMENT APART



O'drobanik

A-camera operator Billy O'drobanik has released the results of a private investigation into Louis D'Esposito's "Employee of the Week" award program used on the set of 'Sweet Home Alabama'. Billy first noticed an anomaly in the program when B-camera operator Buzz Moyer received the award for the third straight week in a row back in November.

"Nothing against Buzz, he's a great guy...it's just there's no way he could win it three weeks in a row. It's almost as if Louis is just handing out the award to the first person he sees."

Buzz Moyer believes that fellow operator O'drobanik is simply jealous saying, "Oh yeah, I could see this coming...that's just like Billy. If he can't have it, nobody can."

Film Loader Fred Thomas states that, "I didn't realize what idiots these two guys were until this week. I'm thinking of switching departments until this is all sorted out."



Moyer

STAN-TA CLAUS IS COMING TO SET!

To help "spin the crew into a Christmas Frenzy", set-medic Stan Swofford will be decorating his gasoline-powered cart with multi-denominational holiday paraphernalia. Last week the LowTide was granted an exclusive first glimpse at Stan's plans.

"Well naturally, anything I do will feature my low-emissions medical support vehicle as the centerpiece. This time around I'll be decorating it like Santa Claus would have if he were an on-set medic. To go along with that I'm asking that everyone call me "Stan-ta" from now until Christmas. For my Jewish patients I'll have a special "miracle of the lamps" lightshow on the port side (that's the left-hand side of the vehicle. Additionally, I'll have Kwanza-inspired comforters available for my passengers. And the new Bose loudspeaker system that I've added to the vehicle will be blasting out Christmas tunes twenty-four by the way)



...this is one party that is going to rock all the way up to our hiatus!"

We don't want to spoil all of "Stan-ta's" surprises, but the ten minute lightshow and audio-animatronic figures that Stan has in store will certainly be a hit with the crew. Says Stan, "On my days off I've traversed the countryside looking for Christmas decorations. I've been to a lot of Revco's, Walgreen's, Eckerd's and CVS stores over the last three months. When we were up in Rome I would spend my weekends driving up to Chatanooga to their Christmas stores. My per diem went entirely into this effort...I hope folks enjoy it!"

Be prepared to receive a very special gift when you go to see Stant-ta. "There's been a fairly virulent strain of scum pox going around the set and I need to inoculate the cast and crew. I figured that while they're sitting in my lap I might as well give them a shot. It's the perfect combination of holiday cheer and medical precaution, they're going to love it! I plan to make this

the best Christmas this crew has ever experienced on any movie set! To round out the celebration I'll be available for photographs for two hours after lunch every day. Every person who sits on my lap for a photograph will receive a free "Stan Swofford" t-shirt!"

[Note that a set of photographs are \$165, non-refundable.]

TALK TO THE HAND!



Big Man Dean Stephens is well known along the East Coast as a spirited driver and the son of famed cowboy-yodeler Blackie Stephens [see article "Legendary Yodeler Releases New Album" on page 7]. What most people don't know is that when he was 14 years old, Dean attended a special summer camp (called "Puppet Camp") at the prestigious Universite Emoté, a satellite of Julliard Academy devoted entirely to the Soft Arts of puppetry and gestural poetry.

His father's touring schedule and his own penchant for big-breasted biker chicks cut short his time in camp and Dean soon abandoned his studies in favor of film work. Twenty years later he found himself on the road for 240 days out of the year with no

permanent companionship. He began to think that he needed a wife, but as it turned out, the solution was as close as his own two feet.

"I was on a big stunts movie out there in Utah. I didn't hardly know a soul on the crew and I was real lonely. Every night I'd leave the hotel bar and come back to an empty hotel room full of beer bottles and old socks. One night I was in that little hotel room watching the Weather Channel and picking up my dirty socks when I was overcome with a desperate need to talk to somebody...anybody. So I shoved my hand up a sock and sat down and had the most interesting conversation I'd had in the entire three months I'd been stuck on that show. It was at that point that I began to realize that I

needed a sock friend."

One thing led to another, and soon Dean had an entire drawer full of sock friends. He couldn't wait to get home at night to visit those friends, and often found himself telling humorous anecdotes about those visits to his co-workers. Finally, he decided to share his sock friends with some of his people friends, so he took Miss Stankee down to the hotel bar one night and ordered her a drink. The first ten minutes of this daring introduction of his sock friend were tense as crewmembers and bar patrons discussed the unusual situation, finally deciding that Dean's sock friends posed no danger to the bar being shut down, leaving him to his own peculiar habits unmolested. But not everyone was as understanding:

"This one producer thought I was crazy 'cause I was talking to Mister Moopie (a grey Hanes 'workman' sock). He didn't know that it's my art; that I went to puppet camp. He sent me in for evaluation. I told the nurse lady that I didn't need no help and to stick her nose in somebody else's business. But she actually understood what I was doing, and how stupid it was for her to ask me to explain my puppets. So now I talk to her a lot about them. She says that they are my "external self-actuating mechanism for parsing modern society". She also says that she likes the way I talk to my sock and has asked me to try talking to her pantyhose. We're supposed to try that next Wednesday night. I hope it works out good."

So do we Dean-o, so do we.

Holiday Recipe Sweet Ham Abalone

- 1 large ham
- 3lb freshly shelled Abalone
- 2 cups fine brandy
- 1oz. cloves
- 1/3 cup parsley
- 6 brown hen eggs
- 1 large Vidalia onion
- 1/2 cup pine nuts
- 1/4 cup watercress
- Splash of Worcestershire Sauce
- 1/2 stick of pure butter

Add splash of Worcestershire Sauce to 2 cups of fine brandy. Mince Abalone. Mince onion. Mix and allow to marinate for 3 hours.

Par-boil eggs then shell and mix them with watercress. Steam for 15 minutes, do not oversteam! Remove from steamer and chill for 30 minutes.

Crush cloves with pine nuts. Add to chilled egg and watercress slurry. Chill additional 10 minutes.

Cut ham with criss-cross pattern on top, rub chilled nut/egg/watercress slurry into cuts. Coat with butter in covered oven-safe crock. Set oven to "bake", 18 minutes for every pound of ham.

Place Abalone mixture into saucepan and simmer until cooked. Do not allow Abalone to heat too quickly or it will become rubbery! When ham is done, slice it thinly and drizzle the Abalone mix over the top. Serves 7.

For more recipes like this, send a self-addressed stamped envelope marked "Recipes" to the LowTide's offices.

Hopelessly Devoted To Lou

DOCUMENTARY SHATTERS LIFELONG FRIENDSHIP

You'd think that the impending re-release of the 1978 film GREASE onto the DVD format would be a celebratory event for childhood friends Andy Tennant and Lou Spaducinni. But the LowTide's crack team of investigators have learned that GREASE may not keep them together like shabby ship sha bop. Undisclosed sources close to Director Andy Tennant have provided the LowTide with a final-edit copy of a 30 minute documentary entitled "Hopelessly Devoted To Lou" that is set to be included on that DVD. The documentary's title, as it turns out, is a sharpened barb directed at Spaducinni's "massively bloated ego" (a quote from actor Jeff Conaway who played the role of Kenickie in the film).

Tennant begins his story in sunny Aroma Park, Illinois where he and Lou grew up as best friends. Fishing in the Sasashamee River by day and organizing dance recitals by night, the boys were as incorrigible and theatre-oriented as any character by Samuel Clemens. By age 14 they'd joined a traveling dinner theatre group called the "Aroma Park Players". Four years later they were ready for

college, and headed off to the big city of Paw Paw, Illinois. Andy attended the prestigious Paw Paw Academy of Dance, while Lou pursued his dream of marrying mathematics with dance instruction at the Astaire Institute for Technical Movement. On weekends they'd get together to go fishing or double-dating with girls from the St. Mary Schwartz Academy for Proper Young Ladies. Andy

"The look on Lou's face was terrifying....I thought they were going to duke it out right there" -A.Accardo

majoring in ballroom dance while Lou began studying theoretical spinning.

After graduation they moved to Santa Monica and performed at the old pier that had once hosted Lawrence Welk and his Champagne Orchestra. A few years later they were working on a spate of mid-70's dance-themed motion pictures like "London Takes A Day Off", "Dance Barn '75" and "Bicentennial Tap". Tennant notes that Lou's attitude began to grow with each new film, "unwarranted by the quality of his dancing skills".

In early 1978 they were hired to work on the film version of the Broadway musical, GREASE. All too soon, the big-budget feature began to test the relationship between the two men. Every dancer fought for screen time and proximity to the lead characters. The stress on-set was incredible as many of the choreographed sequences were invented on the spot by actor John Travolta in what he

called his "dance trance", forcing the other dancers to learn complex sequences in minutes. At this point, Lou's attitude had reached its zenith and everyone on set knew it. Recalls actor John Travolta:

"Sure, Lou seemed like a great guy at first, but dancing? Geeez, his only move was the spin. But, like, he thought it was good stuff. We tried to tell him, but he wouldn't listen. He'd just start spinning and trying to get us to all to spin like him. Can you imagine if we'd shot

the Greased Lightnin' scene that way? Now, the guy still thinks that we're 'friends' and he calls me all the time giving me advice on what kinds of movies I should be taking. Just last week I got an email from him saying that he thought I should have done a lot more spinning in my latest movie "Domestic Disturbance". The guy is a nut."

Several weeks ago the LowTide sat down with Spadaccini and let him view the documentary in its entirety. His initial shock at his friends' betrayal slowly turned into a look of complete acknowledgement during the half-hour of viewing. When the tape ended he leaned back, closed his eyes, whispered the word "jealous" then left the room.

If he was at a loss for words that day, he certainly wasn't the next time we met up with him:

"I knew it all along, but those bastards couldn't come right out and say it. They were jealous of me all along and this is the only way that they could strike at me. This isn't a documentary; it's an ambush. It's a cry for help. It says "oh, look at me, I don't know how to spin". The thing that gets me is that Andy got Johnny to say what he said. I expected Conaway to bash me, that joker was more interested in his looks than his dancing...but Johnny? I don't understand...I mean, I'm the one who introduced him to Tarantino. Hell, he'd still be doing toilet bowl cleaner commercials for the Japanese if it weren't for me."



Writer/Director Andy Tennant says that he wishes the entire matter would blow over so that he and Lou could return to the friendship that they've shared since childhood. "This documentary just kind of spun out of control while we were shooting it. I hope that Lou can forgive me...heck, I'm willing to learn that dumb-ass spin move that he's so hot to show off, if that's what it takes to patch things up."



Actor John Travolta would not answer repeated calls to his home at 3am to discuss the conflict between Andy Tennant and Lou Spadaccini. Nor would he open his back door despite repeated attempts by our reporters to gain entry. Maddeningly, he even refused to discuss the matter after our reporters forced their way onto his private jet.

Most fascinating is that Tennant and Spadaccini are now forced to work together due to contractual obligations with Tennant as a feature-film director and Spadaccini providing video playback. Parties close to both men say that the relationship is uncomfortable and that the constant bickering is distracting.

Says script supervisor Alicia Accardo, "I hate being caught up in the middle of all this...I have to be right beside Andy all day long and I can't help but see the war that these two are waging. Yesterday I saw Andy walk past Lou and spin around a couple of times on his way to the craft service table to get some M&M's. The look on Lou's face was terrifying....I thought they were going to duke it out right there. How long can this go on?"

And the world is watching.

Just last week cameras from Entertainment Tonight were present when a misunderstanding resulted in a shouting match between the men. Spadaccini was seen screaming "Payback? You want Payback? I'll give you payback you asshole!"

Tennant was perched on his director's chair shouting, "I said 'Playback' you chucklehead! Spin on THIS!"

Producers' requests not to air that footage was ignored and now the personal war between the two men has reached out to polarize The T-Birds Alumni Society. Says Society President Hector McGruff, "Oh the boys used to quarrel like that on the set, but it was never this bad. I don't know what Andy was thinking when he shot this documentary. We all know that Lou likes to spin. Now our membership is divided and the 25th anniversary is looking less and less likely. Something has to be done."

Worldwide fans of GREASE have started an

internet petition to get the two men to bury the hatchet, and Producer Wink Mordaunt is adding pressure to that movement saying, "I think they're both fairly bad dancers, so this argument's really a waste of time. I'm encouraging the crew to get the guys to talk it out and make up, and I'm sure that things will be back to normal in no time flat."

Bowing to this pressure, Paramount has decided not to include the controversial 30 minute documentary on the GREASE DVD, replacing it instead with a sing-along karaoke feature that had been previously bumped from the lineup. Representatives for Tennant say that he is happy with this change and that he regrets the havoc generated from the premature release of the documentary.

In a related story the LowTide's Investigation Team has been served with lawsuits from both Tennant and Spadaccini. Mysteriously, our Investigation Team disappeared days before those papers were served. LT



"All these years I thought Andy was my friend. Hell, he was the best man at my wedding. Now this. All I can say is "This means War". By the time this is all over he'll wish he never bad-mouthed my spin move. Travolta's off my Christmas list too. What's his deal anyway? Disco's dead Johnny Boy....D-E-A-D. Get over it!"

MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE TOUCHES PRE-RIGGING CREW, LOCAL BUSINESS-OWNER STEPS IN TO ORGANIZE MEMORIAL BBQ



His name was Blitzford J. Randier but his friends on the electrical pre-rigging crew knew him simply as "Blitzen". Tall, even for an electrician, he cut a striking figure as he laid runs of bandit cable around downtown Crawfordville. Gentle in nature and a vegetarian since birth, Blitzen was a person who naturally attracted friends. Born in the small town of Middle Sackville, Nova Scotia, his unique accent and traditional hair style were curiosities for the local townfolk who insisted on bringing their children out to look at him. Town historian Agnes Hemplewytte would bring him a carrot everyday and they'd share stories about their respective homeplaces. "He was such a nice erm...boy?" says the octogenarian as she walks around the mainstreet of town taping up "Missing" posters.

Randier was a recent transplant to the Atlanta area. Originally from Nova Scotia, he migrated southward so that he might land steadier employment on feature films, commercials and television movies. Most film-production in his own region was largely devoted to ice fishing and Gaelic romantic comedies, or odd combinations of the two. Friends say that he harbored hopes of becoming a writer or a director and that he had signed up to take night classes for directing at a local community college for the 2001-2002 Winter Semester.

For, on December 7th, Randier did not show up to work. Department head Jeff Becker was not immediately concerned saying, "My boys sometimes party pretty hard, so the occasional tardy juicer isn't a surprise. The fact that Blitzen didn't show up the next day immediately sent off warning signals."

Production alerted the local authorities in Crawfordville and in Thomson, where the electrician was being housed. The Thomson police observed that Randier's bed did not appear to have been slept in, and hotel house-keepers reported that they had not had to change his towels for several days. Two days later, Randier's bright red pickup truck was discovered in the trees less than 150 yards from a local restaurant that was being pre-rigged for shooting the very next week. The windshield was shattered and there were trace amounts of blood in the truck cabin.

"From the look of things we initially surmised that the boy might have been injured when he hit a deer.

We thought that he might have tried walking for help but gotten lost in the woods here since it was so foggy the night that the accident must have occurred," states Investigator Hal Lundren.

The fact that the 26 year old continued to be missing was a concern to the authorities, resulting in two well-organized searches of the area near the crash site. Neither search resulted in locating the



Hosting the Blitzford J. Randier Memorial BBQ will be Heavy's Tribute to the missing electron.

missing man, but some clues were discovered in the process. Recovered from the woods were Randier's company-issued walkie talkie, his tool belt and his jingle bells.

"Blitzen would never have left his jingle bells," sighed Stroke Renegade, the 26 year old electrician's best friend and room-mate. "His Uncle Don gave him that set of bells and he carried it wherever he went. When I heard that they'd found those bells I knew that

something was very wrong. I think that something horrible has happened to him out here in East Georgia."

It has been noted that Mr. Heavy Grant, local entrepreneur and owner of the location where Randier was last seen, is very upset at this turn of events. He had befriended the personable Blitzford during the pre-rig and made it a point to find and speak to him everyday as the rigging crews worked in and around the popular barbecue restaurant. Another electrician, who requested anonymity, said, "Yeah, Mr. Grant was fascinated by Blitzen. He was always asking him about his haircut and the size of his head. He was obsessed by Blitzen if you asked me."

Confirming that opinion was the announcement of a "Blitzford J. Randier Memorial BBQ" to be held December 19th on the grounds of Heavy's BBQ. Attendees are requested to bring photos and stories of their experiences with Blitzford, to be shared in a post-dinner ceremony. As the Memorial coincides with the beginning of the hunting season much of the meat served will be from local venison suppliers, a long-time tradition in the region. Served in countless variations, the event is sure to become a tradition in the area; a fitting memorial to a bright star like Randier.

But while the memorials are being planned the investigation continues. Authorities now confirm that foul play cannot be ruled out in Randier's disappearance and have requested the assistance of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation. Says Producer Mike Fottrell, "This has been hard on the crew, but it's brought us closer together. I'll be attending the Memorial, sampling venison and thinking of Blitzen. There ought to be some good eating going on that night. I can't wait."

BEAR-NAPPED!

On November 9th at approximately 1:30pm, a daring daylight raid was carried out against the property department, resulting in the loss of the department's treasured talking-bear. On patrol duty that afternoon was driver Johnny Poucher, who was taken completely unaware as the bear-napping happened right under his nose. The company had just recently arrived in Rome (Georgia, not Italy) to film several scenes at the Martha Berry residence when the raid transpired.

No stranger to 'napping himself, Johnny was not intimidated by a ransom note left behind at the scene demanding that he pay a ransom of four dollars and fourteen doughnuts for the bear's safe return. Attached to the ransom note was a Polaroid photograph of the bear in handcuffs with a gag over his mouth, with that day's newspaper shoved in front of the hog-tied bear. Dire consequences were promised if the bear's removal were to be made known to the authorities.

Poucher's first act was to flag down a police officer providing lock-up to the film crew and report the bear's disappearance. He next alerted the prop department.

After much finger-pointing within the department it was decided that Poucher should continue as the intermediary with the bear-nappers as they had selected him as their initial contact. Within days of the raid Poucher reported that the bear-nappers had left a voice message on his hotel phone with new demands, upping the original cash demand from four to five dollars.

He reported that the voice on the other end of the phone was male and had a foreign accent, mispronouncing his last name as "Poocher" before bringing the bear to the phone. The bear spoke quickly saying "Could you do me a favor? Could you bounce me on you knee?", something he'd often said to Poucher whenever the big man had squeezed his little paw.

That was over a month ago. Since that one phone call Poucher has reported no further contact with the bear-nappers. No contact, until now.

During prep on Monday December 17th the propmaster, Dwight Benjamin-Creel discovered a note on the tailgate of the proptruck addressed to driver Johnny Poucher with a new photograph of the missing bear.

The new note states, "Cooperate or the bear becomes unstuffed. Leave \$5 and five of every flavor of Krispy Kreme doughnuts on the tailgate of your truck on the first shooting day after Christmas Break. Failure to get this order correct will result in torture [sic] of said bear. Do not test our resolve Mister Poucher."

While the theft of a talking toy bear may seem frivolous to



This is the best image we could scan from the note sent to Johnny Poucher in the short time we had before the newsletter went to press.

outsiders, it is considered a grave insult to a Teamster owing to deep-seated superstitions their order have developed over decades of traveling highspeed interstate highways.

Poucher's fellow Teamsters, already agitated by the bear's abduction, are angry and suspicious and severe repercussions are promised should the bear-napper(s) be discovered.

Once again the Lowtide offices are accepting seasonal contributions of cash, expensive electronics and amorous advances. If you choose to contribute to the 'Tide, please be sure to include a detailed manifest of your contributions legibly printed on a \$50 US bill. Please note that these contributions may be written off as charitable donations if you use an inexperienced and/or reckless CPA to do your tax preparations.

HARD LIVING SECTION

Sapp Is Back With "GRITS"



Tell us the basic story behind "GRITS".

GRITS is about a tough, no-nonsense guy who's really hungry and is also not very dumb. He is also not as slow as the people who *claim* to be his friends say that he is behind his back (even though he can hear the mean, hurtful things that they say about him). He hates a lot of them most of the time because they are so mean to him and make him carry stuff that they should be carrying instead....like sandbags and crane-weights. Especially crane-weights.

So, you're saying that the main character is challenged to overcome social hardships to establish himself amongst his peers?

No, I'm saying that he's hungry.

He's hungry in a metaphorical sense, and he's prepared to fight the slings and arrows of society?

He's hungry. *Hun-greeeeeeee*. How stupid are you?

What inspired you to incorporate stop motion animation into "GRITS"?

Man, my favorite TV shows was always them puppet cartoons like the Thunderbergs [sic] and Mister Roger's Couch [sic]. When they came out with them Christmas shows with the singing reindeers and that talking snowman, I knew that I wanted to grow up to make cartoon puppet shows just like them on television. Did you know that Bumbles bounce? I learned that from just watching them shows. Hey, have you got any french fries?

Tapping into the resurgent nostalgia-induced popularity of the 70's-era stop-motion animated

We recently had time to sit down and speak with experimental film-maker Ted Sapp, writer and director of a new independent short called "GRITS". Although Sapp seemed visibly upset, the interview proved enlightening and yielded a deeper insight into the creative process that has resulted in a film that has received critical acclaim in national film festivals. It should be noted that Sapp (at left with clam) has requested that the LowTide not print this interview.

Christmas specials makes sense, but why did you use live clams as the basis for all of your puppets?

Well I did a lot of reading about how they made them cool Christmas cartoon puppet shows. It's something that they call "clam-ation" and its really easy to do. Give me a french fry and I'll show you how I did it.

"Clam"-ation? You don't mean "Clay"-mation do you?

You can't *eat* clay, you idiot. Man, I hate the press.

The intercuts between live-action and stop-motion are jarring and enforce the notion that the main character is a fish out of water; essentially living in a world that cannot appreciate his minimalist sensibilities. When the animated clams (avatars of the live-action actors) are all steamed-open and empty in the epilogue, the viewer is left with a sense of relationships unexplored and experiences lost. Was the shift from color stock to black & white stock part of that denouement or something more sinister that you may follow up with in a future film?

Bad clams make you turn yellow. If they smell like feet, don't eat 'em. My rule is to stay with fried foods....like french fries..hint, hint.

What was the most important thing you learned over the course of this film?

The word you yell to make people stop acting is actually pronounced "CUT". They ought to tell you that stuff up front.

Legendary Yodeler Releases New Album



Camera truck driver Blackie Stephens is finally emerging from his long musical silence with the release of a new album entitled "It's Beginning To Look A Lot Like Yodel". Stephens, one of the original roughneck singers to emerge from Folsom Prison with Johnny Cash, is considered to be the "Godfather of American Yodeling". His keen sense of American social topology has kept him riding the crest of modern yodeling for almost four decades, inspiring younger singers like David Bowie and Madonna to reinvent themselves in like fashion. Lately, he's become the darling of Hollywood directors who like to add his zesty cowboy yodeling undertone to their films; tapping into his giant fan-base in the process.

This new album was inspired by what Blackie calls the "sizzle on my catered steak"; his way of saying that he's found a new love on a movie set. The entire album, though billed on the cover as being holiday-themed, is actually comprised entirely of an loose collection of love songs to a woman who he'll only describe in verse. Tantalizing hints of who this woman is begin to emerge in songs like "I Fell in Love With The Lady In The Champagne Van" and "I Want To See MORE of You AGIN". Easily the best song on the entire album is the Appalachia-fusion yodel called "Tease My Hair". Other songs, like "Come Up To My North Pole" and "I Hope You've Been Naughty, 'Cause I'm Feelin' Nice" fall flat as holiday songs because of the lack of Christmas imagery and the presence of relentless profanity. Fans of Blackie Stephens will be delighted with this new effort, while those who thought they were buying their families a traditional Christmas yodeling album will be organizing a class action suit. The term "deceptive marketing" will haunt this album for years to come.


> Not in stores December 19th, \$16.99

Your Daily Grip-o-Scope

By Madame Garina




Oh my children, gather round, for old Madame Garina, Queen of the Grips has looked into the Future and is back to share the things she's seen. This week she sees good fortune for almost all of the faithful

Applebox 
Jan.20 - Feb.18

People think you're smart, so keep your mouth closed and just smile whenever anyone talks to you. Tonight: steer clear of boiled eggs.

Sandbag 
Feb.19 - Mar.20


Not everything is as it seems, be prepared for a sudden change in plans. Avoid conflict and reality television. Your house is on the rise, sit down and stop looking at the extras.

Dancefloor 
Mar.21 - Apr.19


Today is for reconciliation; mend fences and broken hearts. PeeWee figures prominently in your plans. Use stronger soap.

Teaser 
Apr.20 - May.20

Things are looking up. Set goals and stick to your beliefs, however misguided they may be. Your house is waning. Small children are frightened by your hair.

C-Stand 
May.21 - Jun.12


It's a beautiful day! Take a lot of rides down to basecamp, van drivers LOVE company!

Tacocart 
Jun.22 - Jul.22


You will find yourself reading a griposcope today, to determine what your fate for this day may be...but we're not going to tell you because we enjoy exerting this small amount of power over you. Petty of us, no?

Bullprick 
Jul.23 - Aug.22


Your tendency to speak in Esperanto will lead to an embarrassing incident with a vacuum cleaner and an enraged mall walker. Charmita.

Wedge 
Aug.23 - Sep.22

Try a different approach to those jobs that you've done a million times. Shake things up a bit, surprise your co-workers. Buy new socks.

Speedrail 
Sep.23 - Oct.22

Find some quiet time for yourself today...in fact, BE quiet today. You talk far too much and none of your co-workers find wisdom in your blather. Try dressing snappier too, you look like slob. Geeez.

Trickline 
Oct.23 - Nov.21

Pretend like you're French. Remember, we've read your stars...so this is something you should do. Also call everyone you meet "coach". Bow a lot.

PeeWee 
Nov.22 - Dec.21

The stars favor you, and luck is your friend. Kinda makes up for that speech impediment, now doesn't it?

Beergut 
Dec.22 - Jan.19

It's beginning to look like you're going to get bupkis for your birthday because everybody had to buy Christmas gifts for their real friends. It sucks to be you.

Women's Group Targets Local Film-Maker



Newest Member of WATIPOCIF, Joanne Guthrie, stands with the organization's founder Leigh Leverett waiting for a ride back to basecamp.

"I'll be damned if I let that man give me a van ride again," begins costumer Leigh Leverett in what turns into a breathless five-minute tirade directed against van driver Stu Dodge. Her best friend and colleague Joanne Guthrie stands to her side quietly nodding her head in agreement.

Leverett's ire isn't directed at Dodge's driving abilities, it's his film-making that spurs her into anger, and into action. As one of the founding members of Women Against The Inaccurate Portrayal Of Cheerleaders In Film (WATIPOCIF), Dodge's latest movie "Cheerleader Autopsy" is the apotheosis of everything that her organization holds dear.



Stu Dodge surrounded by starlets at the premiere of Cheerleader Autopsy looked unrepentant at the content of his latest film.

Drinking, smoking, swearing, bare-breastedness and public spankings are the top five no-no's in WATIPOCIF's 50 point list of "non-cheerleaderesque activities". Over the past six months that list has been circulated to all of the major film studios and commercial production companies in the continental United States and Canada with an international push planned for next spring. So far, the grand majority of studios have happily complied with the watchdog group's list, with only a few holdouts, primarily in the adult film industry. But Dodge, founder of Stinky Pictures (stinkypictures.com) seems to have made "Cheerleader Autopsy" to spite WATIPOCIF.

Says Leverett: "It's as if he took our list and tried to do everything that we've said NOT to do. If he thinks that he's going to get away with this he's got another thing coming. WATIPOCIF's membership just doubled yesterday and I think that says we're doing something important here. We're started working on shirts to help draw attention to our war against this vile movie."

Newest member (and previously mentioned friend) Joanne Guthrie pipes in, "I used to be a cheerleader! Do you want to see me do a split?"

Dodge's organization has declined offers to discuss his movie and his thoughts on WATIPOCIF. *It must be noted that the LowTide's film reviewer gave "Cheerleader Autopsy" a glowing review saying that it was "The best cheerleader movie ever!". It should be further noted that this is the same review that our reviewer gave to every movie that he saw in 2001 and as such should not be construed as a recommendation.*

The staff of the LowTide wish you and yours the Happiest of Holidays with family and friends. It has been our distinct honor to work with the talented cast and crew of Sweet Home Alabama in 2001. We had a lot of material to select from for this issue and our editors have had a very difficult time deciding which articles would make it into this edition of the Tide. Unless circumstances change, this will be the only issue of the LowTide published for this film, so read it slow you bonehead! It is possible that we may re-publish one or two of our "classic" editions from past films, if so requested. Be safe in your travels and may nothing you dismay, we'll see you in the New Year!