



THE SUN HERALD

How Weird can Hall of Fame get?

August 4, 2005
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Wherever I go these days, folks ask me one of two questions.

1) How, as a Mississippi resident, can I do my part to get "Weird Al" Yankovic into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame?

And...

2) When is National Underwear Day?

Under the category of people who have way too much time on their hands, a national fan-sponsored "Make the Rock Hall Weird" campaign is asking fellow Yankovic admirers in the state to send letters and postcards to the Hall of Fame Foundation in New York to support the idea of inducting the Grammy-winning comedian into that august body. (The address and additional details are available on the campaign's Web site at www.dohtem.com/al.)

The idea, according to a press release issued by the group, is to "give every state, plus other countries around the world, a chance to show support for Yankovic en masse before the 2006 induction nominees are announced in September."

"Weirder things have happened," concludes the press release.

Yeah, but not many.

Next up...For the third year in a row, Freshpair.com, which bills itself as "a leading Internet retailer of men's and women's intimate apparel," will be staging National Underwear Day on Wednesday.

According to a press release, the event involves male and female models taking to the streets clad in nothing but undergarments from some of today's hottest underwear brands.

(Believe it or not, an online petition for official recognition of the day can be signed at www.freshpair.com or www.nationalunderwearday.com.)

"The models will make appearances in highly visible New York City locales - including Times Square and outside Penn Station," reads the press release.

Actually, with today's heightened security, especially in light of the recent and tragic London subway bombings, this could make sense, from a national security standpoint.

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Searches of people riding the subways and trams across the United States have become almost de rigueur. But if everybody was clad only in underwear, well... Do you see where I'm going with this?

So, if this Wednesday you see a 5-foot 10-inch, slightly overweight and decidedly embarrassed blond man walking the streets of South Mississippi clad only in his skivvies, you'll know I'm just doing my part to make the nation safer. If any models want to join me, I guess that'd be OK, too.

And on we go...Bruce Willis, who was in town last week to participate in the Isle of Capri-hosted B.B. King 80th Birthday Jam benefit concert, was also spotted gambling at the Beau Rivage. (I know, I know, the politically correct term is gaming. But I still, even after all these years, haven't bought into that sanitized description of what is actually, literally, gambling. If you're an adult, there's nothing wrong with it. So lets just call it what it is.)

Willis is also either bald, or regularly shaves his head. At least that was the impression I got when, midway through the performance by him and his band, the Accelerators, last Friday at the Isle of Capri, he marched right off the stage, looked me square in the eye and shook my hand. (It wasn't just me. After shaking my hand, he strode into the crowd and shook hands with floored spectators for the next several minutes. It was actually one of the best public relations moves I've seen in quite some time.)

So lets just hope that Willis, who usually wears a hat, often a baseball cap, didn't try to enter the Coast Brew Pub. Because the last time I tried to enter that fine establishment, literally with baseball hat in hand, I was turned away.

Naturally I looked for a hat rack by the door, of which there is none. So, following the bouncer's instructions, I walked all the way back to the front desk to check my baseball cap, by which time I was halfway back to my car. By which time my wife had had enough, and we boogied out of there. So after seeing a show at the theater, and dropping about 100 bucks for dinner for two, I walked away a very unhappy camper.

My point? I'd just love to be there to see the same bouncers turn away Bruce Willis because he was wearing a baseball cap to cover his bald head.

And finally...I find this fascinating, and I'm dying to know more. But for right now, this is all I've got - Steven Spielberg and members of his family were spotted several weeks ago by the pool at the Beau Rivage. That's right. The Steven Spielberg.

A private family vacation in an out-of-the-way, very un-Hollywood location? Working on a project in the region? (I checked, and it apparently has nothing to do with the upcoming "Raiders of the Lost Ark: The Adaptation" film project spearheaded by producer Scott Rudin, which was naturally my first guess.) Visiting friends in the area?

Regardless, he was here. How cool is that?