



Edmonton Sun

Brief Encounters

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Here's something to think about next time you walk into a busy bar, a football stadium or any other place where large crowds of men are gathered.

A startling 73% of men claim to have tried on women's underwear at one time or another, according to a survey by www.freshpair.com, an online lingerie retailer.

Well, I don't know about you, but knowing that seven men out of every 10 have a penchant for lacy panties makes me look at the Edmonton Oilers in a whole new light.

QUEER TV

Television's infatuation with gay-themed shows goes on and on.

Will & Grace, Queer as Folk and Queer Eye for the Straight Guy already air. Several more are slated to debut this fall.

Since political correctness appears to be out the window when it comes to naming these shows (I always thought "queer" was a derogatory term) here are a few of my suggestions for future programs:

Campy Campers: Outdoor living show for gays.

The Pansy Patch: Gardening show for gays.

Fairy Cakes: Cooking show for gays.

Mincing Words: Quiz show for gays.

Queens of Hearts: Hospital drama about gay cardiologists.

Homo Mojo: Documentary about gay practitioners of voodoo and other magic arts.

ALMOST FAMOUS

Elvis is famous. The Rolling Stones are famous and so is President George W. Bush.

Their names and faces are recognized by people of all nationalities and ages all around the globe.

I, however, am not famous even though the maitre d' of a posh city restaurant recognized me recently, causing my mom to gasp and refer to me as a "celebrity" for the rest of the meal - much to my mortification.

Also not famous are Melissa del la Cruz and Karen Robinovitz.

"Who?" I hear you cry. And that's my point.

The two New York journalists have penned a fluffy little book called How to Become Famous in Two Weeks or Less - although why anybody would want to I can't imagine.

Being a celebrity must suck.

You can't have a bad-hair day, wear your pyjamas to go to the corner store, talk loudly to yourself in public while dribbling profusely or any of the other things I enjoy doing every day, without finding yourself in glaring tabloid headlines .

The book authors went seeking fame for a magazine assignment. They claim they succeeded because they attended ritzy parties and got their photos in the gossip pages.

Well, I don't think they found fame and I can prove it.

Without checking back to the start of this item, write down the two women's full names. No, of course you can't.



PRESS COVERAGE

WEDDING WOWS

And talking of getting noticed ...

If you're spontaneous, fun, want to get married by October and don't mind a complete stranger planning your wedding, then read on.

A Toronto television production company is seeking couples to take part in a new series called Exchanging Vows.

In each hour-long episode, couples compete to plan each other's wedding.

"It's a bit like (home decorating show) Trading Spaces but the difference is the couples don't know one another," says Lara Leavoy, of Breakthrough Films and Television. Producers are footing some of the bills up to \$5,000.

Couples schedule everything from invitations to the bridal dress.

The couple that comes closest to pulling off another pair's perfect wedding wins a honeymoon vacation for themselves.

"We've already filmed two weddings and they went pretty well," says Leavoy. She was scrambling to steer another ceremony in Hogtown yesterday where power outages were still causing chaos.

Exchanging Vows will air on a new Toronto channel this fall and on the Life Network next year.

Hopefully, we'll see a trailer-trash couple planning the nuptials for a pair of society snobs. Now that would be entertainment.

For more information call 416-703-5558, ext. 278.

DANCING WITH DION

Professional dancer Stacey Tookey doesn't claim to be famous.

But the Edmonton lass spends five evenings a week keeping in step with one of Canada's

hottest celebrities.

Tookey, 27, is one of 48 dancers in singer Celine Dion's glitzy show at the 4,100-seat Caesar's Palace Colosseum in Las Vegas.

"I was shocked when I landed the (two-year) contract," says Tookey, daughter of Shelley Tookey of Shelley's Dance Company Ltd. "It's such an elite job," like the NHL for a hockey player.

Another city gal, Sandi Croft, whose mom owns On Stage dancewear, is also in the show.

Dion doesn't act like a diva, says Tookey.

"She's so wonderful, has so much energy. The first time she met the dancers she had on her jeans, no makeup, just like a real girl. She's very approachable."

Every Saturday, Dion lays on a dinner for her performers before the show.

"She chats, asks about our days off. I've worked with a couple of other stars and they certainly weren't like that," says Tookey.

A dancer "from the moment I could stand," Tookey competed against more than 3,000 international dancers to land the coveted Vegas gig.

First, a rigorous eight-hour audition in New York. Then, six months of rehearsals in Brussels, where the chosen dancers did gymnastics, aerial work and intense workshops.

Since the show opened in March, Tookey has revelled in her glamorous lifestyle - house with pool, car, etc.

But she misses her family.

"Especially my little sister, Kelci. She's 10 and like a daughter to me. It's hard."

I guess that's the price of life at the top.

PRIME BEEF



PRESS COVERAGE

"Why do drivers who smoke insist on using the road as a giant ashtray?"

Damien Schmidt

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