



## HUMAN INTEREST

Thursday, April 22, 2010

### Man operates strip club in his basement



Detroit, MI -- Jay Thunderbolt owns a Detroit strip club. In his basement. He runs the whole thing himself, and makes sure that Club Thunderbolt is open 24/7, by appointment. There's no cover charge. Customers can order different strippers out of the company catalog -- a photo album full of seedy-looking Polaroids. Each page features one of his strippers in three poses -- bent over, spread eagle and come hither. There are dozens of girls to choose from. Thunderbolt doesn't need a cabaret license like other Detroit strip clubs must have. The city ordinance regulating other places doesn't apply, because it's not a bar serving liquor or food, but rather a private arrangement in a private home. To him it's like having a strip-o-gram sent to your own house... The club's main room, at the back of the house, looks like a Northern Michigan lodge decorated in the 1970s. The walls are fake wood paneling. The aged carpet is greenish-brown. The seating is an old, thick, sectional couch. A single bed rests suggestively in a corner. An ancient stereo receiver and 8-track tape player sit on a table. A few shotgun shells are lined up along its edge, incongruously. A patron's first visit is an eye-opener. "Usually everybody is shocked," Thunderbolt says, "but I've been in AmVet

halls smaller than this." Before every night's show, customers are given the same introduction. "Listen up," Thunderbolt announces to the room. "These are the rules: There's no licking, sticking, biting or slapping. Can't hurt the girls, gentlemen. Be good to the girls, they'll be good to you. It's 10 dollars a dance with the g-string on, 20 dollars with the g-string off. OK? It's lap dance time..." He has had the club in several different houses, mostly on the east side. Every time he moves to a new one, he goes door-to-door to explain what's coming to the neighborhood. "I tell everybody, 'This is what I'm gonna do. Don't be freakin' out.' I have to because the girls put a shitload of cars on the street, but I keep the grass cut, I pay the bills."



### 12-Year-Old Sued for Music Downloading

NEW YORK — The music industry has turned its big legal guns on Internet music-swappers — including a 12-year-old New York City girl who thought downloading songs was fun. Brianna LaHara said she was frightened to learn she was among the hundreds of people sued yesterday by giant music companies in federal courts around the country. "I got really scared. My stomach is all turning," Brianna said last night at the city Housing Authority

apartment where she lives with her mom and her 9-year-old brother. "I thought it was OK to download music because my mom paid a service fee for it. Out of all people, why did they pick me?" The Recording Industry Association of America (search) — a music-industry lobbying group behind the lawsuits — couldn't answer that question. "We are taking each individual on a case-by-case basis," said RIAA spokeswoman Amy Weiss. Asked if the association knew Brianna was 12 when it decided to sue her, Weiss answered, "We don't have any personal information on any of the individuals." Brianna's mom, Sylvia Torres, said the lawsuit was "a total shock." "My daughter was on the verge of tears when she found out about this," Torres said. The family signed up for the Kazaa (search) music-swapping service three months ago, and paid a \$29.99 service charge. Usually, they listen to songs without recording them. "There's a lot of music there, but we just listen to it and let it go," Torres said. When reporters visited the apartment last night, Brianna — who her mom says is an honors student — was helping her brother with his homework. Brianna was among 261 people sued for copying thousands of songs via popular Internet file-sharing software — and thousands more suits could be on the way.

### Holy Cow! 2 Cows Get Loose On Ohio State Campus



COLUMBUS, Ohio — For the second time in two weeks, life in Columbus was slightly disrupted because of farm animals that escaped their quarters. On Wednesday, two cows were seen running around the Ohio State University campus, 10TV News reported. One of the cows was corralled shortly before 3 p.m., 10TV's Lindsey Seavert reported. The second cow was tranquilized and corralled a short time later, Seavert reported. A photo that was sent to Twitter from Ohio State football player Jonathan Newsome showed one of the cows. The farm animals stopped many students in their tracks. Video taken by Chopper 10 showed hundreds of students stopping to watch the animals go by. The cows got loose from the

university's veterinary buildings, which are nearby, Seavert reported. They were being transported to the hospital and were accidentally let out of their trailer by their owner, an Ohio State spokeswoman said. The first cow was caught quickly in a field, but the second cow was harder to corral and was caught closer to the hospital, the spokeswoman said. Campus employees, including public safety, had to use a watering hose to lead one of the cows to a waiting trailer. On April 8, a pregnant cow that was being transported to Ohio State escaped along Interstate 70. Traffic was stopped briefly along the road while the animal was corralled. She later gave birth at Ohio State.

### Earth Day at 40: How It Began, Where It's Going

From grassroots beginnings in 1970, Earth Day—which celebrates its 40th anniversary today—has blossomed into a global tradition. Organizers expect more than a billion to honor Earth Day in 2010—but many will do so with Facebook rather than megaphones. As part of the Billion Acts of Green, an

initiative organized by the Washington, D.C.-based Earth Day Network's Green Generation campaign,



more than 30 million people will use social media to encourage green activities. One commenter on the Earth Day Network Web site named "Elroy," for example, plans to "shower with a friend"—presumably to conserve water and electricity. Kathleen Rogers, president of the Earth Day Network, said that everyone is part of what she calls the green generation, which marks the transition from the industrial revolution to the green revolution. The campaign aims to make Earth Day's 40th anniversary the moment when the green generation comes together to address pressing environmental concerns, such as the global freshwater crisis and global warming. "The idea that we can all belong to something is what's exciting people and what's making them want to join," Rogers said. Amy Cassara, a senior associate at the World Resources Institute in Washington, D.C., analyzes global environmental trends. She noted that, since Earth Day started,

environmentalism has moved from a fringe issue to a mainstream concern. "As many as 80 percent of Americans describe themselves as environmentalists," Cassara said. [\(More about Earth Day\)](#)

#### Mayor donates kidney to constituent friended on Facebook



East Haven, CT -- A Connecticut mayor is giving new meaning to being Facebook friends. East Haven mayor April Capone Almon donated a kidney to a constituent through the social-networking site. Almon, 35, underwent surgery two weeks ago and is back at work. The recipient was a local man named Carlos Sanchez, 44-year-old father with diabetes. The two knew each other casually and were friends on Facebook. Preparing to go on dialysis, Sanchez sent a desperate plea through his Facebook page after friends and family members failed to match. Almon, who took office last January, sent him a message. "I thought she was joking. The mayor of East Haven would offer me her kidney?" Sanchez said. "She

responded back and said, 'I am serious, I am willing to get tested.'" Sanchez is recovering at Yale-New Haven Hospital. "Seeing him in the hospital and seeing him just come to life to be a whole new person and seeing him eating," Almon said. "I still don't have my appetite back and he's just eating everything in sight and that's tremendous." The two new friends speak every day now. "He calls me his little sister and I'm proud to be," she said. "It's just a happy thing, and it's wonderful to see him and his family so happy." Almon encouraged others to be organ donors. "Throughout the whole process, he kept saying even if you decide to not do this, I will be appreciative and understand and that it was very kind," she said.

