

Topless waitresses notion has our faces turning red

Colorado voted as a blue state last November.

Now, "blue" is manifested here with the comedian's definition: salaciousness.

It started when in early June, Gov. **Bill Ritter** and Denver Mayor **John Hickenlooper** announced "Cool Biz," an energy-saving initiative in which they urged people to wear lighter clothing in the office during the summer. That was mild compared to what's rapidly followed:

- A Boulder entrepreneur wants to open a coffee shop featuring topless waitresses — on the CU campus. According to the **Boulder Daily Camera**, **Dan Kennedy** says he might charge a \$12 cover fee "to avoid attracting a crowd just looking to ogle the waitresses," the paper said, a cost that won't faze anyone willing to pay \$5 for a cuppa joe. Sure hope Kennedy plans to offer health care coverage, in case of unfortunate spills.

- Word came that **The Tilted Kilt** — a Celtic-themed sports bar featuring scantily clad waitresses — would fill some of the **Tabor Center's** empty space caused by the departure of the **ESPN Zone**.

- Men's salon "A Little Off the Top" — where lingerie-clad women do the haircuts, nail therapy and massage at locations in Englewood and Aurora — plans to start franchising.

- Thankfully, the state's honor was salvaged when a representative of a Colorado company rang the closing bell July 22 at the NASDAQ stock market in New York City.

Troy Lowrie, chairman and CEO of **VCG Holding Corp.** (NASDAQ: VCGH) was the bell-ringer.

Uh, wait a minute. Turns out that VCG runs adult nightclubs, in which dancers start off with more clothes than the coffee shop or men's salon, but finish with less.

Street Talk is shocked — SHOCKED, we tell you — and is on a campaign for decency.

So all you ranchers out there: Put some dang pants on those horses!

GIVE THEM CREDIT: Credit's no good? Thinking about selling valuable items so you can afford that life-saving prescription?

Todd Hills and **Jim McHose** have started up what they claim is the first online pawn shop in the United States, **www.InternetPawn.com**, based in Centennial. One big feature, they say, is that it will make loans through the Internet.

Hills sold his **15 Jumping Jack Cash** pawnshops, located along the Front Range and Salt Lake City, to **EZCorp.** (NASDAQ: EZPW) of Austin, Texas, in July 2007. McHose was his CFO. Later, they created the website, more for folks not used to walking into a pawnshop.

"It's not a pleasant thing to have to pledge something that has a huge emotional value to yourself for cash," Hills says.

"Unfortunately, in these very difficult times, and with a credit crunch, we felt we wanted to provide a new service."

Potential clients fill out an application online. If they're accepted, they ship their items via FedEx to the Centennial office, and InternetPawn sends them a pawn ticket, which amounts to a six-month loan, Hills says.

The interest rate is 30 percent — high in the view of many, but low in the pawnshop world, with annual interest charges between 120 percent and 240 percent, McHose says.

If the customer can't pay back the loan, InternetPawn will sell the pawned item, and will return any proceeds above the loan amount to the customer.

"We like items that don't depreciate, are easy to store, need no maintenance, and can be easily and economically shipped," McHose says. Preferred items are jewelry, gold or silver bars and coins, heirlooms, watches, precious stones, collectibles and artwork. Loans range between \$500 and \$100,000, though most fall between \$1,000 and \$5,000.

BE TRUE TO YOUR SCHOOL: The **Colorado State University Alumni Association** isn't waiting for the recession to end. The group is holding events designed both to help its unemployed members and to promote professional networking.

With 43,000 alumni in the metro Denver area — the "Denver Ram Network" — they've drawn some good crowds.

Events include:

- The CSU Career Series, with such titles as "Surviving the Pink Slip" and "Tweets, Pokes and Links: Using Social Media to Find Your Dream Job." These will resume in January 2010.

The "Pink Slip" event drew more than 40 people, and "about half were unemployed; the other half were feeling they might be unemployed in the next three to six months," says **Paul Wolansky**, senior director of alumni relations in Denver.

Three alumni spoke, with **Amanda Thompson**, a national account executive with **CareerBuilder.com**, as lead presenter. The panelists were **Monica Covert-Kerber**, chief selection officer at **Northwestern Mutual**, and **Heath Grantham**, staff manager at **Noodles & Company**.

- CSU Schmooze at **Snooze** networking breakfasts, held the third Wednesday of each month. The next one is 7:30-8:30 a.m. Aug. 19 at the restaurant, 2262 Larimer St. They max out at 25 people; registration is a must. People have gotten job leads at the breakfasts, Wolansky says.

The alumni association plans a big networking reception in September at the **CoBiz Bank** at 821 17th St.; a gathering last February drew about 350 people.

Info: www.alumni.colostate.edu. Registration: denver@ar.colostate.edu or 303-376-2613.

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