

ShopTalk



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The Hunt Is On In D.C.

What has three heads, can maneuver through disaster and at the end of the day end up with “sneakers full of sweat?”

Answer: Syndicated humor columnist Dave Barry, Washington Post Magazine Editor **Tom Shroder** and Post humor columnist **Gene Weingarten**, of course.

The three, who are sorta the Socrates, Plato and Aristotle of humor journalism (Weingarten hired Barry, who Shroder then edited) came up with and refined the famous Tropic Hunt (now known as the Herald Hunt)—a city-wide contest started in Miami, where contestants solve puzzles that lead to more puzzles for the chance to score some sweet prizes. Now, they’re bringing their shenanigans to D.C.

The first ever Post Hunt will take place on Sunday, May 18 from noon to 5:00 p.m. at the City Center Lot (between 9th and 11th and H and I Streets in downtown D.C.) Like its Miami older brother, The Post Hunt will be a scavenger puzzlehunt interwoven into the city’s downtown landscape. The prizes given to the top three teams of four will consist of vacation packages

(air fare, hotel included) to Westin Diplomat Resort and Spa in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

The original Tropic Hunt named after the Miami Herald’s “Tropic” magazine was based on a game started by a small South Florida community.

Shroder says, “The people who inspired us to come up with the Hunt were Dave and Anna Harris and Leonard and Adrian Nabutovsky. They came up with a small-scale version, where a handful of people drove around a neighborhood solving puzzles. Michael Browning [late Miami Herald writer] wrote a feature story and that gave Dave and Gene the idea to try it on a massive scale.”

“They had people driving all over South Florida when I came into it the second year—that was 1985,” Shroder adds. “Then, I argued that it would be far cooler if we could get everybody out of their cars and put all the puzzles in one walkable area—kind of like creating a puzzle theme park for the day. So that became the modern Hunt model that we still follow.”



In a comical Podcast interview on tropic hunt.com—a Web site dedicated to the game (with all the previous years’ puzzles—hint, hint)—Barry and Shroder, in their classic self-deprecating humor, wonder how they’ve ever pulled it off.

Barry says, “I always end the day with my sneakers full of sweat and every year, we wonder if we’ll ever do it again.” Not only have they done the thing 17 times since its inception in 1984, they’re now expanding.

Shroder, who suggested bringing it to D.C., says, “It wasn’t hard enough to design a hunt in Miami, so we needed to go to a place where Gene could help.” Barry jumps in, “Yeah, involve Weingarten, who thinks everything we’ve ever come up with is horrible!”

Barry then explains that he and Shroder usually come up with the puzzles and then they “send it over to Gene and he tells us whether it sucks or not. That’s his job.”

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Fenty Speaks At Eastern 500 Club Luncheon



Washington, D.C. Mayor Adrian Fenty and Post Chairman **Bo Jones** catch up during the recent Eastern High School 500 Club Luncheon.



Post Chairman Bo Jones's executive assistant, **Lisa Heidemann**, and her Eastern 500 Club protégé, Christian Loggins, have much to smile about. Loggins is the recipient of the \$100,000 Posse Scholarship, which he intends to apply towards his education at Grinnell College in Iowa.



B.J. Johnston, Human Resources, leads the Eastern 500 Club students through an icebreaker session.



After introducing Mayor Adrian Fenty, Vice President **Lionel Neptune**, Affiliates and Community Development, welcomes the mayor to the podium. Of note, Neptune's protégé, Delonte Moore, was a finalist in the Posse Scholarship competition.



Post Co. Chairman **Don Graham**, who along with former Vice President **Dr. Vincent E. Reed**, started the Eastern 500 Club, serves up some lemonade for his table.



Eastern 500 Club students, their mentors and other members of the community enjoy lunch, while Mayor Adrian Fenty addresses them.



Mayor Adrian Fenty responds to various questions from students.

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Not all puzzles have worked according to plan. They talk about the year that they had to improvise after a maze that was built in downtown Miami was blown into the bay overnight by 75 mile per hour winds, leading Shroder to say, "We've learned to maneuver with disaster."

Joking aside, both explain that over the years, the Hunt has become more and more difficult to create because the

puzzles need to be more challenging for the returning hunters, but still be fun for the newcomers.

Event organizers from Marketing assure that although the puzzles will be "baffling," they will be "solvable, wacky and fun for all ages."

But participants will not be the only ones smiling. From a business standpoint, with past Hunts drawing over 10,000 in a given year, businesses will be chomping at the bit to advertise during the event or in the May 18 edition of Post

Magazine, which will be dedicated to the Hunt (that issue will be riddled with clues and is an indispensable part of the game).

Any Post employee interested in becoming official Post Hunt Ambassador volunteers the day of the event and attending the volunteer after party can contact **Nicole Marshall** at marshallnd@washpost.com or at x4-6874. ■



PHOTO - AMANDA MCCRATH

(Left to right) Post Magazine Editor **Tim Shroder**, syndicated humor columnist **Dave Barry** and Post columnist **Gene Weingarten** during a recent video segment that will run at washingtontimes.com/posthunt starting March 14.

Student Journalists Meet With Post Journalists

On Feb. 6, 170 high school journalists from 14 area schools congregated at The Post for a Young Journalism Development Program event. Several Post writers and editors met with student journalists to discuss basic journalism skills.

Athelia Knight, YJDP director, recognized the following reporters for meeting with students: **Gina Acosta** (Editorial), **Michael Cavanaugh** (Style), **Marcia Davis** (Metro), **Patricia Gaston** (National), **Michael Lee** (Sports) and **David Nakamura** (Metro). ■



PHOTO - LAUREN BURKE

National Senior Night Editor **Patricia Gaston** talks about her editing job and answers questions from student journalists and editors.



PHOTO - LAUREN BURKE

Sports writer **Michael Lee**, who covers the NBA, gets into his trade, as aspiring sports journalists listen closely.



PHOTO - LAUREN BURKE

Nieman Fellow **Gina Acosta** from Editorial, meets with student editorial and opinion writers.



PHOTO - LAUREN BURKE

Post writer **David Nakamura**, Metro, discusses the finer points of reporting with student journalists from nearby high schools.

Dream Job

The Workforce Organization for Regional Collaboration's or WORC's third annual, Post-sponsored Dream Job Auction will take place on May 1 at the Four Seasons Hotel in Georgetown (D.C.) All proceeds will go toward fulfilling WORC's mission of "providing the chance for thousands of people in the Greater Washington region to have access to jobs, ultimately



allowing them to create a better life for themselves and their families."

Among the "dream jobs" (for a day) up for grabs: producing ABC 7 Evening News, covering national politics with NPR White House correspondent David Greene, flying a fighter jet, managing the Washington Nationals and commanding a riverboat, among many others. To read more about the event, go to: www.DreamJobAuction.org.

Food As Fuel Brown Bag Lunch—TODAY ONLY!

Today only (Feb. 29), Holistic nutrition counselor Catherine Varchaver from Crossings—A Center for the Healing Traditions will host a brown bag lunch from 1 p.m. to 1:45 p.m. in meeting room 3. Her topic

will be "Food as Fuel for Physical Well-Being, Brain Function and Emotional Balance: How to Feed Body, Mind and Spirit in Diet-Crazed America."

In the world of holistic nutrition, one size (or one diet) does not fit all. In our country, the definition of "food" can be as complex as the definition of "healthy". So how can we eat delicious foods that are good for us in order to get well, stay well and prevent disease? And how can we acknowledge nature's important influences and make sense of the barrage of mixed messages from medical professionals, the media and our culture at large? Come listen to one nutritionist's perspective.

New Game Room Is Here

The new game room near the Northwest Building cafeteria is finished. It has two new TVs, an air hockey table, a foosball table and a Wii gaming system. Enjoy!

Dry Cleaning Service At The Post

Bergmann's Dry Cleaning will be offering their services to Post employees at a 20 percent discount starting on March 3. The best part is that the drop-off and pick-up points will be conveniently at The Post. Employees will be able to sign up by providing a credit card number. They will be issued a dry cleaning bag that's assigned to their credit card on file. Bergmann's will be picking up and dropping off on the first floor L Street entrance within the security center on Mondays and

Thursdays between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Of note, Bergmann's customer service will handle any discrepancies, not The Post. Contact **Tammy Johnson**, Purchasing, at x4-7111 with any questions.

Post Gifts Now On Sale

Looking for Post or Post Media logo-emblazoned gifts for clients or relatives? There are a variety of handy office supplies, clothing items, tumblers, water bottles, mugs and a variety of weather gear available. The items range from inexpensive to high-end. Special orders can also be placed. Please note that the Purchasing Department maintains a low inventory of products; therefore, an advance notice is highly recommended if you need to purchase a large quantity of items for your next project or promotional event. The promo sales hours of operation are: Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. The store is located in Purchasing on the first floor near the gym.

DVD Kiosk

A DVD-vending machine is now available in the Northwest cafeteria. The cost is \$1.79 for the first night and 99 cents each additional night. You will need a credit card to check out movies and it is available to all Post employees and contractors. The rental machine has a Web site that allows you to enter "The Washington Post" machine to check inventory, print credit card receipts and check on new release dates. Visit: <http://ynotdvd.com>.

Correction

The Feb. 22 ShopTalk incorrectly spelled Post journalist and book author **George Packer** as George Pack. His book title was also misspelled. It should be "The Assassins' Gate."

Marketplace

FOR RENT: Vacation week in Villas at The Boardwalk. This is a beautiful oceanfront resort in Virginia Beach. Check-in on Saturday, Sept. 6 and check-out on Sept. 13. One bedroom, two sofas and kitchen; sleeps up to six people. Amenities include: indoor pool, Jacuzzi, gym and restaurant. Asking for \$650. Contact Trinh at x4-4021 (leave a message between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.).

FOR RENT: Share lovely Arlington home in quiet convenient neighborhood. Near two metro stops. Reasonable rent price includes utilities in exchange for pet care when I travel. \$600/month. Call Carol at 202-412-8905 or x4-4832.

NEW MARKETPLACE DEADLINE: Close of business on Fridays. Please include your name, extension and phone number. Ads are for Post employees only. Send ads to ShopTalk, seventh floor, or call x4-6803. To send ads via fax dial x4-4963 or to email send to shoptalk@washpost.com or onom@washpost.com. Ads run for two issues unless otherwise requested. ShopTalk reserves the right to publish and edit all ads.