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WESTCOAST NEWS, B1

FOR THE KIDS
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More women using bars in restaurants, poll finds

Arbitrator upholds teachers' right to bad-mouth Victoria

Have you seen this man?



Ruling allows politicking in parent-teacher interviews and on bulletin boards

By Janet Pedersen
A Victoria arbitrator has ruled that teachers have a constitutional right to bad-mouth their principals and school boards in parent-teacher interviews and on bulletin boards. A labour arbitrator has ruled that teachers have a constitutional right to bad-mouth their principals and school boards in parent-teacher interviews and on bulletin boards.

Brenzinger retracts claim, apologizes to Stewart

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A Victoria arbitrator has ruled that teachers have a constitutional right to bad-mouth their principals and school boards in parent-teacher interviews and on bulletin boards.

Codebreakers on quest for Holy Grail

By Bill Kavanagh
A team of codebreakers is searching for the Holy Grail, a legendary sword that is said to have been hidden in a cave in the British Isles.

Avril says Britney looks cheap

By Bill Kavanagh
Avril Lavigne says Britney Spears looks cheap. She says she is a better singer and more talented than Spears.

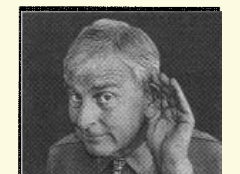


Table with 2 columns: Item, Price. Includes items like 'JORDAN' shoes and 'SUPER SALE PRICE'.

Advertisement for 'INSTALLED FLOORING SALE' with 'SAVE UP TO 1/3' and 'PUT DOWN ONLY 10%'. Includes 'SUPER SALE PRICE ON COMPLETE INSTALLATION'.

Selling 'cruise ships on land'

TRADE TALK | Two young hotshots aim to sell motor homes to the retirement crowd



MALCOLM PARRY
VANCOUVER SUN
COLUMNIST

JASON CRAIK is "the next Bob," according to Cresssey Development Corp. VP Hani Lammam. He didn't mean the jovial McNeill and Craik Real Estate Solutions Inc. partner will succeed the late Bob Hope, but rather that he has the moxie to top perennial condo seller supreme, Bob Rennie.

Indeed, outgoing Craik, 33, and stay-in-the-office marketing whiz Cameron McNeill, 34, have moved a lot of tower-based units in the three years since they parachuted from Marcello and Rossano de Cotiis's Amacon/Omni outfit.

Brian Morton's article in *The Vancouver Sun* Jan 17, listed many of the projects they've sold for developers like Cresssey, Anthem Properties and the like. Since then, the pair and their 40 internal and external staff have put hundreds more mostly youthful purchasers into residences not much larger than high-end motor-homes.

Now, paradoxically, they're starting to aim at the folk who buy those palaces on wheels.

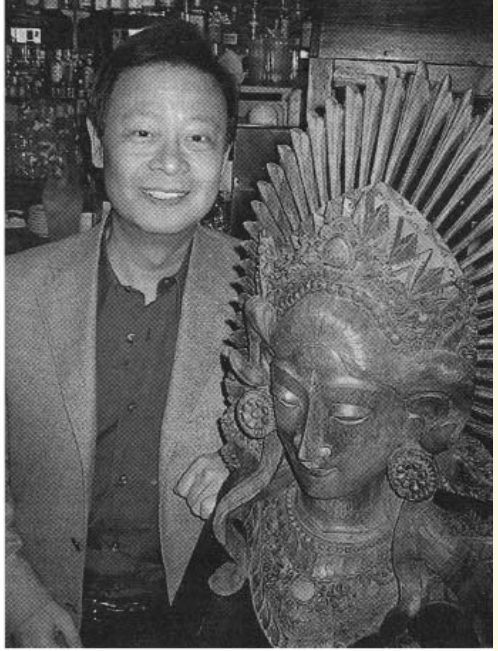
They plan to sell 130 "resort-retirement-living" units next year, and double that number in 2006. They claim that many older baby boomers and young boomers parents want to maintain their active, stylish existences in what they already call "cruise ships on land."

"They don't want to be pigeon-holed as seniors," said Craik, who added the 800 to 1,100-square-foot homes older buyers want are variations of his own parents' golf-course-adjacent place in Palm Desert.

Not that Les Craik, 59, spends all his time getting a Coachella Valley tan. In fact, it is projects developed by his Avenir Group the two young hotshots will be flogging.



Cameron McNeill (left) and Jason Craik see even bigger realty sales in the coming active-seniors market, and Fairchild Group head Thomas Fung likes to chow down at pal Louis Kong's Tropika.



Thomas Fung and Louis Kong.

BUSINESS LUNCH: Fairchild Group chair and CEO Thomas Fung, 53, strolls two blocks from his office for the Malay-style stir-fried clams with sambal chili sauce and fresh pineapple fried rice at pal Louis Kong's Tropika restaurant. A frequent global traveller, he said Tropika's juicy chicken, beef, pork and lamb satays are "the best in the world."

The Cambie-at-14th eatery's best seller is Thai-style tom yum goong lobster soup for four, \$21.50.

Kong not only appears with BMW dealer Brian Jessel's star salesman, Michael Ho, in TV commercials for Fung's Aberdeen Centre, he'll officially open a Tropika at that Richmond shopping mall tonight.

Fung, who learned to cook recreationally during a 10-day session at Bangkok's Oriental Hotel, will open his own Seventh Heaven Café at Aberdeen Centre in June, and will joint-venture in a franchised Fisherman's Wharf restaurant there. His Ajijiman yudon noodle restaurant is already open in the centre.

Seventh Heaven's food, will be "Western with a touch of Asian," he said, and the design will echo 1950s and 1960s styles.

Fung's other plans for the centre are strictly up to date. Eager to bypass middlemen, agents and importers, he recently finagled his way into a



Aaron Muehlebach (above) devised a better way to tow motorcycles and is profiting from it. Michael Bjornson and Sherri Kajiwara (right) say two heads are better than one in the art gallery game.

10-million-square-foot garment trade mart "like a small town" near Naples. The southern Italian factories represented there supply the nation's top labels and international department stores. But their minimum orders of 20,000 lots for any one style are "impossible for any Canadian retailer," Fung said. So he picked out certain styles, and says he made "first ever" deals to tag smaller orders for very slightly modified versions of the garments the factories will cut for big-time customers.

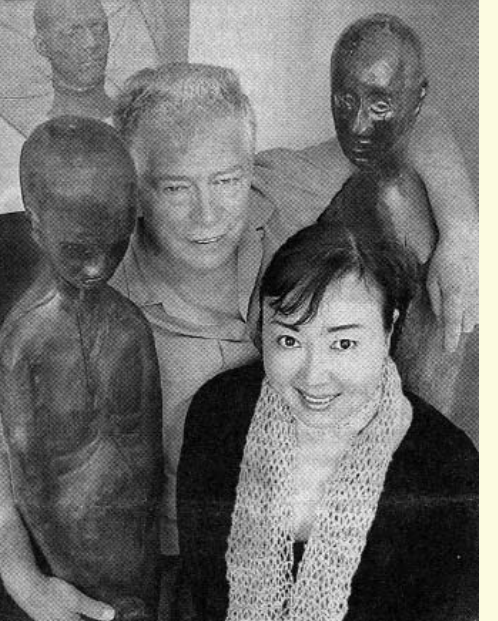
Fung said he'll open a still-unnamed store in August at Aberdeen Centre and sell Italian womenswear with the "cut, quality and material" of major-label garments. But he'll charge \$250 or so for goods that otherwise fetch four times that.

He'll also joint-venture in a U.S. style outlet operation for off-season garments, and is scouring the world for direct-import household goods and other products.

With that and a serving of Tropika's fried bananas and ice cream, Fung hit the road.

AARON MUEHLEBACH, 43, has ridden motorcycles since age nine — ample time to reflect on how their towing needs differ from those of cars.

For starters, he said, bikes should be hauled as they are ridden, with the front wheel forward. Machines



straddled sideways on conventional towtrucks can have their fairings and other panels distorted, he said. As well, bikes need the cushion of their own suspensions so that fork caps aren't popped off by unnatural stresses. Four years ago, the former welder and metal fabricator worked out what was needed. He modified his Pirate Enterprises' two towtrucks with heavy-duty channels to hold bike wheels. Making cutouts in the trucks' rear decks allowed him to snug motorcycles close in, and redesigned "L bars" provided secure lashing points.

The result: close to 70 per cent of his business involves motorcycle towing and delivery. But, no matter how much money he's offered, the dedicated motorcycle rider and builder refuses to tow away bylaw-breaking bikes. He offers 24-hour service, and sometimes writes poetry in the wee hours. And when folk ask for CEO Y.T. Jackson listed on Pirate Enterprises' website — www.towandrecove.com — Muehlebach chuckles: "He's my dog."

MICHAEL BJORNSON, the architect, artist, movie production designer and Third Avenue Gallery owner, has made seasoned arts sales executive (Buschlen Mowatt, Pthalo) Sherri Kajiwara a partner and renamed their enterprise the Bjornson Kajiwara gallery.

Bjornson, who designed Buschlen Mowatt owner Barrie Mowatt's big-ticket satellite facility in Palm Desert, has also leased half this West Third Avenue premises to former BM hands Mark Redekopp and Shane O'Brien, who opened their own gallery there recently. Bjornson and Kajiwara plan to supplement their gallery's venturesome younger artists with some mid-career and even senior painters and sculptors. Some of the former — Angus Bungay and Mark Gilbert, say — are rising nicely. Current exhibitor Jessica Bushey's large photographs sell well, and painters like Marc Seguin command \$8,000-\$10,000 prices. But, while Sarah Beck's works are a delight, few have space for sculptures like the 10-metre-long military fighting vehicle she showed recently. Bjornson hopes daughter and fellow-architect Sarah will join his on-premises practice, but worries the disclosure may shorten her career at Norman Hotson and Joost Bakker's firm. As for making money like Bau-Xi, BM, Equinox and Monte Clark, Catriona Jefferies and Doug Udell's galleries likely do, Bjornson smilingly says things are okay. After all, he paid \$650,000 for his Third-off-Burrard building in 1996, and it's worth nearly twice that today.

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Artist Sarah Beck's 10-metre-long military vehicle is rather bulky for at-home collectors.