1007the_OurSpace.cs 9/25/07 9:51 PM Page 6

Happy Birthday 2.0

How I learned it's not so easy to gift-wrap the internet

A SINGULAR BLEND of vanity and boredom, Googling yourself is the new thumb twiddling. It is the nadir of idleness, a last desperate act before you're forced to do something constructive, like sit-ups.

In truth, there's one floor lower than Googling yourself: Googling a relative. That's how I came to the terrible knowledge that, according to the internet, my own mother doesn't exist. I Googled her and came up empty. Google delivers countless links for that confection Nicole Richie, but can't flag down anything on my mom. Score: Nicole Richie, 3,080,000; my mother, zero. It's enough to elicit a tremor of indignation. *Hey! That's my mother you're not talking about!*

There's no shortage of Arlene Weinstocks out there, but none is my mother, unless my mother is a colored-pencil artist in Arlington, VA. That would explain a few things—such as why my colored pencils are always missing. So, for her 60-some-odd birthday, I decided to get my mom something she didn't even know she could have: a Wikipedia entry. That would get her some internet cred.

It turns out Wikipedia is a tough nut to crack. You stand a better chance of getting into Harvard. After entering my mother's biography, I was informed that the entry didn't meet Wikipedia's "notability guidelines." Oh really? So raising three kids isn't notable? Being an original member of the Minneapolis Lakers dance squad isn't notable? Being flummoxed by call waiting three decades since its introduction isn't notable? It is to some people!



The Wikipedia goons piled on. Because of her lack of accomplishment, my mother was judged "a candidate for speedy deletion." Well, so was Madonna way back when and she's still around.

Evidently, you don't pick a fight with Wikipedia. After a second try was likewise spiked, I was warned that my Wikipedia privileges might be revoked. The clock had struck go time. Normally, calling my mother a candidate for speedy deletion would earn the speaker an express ticket to step outside, if there only were an outside. It recalls a line from a Stephen Crane short story: "When it occurs to man that nature does not regard him as important…he at first wishes to throw bricks at the temple, and he hates deeply the fact that there are no bricks and no temples." So it is with cyberspace.

I got creative, embellished as if it were my own resume. A third try stuck. Arlene Weinstock, founder of the pioneering Minneapolis Lakers dance team, had reached notability, though she may well still be a candidate for speedy deletion. Aren't we all? She was on the internet, proof of a life well lived, and well within Google's search talons. She was declared fit for Wikipedia, which made her the equal of all the presidents and kings. Now there's something I already knew. **THE**

—Jeff Weinstock, Executive Editor

T·H·E journal™

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY GROUP Katherine Grayson

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR Geoffrey H. Fletcher

EXECUTIVE EDITOR Jeff Weinstock

MANAGING EDITOR Christina C. Schaller

EXECUTIVE EDITOR, WEB Dave Nagel

eCONTENT EDITOR Kanoe Namahoe
Phone: 818-674-3392

eMEDIA COORDINATOR Judith Rajala
Phone: 860-254-5392

CONTRIBUTORS Charlene O'Hanlon, Jim Paterson, Rama Ramaswami, Matt Villano, John K. Waters

CREATIVE DIRECTOR Scott Rovin

GRAPHIC DESIGNER Erin Horlacher

ASSOCIATE PRODUCTION COORDINATOR Jennifer Shepard
818-734-1520 x112 phone
818-734-1528 fax

MARKETING DIRECTOR Kay Heitzman **MARKETING MANAGER** Karen Barak

AUDIENCE MARKETING MANAGER Annette Levee

1105 MEDIA INC

PRESIDENT & CEO Neal Vitale

CFO Richard Vitale

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT Michael J. Valenti

MANAGING DIRECTOR Dick Blouin

MANAGING DIRECTOR Ellen Romanow

VP, FINANCIAL PLANNING & ANALYSIS
William H. Burgin

VP, FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION
Christopher M. Coates

VP, AUDIENCE MARKETING & WEB OPERATIONS
Abraham M. Langer

VP, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
Erik A. Lindgren

VP, PRINT & ONLINE PRODUCTION
Mary Ann Paniccia

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD Jeffrey S. Klein

CONTACT US

WISH TO COMMENT? Write to editorial@thejournal.com. Contact information for individual editors can be found at *www.thejournal.com*.

E-MAIL is routed to individuals' desktops. Please use the following format: firstnameinitial,lastname@1105media.com. Do not include a middle name or a middle initial.

TELEPHONE The switchboard is open weekdays 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Pacific time. After 5:30 p.m. you will be directed to individual extensions. (818) 734-1520 phone; (818) 734-1528 fax

1908 100 2008 AMERICAN BUSINESS MEDIA · BPA WORLDWIDE · WPA Western Publications Association