

Video postcards: a high-tech 'hello'

By Frale de Guzman

Of the Emerald

A new gift idea is now out on the market — video postcards.

"It's an opportunity to send a piece of yourself to someone," said Howard Wade, creator of Video Postcards.

For \$15, people can send a three- to five-minute postage-paid, videotaped message or skit to family and friends.

Like postcards, the videotaped messages are short, but are personalized and sometimes funny greetings to loved ones when "a phone call or a letter just isn't enough."

"It's fun to watch people you know on TV, especially if you haven't seen them for awhile," Wade said.

"A lot of the students at the University have parents that have never been out to the University," he said. "This is a way for them to see the dorm their children live in or to see a little bit of the campus."

The idea for Video Postcards began in 1983 when Wade and Chris Powers worked together on a weekly comedy/variety show that relied on "man-on-the-street" interviews. The popularity of the show gave Wade and Powers additional insight into human behavior and convinced them of the idea's potential.

"We noticed that people love to be on TV and love to see themselves on TV," Wade said.

"We also noticed that about 45 percent of all

tober, Wade and partners Kap Richards and Powers have made a total of about 100 videotaped messages.

The public's first response to the idea is, "Video postcards — what a great idea!" Wade said.

Outside the studio, Wade and his partners charge \$25 to videotape weddings, anniversaries, family reunions, holiday gatherings and to make video inventories of homes and businesses.

Part of the attraction of Video Postcards is that the videos are packaged for mailing and Video Postcards pays the postage cost, Wade said.

"It's great to be able to go out and get a present for somebody and drop it in the mail the same day without having to stand in line," he added.

"It's a great present," said Leslie Glasser, 31, a Eugene resident who sent a video postcard of her children to their grandparents. "It's a great deal, and it's really different."

A section of Glasser's video showed her children fighting with each other, and the children's grandparents loved it, Glasser said. Through the video postcard, they "get to see the children and have a record of them."

When you send someone a video postcard, "you're giving them a unique and timeless gift and not another piece of junk to litter around the house," she added.

Video Postcards is made by

Stepfamily Continued from Page 14

Another problem area outlined in a recent SAA seminar is maintaining a livable relationship with a former spouse.

It is essential for the parents to communicate with each other without making any hostility apparent to the children, Dwan said. One common pitfall is using the children as messengers in disputes between the biological parents, she said.

While tempting, this is a method of communication that must be avoided, she said.

"When you say to a child, 'Remind your father that he has to give me his child support payment,' what you're really saying to the child is, 'Your daddy is not a good daddy,'" Dwan said.

Indeed, most problems faced by stepfamilies deal directly with their children, she said.

After a divorce, children maintain hope that their parents will reconcile their differences and get back together, Dwan said. When a parent remarries, children realize that the likelihood of that is seriously diminished, she said.

Because of this, children will often show hostility toward their new parent, not only to vent the anger they feel for the loss of the original family unit, but also to try to create a division within their household, Dwan said.

"The child will often try to create a wedge between their parent and new stepparent, thinking that they can get their parents back together," said Dwan. "These feelings go away in time. The hostility is usually gone by the time the children are about 16 or 17."

Of course, hostility is not always present in a stepfamily, as University sophomore Chris Nolan points out. Nolan has been a member of two stepfamilies for eight years.

"I've gotten along really well with my stepparents," said Nolan. "My attitude from the start has been, 'Well, my parents are married to them, I'm Oregon Daily Emerald

not.' My stepparents are both super people, so we've gotten along great."

Problems often arise when people remarry and bring together teen-age, opposite sex children, Dwan said. Sexual involvement between stepsiblings is much more common than involvement between biological siblings, she said.

"The incest taboos haven't had a chance to develop," Dwan explained.

In an article for "Remarriage," a national newsletter for stepfamilies, New Mexico family therapist Dr. David Baptiste, Jr. outlined the typical circumstances under which such involvement often takes place.

Remarried parents are troubled when opposite sex siblings seem cold and distant, according to Baptiste. They try to bring the stepsiblings together — often much closer than the relationship biological siblings share.

Because of the "absence of the incest taboo in stepfamilies," this pressure for closeness may lead to sexual involvement, he wrote.

Stepparents can take measures to avoid this, according to Baptiste. They have to realize that it is possible for sexual involvement to develop in a stepfamily and be careful not to allow opportunities under which a sexual relationship may develop and be inadvertently encouraged.

Stepparents must also avoid pushing stepsiblings closer "than they want or can tolerate at the time," he added.

In some instances, there are more problems between same-sex stepsiblings than opposite-sex stepsiblings, Nolan said. He has one biological sister, Stephanie, and a stepsister, Nicole.

"My stepsister and I have always had a pretty good relationship," Nolan said, "but she can drive my sister up the wall. Nicole has always used my

sister as a role model. When Stephanie started playing the flute, Nicole had to learn how to play the flute. It got pretty bad sometimes," he said. "Even that's gotten better over the years though."

The holiday season is often a critical time for stepfamilies, Dwan said. Christmastime brings thoughts of family and tradition and can make the going rough when the family is new and the old traditions are gone, she said.

To combat this, she suggested creating new traditions. Stepfamilies can brighten their holidays by starting their own yearly rituals, she said.

The holidays can be much easier on the children of stepfamilies if the biological parents still live near each other, Dwan said.

"I'm lucky — my parents only live two blocks away from each other," Nolan said. "I can celebrate Christmas at one house, then walk over and celebrate it at the other house."

All in all, many people find that being in a stepfamily is a joyful, enriching experience.

"I think I'm a lot happier now than I would have been without the stepfamilies," Nolan said. "I've always had two super people for parents. Now I have four."

People interested in learning more about the SAA can find out about the group and their activities in a variety of ways such as public service announcements and school newsletters. They also are referred to the SAA by groups like the Sacred Heart Women's Auxiliary and by lawyers familiar with the group.

The SAA is active on a national scale and is headquartered in Baltimore, Md. Members receive the "Stepfamily Bulletin," a quarterly magazine containing articles, news briefs, book reviews and other things pertaining to stepfamilies.

BREAKFAST SPECIAL

Two for the Price of One

(2 eggs, any style, home fries, toast or muffin, \$2.50)

thru January with coupon



Hours:
Mon.-Fri. 7-5

Closed Sat.
Sun. 9-3

HIGH STREET CAFE
1243 High Street • 345-4905

VOLVO Owners

Take advantage of our FREE Safety Inspection and SPECIAL



Call for an appointment or just drop by
Springfield • 12th & Main • 726-1808

ALL WORK GUARANTEED

The VOLVO Specialist

UO Bookstore

Soda Pop

6 Packs
12 oz. cans **1.49** + DEP.



WIN a NEW HONDA Spree



Enter a new PEPSI CHALLENGE

Come to the U of O Bookstore and guess how many bottle caps are in our cooler. Closest guess wins a

FREE HONDA Spree.

Winner will be determined
Friday, January 23rd at 3:00 pm

Your store since 1920.

UO
BOOKSTORE

13th & Kincaid
M-F 7:30-5:30
SAT 10:00-4:00
686-4331