

Of Phones And Nickel Ads

Magic Ads. The Willamette Valley Advertiser. Money Saver. The last chance for the best deal ever.

At first glance, these local nickel ads appear to be a variation of a grade school newsletter; you know, the one where the editor in chief was the owner of the largest bottle of Elmer's glue and had the loudest voice. Call it confused advertising if you must.

With nothing better to do, I decided to check out some of these confusing ads. I really had nothing in mind when I dialed; no images of securing a dog house for a future pet or some used tires for the car I do not own.

Because I live in an area where concrete is my only neighbor and such strange and exotic objects like trees are only an encyclopedia vision, I decided to call a horse manure ad. It might come in handy some day, you know, and besides it was free.

"It's fairly fresh," said the man on the end of the line. "All our old stuff is gone. So it

should be left to sit a month or so to let it decompose down. But it's good stuff, and we're out in Alvarado."

Sounded enticing, the free and good stuff parts. But I really didn't know of a place where I could let it rot for awhile, other than my landlord's mailbox.

But talk of horses and sheep and things like that inspired me to check another unbelievable offer: five large roosters for only \$1.50 each.

Unfortunately, the older gentleman who placed the ad informed me they had already been snatched up. "We used to raise a lot of chickens. So these were just leftovers of the chickens that we'd had. They were beautiful roosters, I mean they were huge. Close to 18 inches high," he said.

"Did they crow a lot?" I asked.

"Well, yes they did," he admitted. "They were pretty noisy."

Glancing through the paper again I found a competitor eager and ready to challenge the



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monthly fee—call for infor-
mation. 741-4575.

RELIANCE
Free est.

Graphic by Lorraine Rath

rooster's reign as king of the dawn. The notice read simply, "Wake Up Service. Anytime, 24 hours 7 days. Low monthly fee — call for information." I dialed immediately.

After only one ring, a voice that sounded like that of a campus operator with a cold came on. "Springfield Answering Service, this is Nora, may I help you?"

"Yeah, well uh, I'm one of them people who can't wake up in the morning, and I was wondering what you've got to offer," I said.

"If you're someone who's hard to wake up, we'll call and wait 15 minutes, call again and maybe wait another 15 minutes and then call again."

Sounded good to me, but when Nora told me it cost \$11 a month I got to thinking. If I only could find a rooster and tie it to the roof of my flat and every once in awhile feed it a little chicken scratch, I'd save a lot of money.

"Well, let me talk to my wife and get back to you on that," I told Nora. Click was Nora's response.

Which was all right with me. I had located some ads that told

me I could make thousands of dollars in a short time. With all that money floating around, maybe then I could afford Nora and her answering service.

I decided to dial the one that said, "Make money, more money than you ever thought you could make in your entire life." I wasn't surprised when a fast talker answered the phone.

"First of all this is not a job, if you're looking for a job, this is not a job, this is a business opportunity," he speedily said. After about 10 minutes of "It's pretty logical," "There are no sales involved" and "Is there any time we can get together?" I decided a big question needed to be asked.

"I'm curious, what does this all involve?"

"Two different catalogs," he said. And then he was back at it again. "I can show you how you can be making \$1,500 in six months. Easy, and it just grows from there with future potential of \$15,000 a month or more, depending on what you want to put into it. Is there some time we can get together so I can show you the whole plan?"

"Sounds interesting," I told him, "but I'll have to get back to you after I've had a chance to talk to my partner." The click of the phone was becoming a familiar sound.

Feeling kind of depressed because my luck at finding a sweet deal was poor at best, I dialed the number advertised under the notice, "Two burial vaults and internment spaces."

After introducing myself and explaining to the woman who answered what my purpose in life was, I asked where the vaults were located.

"In Lane Memorial Gardens. It's the one that didn't go down," she said. That set me back a bit but I forged ahead. "Where in Lane Memorial Gardens?" I asked.

"Lot number 80, Block B, Unit 3 and 4, Section 7 in Everlasting Life," she answered.

Smoking or non-smoking, HBO or Showtime, I wondered. In everlasting life, there must be some benefits.

Which is what Mike at Herbalife tried to convince me. "The first month I made a thousand bucks, the next month I made, \$2,000, the next month I made \$3,000. Does that sound like something you'd be interested in?"

"What you could do is we're having an organizational meeting here with Al who's made \$700,000 in the last four years. In Herbalife, and he's from Roseburg," Mike said. "But I could maybe get with you during the next couple of hours. Right now I'm just swamped. I'm trying to get out of the office and..."

Click.

— STEPHEN MAHER

Off the Cuff submissions should be about a humorous, real-life experience and about 750 words long. Submit them to the Oregon Daily Emerald front desk. Spectrum pays \$15 upon publication.

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Spectrum

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