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Dead Pool

Continued from Page 5

points are awarded for correct picks of celebrities 35 to 65, three points for those under 35. Points will be tallied after 1999 ends.

Wilkinson believes the deeper you dig, the better you will do. He added that good dead-poolers research the health problems and high-risk habits of their picks.

"It's a no-brainer to go with a Ronald Reagan or a Bob Hope because they're old," he said.

He added that young people who abuse drugs and alcohol or those with serious weight problems are other good bets.

But the spirit of the contest is not lost in the prizes.

The first-prize winner of the grim game reaps the reward of a trip for two to Mexico for the celebration of the traditional Mexican "Day of the Dead" in 2000. The second-prize winner wins a trip

to Los Angeles for the Grave Line Tour of burial sites of famous show-business personalities.

Although the concept of choosing corpses may cause some to roll their eyes, Wilkinson said his dead pool is not to be taken too seriously.

"It's not for everybody," he said. "It's dark, edgy humor. The existence of a dead pool is not to offend anybody. It's for those who enjoy it."

Wilkinson said he and Gelfand have received only a few groans and sighs from readers and media.

"If that's the reaction we get, it's clear that we've not started the demise of Western civilization," he said.

He even chuckled at the thought that Gelfand's and his dead pool would become so popular that he might be picked on a few dead pool lists.



Dead pooling criteria

Mike Wilkinson, co-creator of the Dead Pool guide, suggests these tips when selecting dead pool picks.

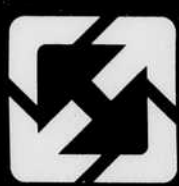
TIP 1: Consider the age of your pick.
TIP 2: Track the history of the health problems of your pick.
TIP 3: Consider if your pick is abnormally obese.
TIP 4: Consider if your pick has a self-induced chemical dependency.
TIP 5: Consider if your pick lives a dangerous life style or engages in stupid behavior.
TIP 6: Consider if your pick combines chemical use and violence.

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