

Signals in the Static: This year's top celebrity Halloween costumes: **Paris Hilton, Michael Jackson, Jessica Simpson** and the **Tom Cruise/Katie Holmes** duo. Died: **Robert Wise**, 91, director of *West Side Story*, *The Sound of Music*, and *The Day the Earth Stood Still*; folk music promoter **Harold Leventhal**, 86, who first presented Bob Dylan, Neil Young, Johnny Cash, Jacques Brel, Ravi Shankar and others.

On Oct. 18, the **Rolling Stones** will debut "Streets of Love," their new single and video, on the NBC-TV soap opera "Days of Our Lives." **Pepsi** launches **MDX**, an energy version of **Mountain Dew** aimed at video gamers, packed with 47mg. of caffeine. **Wal-Mart** introduces a new urban clothing line for women called **Metro 7**, featuring sheer printed tunics with beaded necklines, distressed jeans, and a silk camisole with sequined lace. **Wal-Mart** is also opening in-store health clinics (\$25-\$60/visit) staffed by nurse practitioners. Commuters exiting NYC's Grand Central Terminal encounter **AdsOnFeet**, models who wear vests with LCD TVs playing 5-second commercials. **CEOIQ** will introduce a credit card-sized digital media player (\$25). The *NY Times* launches **OnMovies**, a digest-sized magazine handed out free to moviegoers.

McDonald's signs a 2-year deal with **Dreamworks** to use its characters, including Shrek, in advertising. **3M** has launched a line of grey duct-tape-inspired band-aids packaged to fit in a toolbox. **Oral B's Triumph** toothbrush (\$140) has a microchip in its brush heads that talks to a CPU, which sends messages to a digital display in the handle, which tells you (in one of 13 languages) just how well you're brushing. The new **VW Eos** enables owners to plug their USB stick into the center console to play audio files through the car's sound system.

American Snapshots: Sex, Money, Drugs and Email

Sexual Fidelity: According to data collected in 2002 on Americans 15-44, 93.4% of married women had just one sexual partner during the previous year. For married men, the figure was 91.6%. Only 2% of married women and 2.5% of married men reported having more than three sex partners during that period. Among all men 20-24, 33.3% reported having at least two sexual partners in the previous year; among women in this age group, 25.9% reported at least two sexual partners in the same period. *National Center for Health Statistics.*

The Very Rich Are Very Different: "Twenty years ago, there were 14 American billionaires on the Forbes 400. Today, the list includes 374 (known) billionaires. In 1985, the combined wealth of the Forbes 400 was \$238 billion, adjusted for inflation. Today, the 400 richest people in America are together worth \$1.13 trillion. To put that number in perspective, \$1.13 trillion is more than the gross domestic product of Canada. And it is more than the GDP of Switzerland, Poland, Norway and Greece—combined. The median household income of Americans has been stuck at around \$44,000 for five years."—*NY Times.*

Illegal Drugs Get Cheaper: The inflation-adjusted average price for cocaine has fallen by 40.1% from 1995 to 2004, while opiates have fallen 49.3%. Today, the average price of opiates is \$116/gram, and cocaine retails at \$75/gram. —*Bloomberg.*

Email Addiction: 26% of Americans say they can't go more than 2 or 3 days without checking their email. 23% check their email in bed, 8% in business meetings, 4% in the bathroom, and 1% in church. —*Opinion Research Corp.*