

Signals in the Static: The E Street Band's **Clarence Clemons** turns 64. *Rolling Stone* publisher **Jann Wenner** turns 60. **Bill Clinton** turns 60 in August. **Sylvester Stallone** turns 60 in July. He was recently knocked unconscious on the set during the filming of his new *Rocky* movie. Died: biochemist **Joseph Owades**, 86, who developed the recipe for light beer.

Gray Line offers a "Hurricane Katrina—America's Worst Catastrophe" bus tour in New Orleans (\$35/person). A new version of the **nickel** is introduced, the first U.S. coin with the president's face looking forward, instead of in profile. **Shine**, a trendy new bar in San Francisco, has a "Flickr photo booth" where patrons can have their photos taken which are automatically uploaded to the bar's Flickr Web stream.

Levis introduces RedWire DLX jeans which have an iPod docking cradle, headphones, and remote control built into the jeans. **Kolcraft iBaby** is a reclining umbrella baby stroller that features an iPod docking station as well as a built-in speaker. **Vino 100** is a new franchised wine store (currently in 29 locations) that offers "100 great wines for \$25 or less." For the first time in its 135-year history, the **Ringling Brothers'** circus will present a new show without its traditional three rings. **Visa**, **AT&T**, and **Intel** unveil new logos and launch new image campaigns. **McDonald's** tests new store designs with multiple "zones" for both fast dining (high energy music and videos) and lingering (Wi-Fi and dimmer lighting). **Burger King** offers a triple burger with ¾ lb. of beef and more than 1,400 calories, plus a 42-oz. chocolate banana milkshake, as part of its *King Kong* promotion. **Starbucks** will begin promoting movies and distributing DVDs in its stores. **Disney** will release a new collection of Devo songs,

including their 1980 hit, "Whip It!", with vocals provided by a quintet of kids.

Products With Green Tea: P&G's Febreze odor removal spray, Starbucks Frappuccino, Dove cleansing bar, Elizabeth Arden perfumes.

Directed-Energy Weapons: After more than two decades of research, the United States is on the verge of deploying a new generation of weapons that discharge beams of energy. The **Airborne Laser** utilizes a megawatt-class, high-energy chemical oxygen iodine laser aboard a Boeing 747-400 aircraft to track and destroy missiles in the powered part of their flight. **Active Denial Technology**, uses a beam of millimeter waves to heat a foe's skin, causing severe pain without damage, making the adversary flee the scene. The **Tactical High Energy Laser** heats high-flying rocket warheads, causing them to self-detonate. —*J. Douglas Beson, The E-Bomb: How America's New Directed Energy Weapons Will Change the Way Wars Will Be Fought in the Future (Da Capo Press, October 2005).*

A Global Look Ahead: In 2006, the 300 millionth American will be born, probably in October. Worldwide, for the first time in history, more human beings will live in cities than in rural areas. **Singapore Airlines** will fly the world's biggest passenger jet (the A380 Superjumbo). Japan will launch the world's biggest bank. The highest railway (16,400 feet) will open in China. The largest-ever global TV audience will watch the **World Cup** in Berlin in July. 2006 will mark the 250th anniversary of **Mozart's** birth, the 300th anniversary of **Benjamin Franklin's** birth, the 400th anniversary of **Rembrandt's** birth, the 100th anniversary of the San Francisco earthquake, and the 100th anniversary of **Kellogg's Corn Flakes**. —*N.Y. Times, The Economist.*