

Signals in the Static: **O.J. Simpson** receives \$3.5 million to write a "hypothetical" book about the 1994 murders of **Nicole Brown Simpson** and **Ron Goldman**. The book is tentatively called "If I Did It." The **iPod** turns 5. **Fox News** turns 10. **Joni Mitchell** turns 63. U.S. highway **Route 66** turns 80. **Lady Bird Johnson** turns 94. **Bob Barker**, host of TV's "The Price is Right" since 1972, will retire next summer. Died: novelist **William Styron**, 81; actress **Jane Wyatt**, 95, who played the ideal 1950's suburban mom on "Father Knows Best"; the **pink plastic flamingo** lawn decoration, 49.

Major League Baseball licenses team insignias to **Eternal Image**, makers of caskets and cremation urns. **IBM** will add podcasting to the curriculum at **University of Arizona**. The **U.S. Postal Service** will eliminate all of its stamp vending machines by 2010. **Boy Scouts** in L.A. can now earn an activity patch for learning about the evils of pirating movies and music. The first new **Playboy Club** in 25 years opens at **The Palms Hotel** in Las Vegas. **The Solaire** apartment building in NYC will be the city's first "environmentally advanced residential tower" with eco-friendly amenities. **Hannaford Brothers**, a supermarket chain in New England, rates the nutritional value of the food and drinks in its stores from 0 to 3 stars. Of their 27,000 products, 77% received no stars. **ScentAndrea Multi Sensory Communications** installs 8,000 scent-delivery systems into in-store flat-panel screens in Kroger and Wal-Mart stores.

For Your Secret Life: **Alibi Networks** will email convincing flight confirmations and hotel reservations showing that you're traveling for work, and deliver convincing literature for phony seminars. They will also provide untraceable phone numbers, route your emails to appear they come from other

countries, and buy and ship presents, all with privacy guaranteed. (alibinetwork.com).

Underground Restaurants: San Francisco's **Ghetto Gourmet** (theghet.com) leads an "anti-restaurant" movement, now spreading to Sacramento, Austin, Seattle, L.A., and NYC. Small groups of diners are invited by email to meals in private homes created by professional chefs, some of whom have national reputations.

Watching TV in SecondLife: The Sci-Fi channel begins syndicating their content to **SecondLife's** first broadband TV network. By the end of 2007, there will be more than 100 specialist channels streaming a mix of branded content and original programming 24 hours a day. Residents of this virtual world also will have the opportunity to become part of the first virtual, reality-TV show, "Big Brother." (bigbrothersecondlife.com).

Ding!: **Southwest Airlines** encourages their regular travelers to download RSS software from a Web site and indicate their preferred routes. Once they do, a small icon of an airplane tail appears on their computer desktop. When a discounted fare is offered on that route, the computer emits an audible "Ding!" Clicking on the icon opens a microsite where a ticket can be purchased and a boarding pass printed. *Brandweek*.

Ghost Riding: This dangerous stunt involves a driver and/or passengers of a vehicle exiting while it is still rolling and dancing beside it or on the hood or roof, videotaping the episode, and then uploading the video to YouTube. The phenomenon has its roots in the Bay Area's Hyphy movement, a style that celebrates life void of inhibition or self control. (JOHO 3/06). So far, eight people have been killed doing this in Northern California.