

# JOHO™

Trends from USA

July 2008

"To be an American is a complex fate."—Henry James

Vol. XVII, No. 7

**Signals in the Static:** **Becky Harmon**, former Silver Stars' WNBA point guard and South Dakota native, [will represent Russia](#) in the 2008 Olympic Games. **Shia LaBeouf** turns 22. **Natalie Portman** turns 27. **Intel** turns 40. **Meryl Streep** turns 59. The **hula hoop** turns 60. **Kris Kristofferson** turns 72. The **FBI** turns 100. Died: **John Herlitz**, 65, designer of the [1970 Plymouth Barracuda](#); **Wilbur Hardee**, 89, founder of the Hardee's Restaurant chain; costume designer **Kermit Love**, 91, who created *Sesame Street's Big Bird*; New Jersey boardwalk fortuneteller **Marie Costello**, 93, made famous by Bruce Springsteen's 1973 [song](#).

Boston's 156 year old **Charles St. Jail** has become the [Liberty Hotel](#) (\$319-\$5,500/night). The iron bars on the windows have been removed. **Hawaii** becomes the first state to require solar water heaters in new homes.

**The Dark Knight** opens in theaters with tie-ins from Hershey, Nokia, and the California Milk Processor Board. **Pixar** will produce a feature version of Edgar Rice Burroughs' *John Carter of Mars*. **Quentin Tarantino's** next movie is *Inglorious Bastards*, a WWII thriller that will be released in two parts. **HBO** and **Lifetime Television** are casting a new reality TV show called *Arranged Marriage*. Contestants will have to marry a complete stranger chosen for them by family and friends, then cameras will document the marriage. **TNT** will launch a new dramatic series, *Truth in Advertising*, set in a modern day Chicago ad agency.

**Rolling Stone** and **Men's Health** are testing programs in which readers take cellphone photos of icons in ads and send them to a number to receive more information or an offer from the advertiser. **Ricoh** will build a solar and wind-powered billboard, scheduled to go up in NYC's Times Square this winter.

Las Vegas' **Rio Casino** introduces **Microsoft's** Surface-enabled touch screens in its [iBar Ultralounge](#). Its program called Flirt lets players video chat and order drinks for themselves or friends across the room. Young women at Beverly Hills' [Fashionology LA](#) use touch screen DesignPads to design and make their own clothing. [M&M's candies](#) can now be customized online with photo portraits (7 oz/\$14.95). [Mygallons.com](#) lets you purchase gasoline at the current rate and lock in that price for the future.

**Plum:** It is today's hottest new branding color. Examples include The Plum Card from American Express; Plum TV, a channel available in resort communities; new plum-colored labels for [Penta Water](#); RedPlum newspaper ad inserts; Plum Organics baby food; and PlumChoice Online, a PC services company. *NY Times*.

**People are Watching:** The average American spent 127 hours with TV in May, up from 121 hours in May, 2007; and 26 hours on the Internet, up from 24 hours last year. 2/3 of US Internet users, 119 million people, watched online video during May, for an average of 2 hours and 19 minutes. Children 2-11 spend 1/3 of online time watching videos. *NY Times*.



*Backed by positive reviews from Orange County, NY's SWAT team, the [PistolCam](#) (\$695) affixes to handguns and records up to an hour of MPEG4 audio and video.*

**Reminder:** JOHO will return in September.

JOHO™ is published by The Morgenstern Company, Inc.

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