

Dream vacation can't cure baldness

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Again

THE SON of Abbie Hoffman is proving a chip off the late Yippee. **Andrew Hoffman was helping activist Jon Parker** pass out clean hypodermic needles in Lower Manhattan last week when the National AIDS Brigade founder was arrested. Hoffman told PAGE SIX that he occasionally drives his van from Boston — where he lives and operates a mobile soup kitchen — to New York to help Parker's movement. "I'm definitely following in my father's footsteps," said Andrew, who added that he plans to write "Son of Steal This Book," a '90s update of his father's classic Yippee tract.

Looking ahead

RON Darling will soon be worrying about his average — and not for earned runs. The Mets pitcher intends to finish up his B.A. in history at Yale next fall. "He's just a couple of credits short," says a Mets spokesman. "He's in the process of letting the people at Yale know now. He has to work it out with his schedule." Eventually, the spokesman confirmed, the 30-year-old right-hander wants to go to law school.



KIRSTIE: pampered pet

SOME publicists will go to any length to please a star. Animal-lover **Kirstie Alley** brought a baby possum with her on a promotional junket for her film "Sibling Rivalry." She decided the critter needed milk — but not the homogenized kind. The best thing for her pet, declared the actress, would be mother's milk. Conveniently, a flack for the film was lactating at the time, and had brought along a breast pump. The woman provided the milk and Kirstie fed it to the possum. Alley's spokeswoman confirmed the hard-to-swallow story, telling PAGE SIX, "Kirstie found an alternative milk source just this one time. She sent the woman a bouquet of flowers afterwards." The message: "Thanks for lunch."

A MEDIA hoaxer whose elaborate scams have fooled "Good Morning America" and CNN has gotten his comeuppance — from a supermarket tabloid.

Not only did the Globe uncover **Joey Skaggs'** latest attempt to bamboozle the press, but its investigation prompted the city's Department of Consumer Affairs to subpoena the scammer.

Skaggs, a self-proclaimed "artist," has fooled numerous news organizations with such schemes as a pet-prostitution play called Cathouses for Dogs, and the Fat Squad, a group of thugs who would physically prevent clients from eating too much.

But Skaggs didn't fool the Globe when he baited the tabloid and some 1,500 journalists — via a slick mailed brochure — with one of his latest hoaxes, Comacocoon.

Posing as Dr. Joseph Schlafer — he even appeared in a photograph set on a Hawaiian beach — Skaggs offered fake "dream" vaca-

tion packages a la the film "Total Recall" for \$900 to \$5,600.

According to the spurious circular, sleeping patients also could receive "optional" services including liposuction, language lessons and even hair replacement while they dreamed of leading a rock star's or spy's lifestyle.

"It was either a scam or the best goddamn thing in the world," Globe managing editor **Charlie Montgomery** told PAGE SIX. "If it was real, I would have signed up for it myself."

Instead, the Globe put together an "expose" of Skaggs — which ran in its Dec. 18 issue — tipping off the city's Consumer Affairs Dept. That agency subpoenaed the hoaxter, who appeared before it yesterday. Spokeswoman **Linda Sachs** says, "We wanted him to support the claims he's made in his brochures or convince us that it was a [prank]." Sachs says Consumer Affairs was tipped off by the Globe.

Consumer Affairs closed its file on the hoaxter after determining that he wasn't taking

money for the scheme. After Skaggs met with the agency, his attorney, **Stanley Cohen**, angrily called the subpoena "the media's revenge."

"It's vindictive," said Cohen. "It's a sad commentary on the priorities of government and its ability to move mountains when pressured by the media."

Cohen added that "Joe and Mary Citizen who have legitimate complaints have to wait forever" for Consumer Affairs to act. "It just reinforces the need for more Joys."

But Montgomery says Consumer Affairs was alerted not by vengeful reporters but by responsible ones who didn't ignore basic fact-checking procedures that Skaggs relies on journalists not to perform.

"We called up everybody," says Montgomery. "The Better Business Bureau — everybody. That was the only way we tipped them off. I would not set out to nail Joey Skaggs other than to get a good story."



No bows

IT'S CURTAINS for one "Oh, Kay" actor's bid for a curtain call. When **Mark Kenneth Smaltz** was forbidden — by perpetually petu-

lant producer **David Merrick** — to take a bow at the end of the musical, he filed a complaint with Actors Equity. Now, after arbitration, Equity has ruled in favor of Merrick's argument: Tradition

notwithstanding, the Equity rule book doesn't specify that an actor must get a curtain call. Smaltz took the decision in stride. "This is just another black eye that Actors Equity will have to put a salve on," he told PAGE SIX. "I thank Mr. Merrick for bringing it to Equity's attention." A spokeswoman for Equity says a curtain-call rule can't be adopted until the union renegotiates its contract in three years.

CBS scores a non-scoop on air crash

IT was like déjà vu for some CBS News viewers Monday night. Reporter **Mark Phillips** reported that investigators had made a major breakthrough in the case of the bombing of Pan Am flight 103, linking a microchip found in the wreckage to a Libyan terrorist. The story dispelled previously held notions that Syrian terrorist **Ahmed Jibril** was solely responsible for the 1988 tragedy, which killed all 259 passengers. Only trouble was, the story had been reported 11 days earlier by CNN national security reporter **Steven Emerson**, who wrote the book "The Fall of Pan Am 103." "I got a phone message from **Lee Kreindler**, the lawyer for the families of Pan Am 103 victims, saying a virtually identical story to mine was on CBS last night with no credit at all," Emerson confirms. "We did this story Dec. 6 and it went out all over the country and all over the world. This was on the wire; it was in newspaper reports. You'd think that they'd be a little bit intellectually honest about the whole thing." But a CBS spokeswoman claims its producers and reporters were unaware of the CNN story. "You're making the assumption that every person in the U.S. is watching CNN," says **Donna Dees**. "We didn't know that CNN had done the story. We have credited CNN many times in the past when they have broken stories, but our reporters have been working on this for six weeks." But weren't they scooped by Emerson? "If you can get someone to talk on the record, which we did, you've advanced the story."

Big bikes

ANTON Furst is bringing two sacred objects to New York. The Oscar-winning designer, who created sets for "Batman" and "Awakenings," has acquired the motorcycle **James Dean** rode in "Rebel Without a Cause" and a 1976 Harley-Davidson that was once **Elvis Presley's**. He'll install them in Planet Hollywood, a \$12 million homage to film and television. The restaurant and entertainment complex will open on West 57th Street by next summer.



LEON: new direction

HE took the rap for an underground porno video featuring him and his ex-wife, **Jayne**, but filmmaker **Leon Isaac Kennedy** is now trying to redeem himself with a preaching career. Tonight through Sunday he'll be at local churches — including the New York City Mission Society in The Bronx — depicting the evils of drug addiction to young people.