

**Radio Iowa News Director O. Kay Henderson covered the Iowa delegation at the 2000 Republican and Democratic National Conventions and filed the audio reports below.**

**Subj: Bye Bye, Birdie**

Date: Thu, 17 Aug 2000 22:47:34 EDT

From: kHenderson@Learfield.com

Dear Kathie,

Well, the show's over and the Staples Center will go back to hosting NBA games. Today has been an especially long day, as last night I went to see what was up with the reunion party thrown for and by the roughly 80 people who worked on Gore's Iowa campaign who are in town for the convention. The party, to which Iowa delegates were invited, was thrown in a brew pub not far from the Iowa delegation's hotel. There were salutations from Iowans and "thank yous" to Iowans by Gore staffers, as well as a video produced by and for the Gore campaign which included all sorts of inside jokes. (Remember "Corn Man" -- the fellow who would don a corn cob costume to tag after Bill Bradley to complain about Bradley's Senate vote AGAINST corn-based ethanol fuel? Well, Corn Man was featured in the video as a disgruntled former staffer who had been "canned.") One of the party's hosts quipped that if the bar tab ran out, they'd just start charging drinks on Jerry Crawford's credit card. Crawford, as you know, is the Des Moines lawyer and party activist who ran the Dukakis campaign in Iowa in '88.

Got up at five a.m., as I have every day this week, to talk to the folks at WOC in Davenport. Took me 20 minutes to get a phone line out of the hotel. A later conversation with WDBQ in Dubuque revealed they, too, had difficulty connecting with the hotel switchboard this morning. I thought LA was supposed to be the capital city of the new century. Can't get there if you can't get a phone line.

Went to the Iowa delegation meeting at 8 a.m., where Congressman Leonard Boswell of Davis City referred to the Bush/Cheney ticket as the "Texaco Twins." Heard Senator John Edwards of North Carolina give a short speech in which he said the "W" in George W. stood for wrong. Counted the number of times he said 'Y'all." Nine in a three and a half minute speech. Then, it was House Democrat Leader Dick Gephardt's turn at the mic. He got 'em going, then dashed out to talk to the Oregonians next door (Oregon's delegation is here at this hotel, too). Afterwards, as he strode out the door, his aides told the Iowa reporters and the TV crew assembled for a quick q-and-a that he didn't have time for us, and we needed to call his office to schedule an interview sometime later (like 2001, maybe?). Rod of the CR Gazette got a great picture of Gephardt's eyes bugging out as his aides dissed us.

Rushed today to write seven stories and send my reports back to the Radio Iowa ranch in Des Moines. I'll reflect a bit later, tomorrow, but here are a few other tidbits before I sign off for the night:

\*Found out today Secretary of State Chet Culver and his wife, Mary, went to one of the exclusive parties this week. It was a tribute to Senator Edward Kennedy, at Maria Shriver and Arnould's home. Mary says it's a glorious home.

\*Christie Vilsack told me she brought four hats with her to the convention. She went down the street to Saks in Beverly Hills to see if they had any she might add to her collection. The price tags read over \$200 and she said that was too much to spend on a hat. (The on-sale hats, which she said were beaten up, were at least \$100.)

\*The Iowa delegations "votes" for Al Gore's nomination were cast by four minority members of the Iowa delegation (a Laotian refugee who's now a naturalized American citizen, an African American, a Latino and a Native American). First Lady Christie Vilsack said afterwards a delegate from another state asked her if "you have any white people in Iowa."

\*The Iowa delegation took up a collection and purchased souvenir t-shirts for the Iowa Democratic Party staff. The women got shirts which featured a donkey on a surf board. Rob Tully, the party chairman, was

given a convention 2000 t-shirt (an XXL, which Rob noted, remarking he didn't need THAT big a shirt, to which Vilsack said "Stay party chairman and you'll grow into it.,")

OKay

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**Subject: L.A. Confidential**

Date: Wed, 16 Aug 2000 20:56:53 EDT

From: kHenderson@Learfield.com

Dear Kathie,

Today's winners of the cab fare sweepstakes are Paulee Lipsman and Tom Henderson, both of Des Moines and delegates at this convention. The two got into a cab at the hotel, and 15 minutes later when they were just a few blocks from the hotel they knew they were in trouble. A bank robbery had supposedly closed some streets. As Tom said later, if the cab driver "was going to rob us, I wish he'd just gotten it over at the hotel instead of at the Staples Center, because we might have gotten there sooner." The meter read \$57 when they reached their destination. Lipsman says she threw three 20 dollar bills at the cabbie and escaped without more of a tip because she was so mad.

The Iowa delegation was treated to lunch at Spago in Beverly Hills today. In a former life, the restaurant was called the Bistro Garden and it was Nancy Reagan's favorite. It has a garden courtyard area in the middle and eating/bar areas form a horse-shoe around it. Wolfgang Puck bought the place to establish his second "Spago" and it's the restaurant which played host to the "American Beauty"/Dreamworks party after this past year's Oscars. (Theplace was full of roses. Rent the movie if you don't get it.)

The Harkin fiesta was paid for by a couple of lobbying firms and businesses like Gateway and Aegon. Anthony Edwards, who is Dr. Green on TV's ER, attended, wearing a white button down and khakis. In the din of the room, Edwards' cell phone went off and he had to crouch down behind the serving tables and clamp his hand over one ear to try to engage in conversation. Mike Farrell and Shelley Fabres were there, too. Farrell portrayed B.J. on MASH and is now a vet on the NBC show "Providence". Faberes was on the "Donna Reed Show" and "Coach". She comes back to Denison, Iowa, every summer to conduct seminars for film folks.

Rob Tully, the democratic party chair, stood on a chair to speak to the Spago throng and mid-sentence one of the Spago waiters made him get down so a napkin could be placed on the chair (perhaps the Californians were worried Tully carried a little bit of Iowa manure on his shoes?). Harkin took to the chair after Tully, and proclaimed that "I still have enough balance to stand on this thing, although I do lean a little to the left." The place roared.

In saying thanks to Dr Green, Harkin said as a former Navy pilot, he liked his role in "Top Gun" better. Edwards quickly shot back that the character had died, to which everyone laughed. Then, Edwards said he had to go to work on the sound stage as "I have to kill somebody at four."

Afterwards, Jon Roos of the Des Moines Register, Rod Boshart of the Cedar Rapids Gazette and I got a table in the Spago restaurant area and had lunch. Given our attire (we had credentials around our necks, and Rod was carrying his paper's disc camera) we were placed at an open table in the bar area, which meant we saw everyone walk by. We drank three bottles of water. At seven dollars each, that's \$21 on the bill. I had the roasted organic chicken, which was delicious. Jon ordered some spicy beef dish, billed as one of Wolfgang's childhood favorites. Rod had chicken stir fry. The entire bill was \$103, not counting our tip.

Other LA tidbits:

\*I tried to order skim milk via room service last night. I was advised they only had fat-free milk. Duh.

\*Rob Tully borrowed Christie Vilsack's hat Tuesday morning to draw the names of lowans who got the guest passes to the convention that night. As you may know, Christie's a big fan of hatwear. Speaking of, delegate Margo McNabb of Ames is getting great mileage out of her hand-crafted straw hat. It's got four American flags; red, white and blue flowers; and a red, white and blue ribbon to tie under her chin. She's be photographed, videotapes and interviewed by all sorts of media outlets, many of whom represent the foreign press.

\*On the way to the convention hall, we've driven by a sign advertising the "Museum of Tolerance" here in LA. Bet they let everybody in, don't you?

\*The lowans have eaten eggs and bacon for breakfast everyday. Today's breakfast was paid for by Governor Vilsack and Lieutenant Governor Pederson. Pederson joked to the delegates that they had gotten up at six and "The Governor did the eggs. I cooked the bacon."

\*This morning's speaker was Senator John Kerrey of Massachusetts. As the crowd gave him a standing ovation, he remarked that Winston Churchill had once said "the only reason people give a standing ovation is they are desperately looking for an excuse to shift their underwear." In an interview with me and other reporters, Kerrey said they may have to get "the jaws of life" out to pry Clinton from the stage so Gore can take his role as party leader and nominee.

\*Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala spoke this morning, too, and talked of her door-knocking for Al Gore in the days before Iowa's Caucuses. Shalala said she was in an Iowan's home, getting ready to leave after closing the sale, and the woman asked her this question: "Did anyone ever tell you you look like Donna Shalala?"

\*Shalala also reminded the lowans she was from Wisconsin. On her way out the door, Governor Vilsack reminded her Wisconsin's football coach was from Iowa.

\*I did an interview with Laura Castro de Cortez, one of the delegates, in the car on the way to the Spago event. It will NOT be playing on that HBO series which features people talking in the back of a cab. Castro de Cortez says she's disappointed with the convention. It's not what she thought it would be. She says she feels like "a peon" and "an ant" as she sweats on the convention floor while all the "first-class" people stand in their air-conditioned skyboxes sipped Chardonnay and nibbling gourmet food paid for by corporate sponsors of the convention.

Well, gotta go. There's a reunion tonight after the convention for political operatives who have worked the Iowa Caucuses. More later.

OKay

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**Re: And on day two, there was Kristin**

Date: Wed, 16 Aug 2000 10:17:47 -0700

From: Kathie

Dear Kay:

I expect that unlike the Republicans, the Democrats know that the vodka tonic is the official drink of summer. I've noticed that the Ds are also a lot looser in their convention speeches -- none of that fake nicey-nice and not saying anything bad about the opposition. I hear Jesse Jackson gave a barn burner speech last night -- I didn't see it but have caught some of the clips on the news. The "Stay out the Bushes" line was particularly memorable.

There was almost nothing in the paper today about Bill Bradley's speech. How was he received? Jon Roos of the Register had an interesting story in the paper today about being caught in the middle of Monday's riot. My favorite line: "...I was never in any danger. But as I slumped into the seat of my shuttle bus

afterward, I wondered if what I had just witnessed was real." I also enjoyed the part about someone broadcasting a fake announcement to the police, telling them they were no longer needed and "You may return to your air-conditioned homes and have a cold beer." Classic!

Speaking of shuttle buses, has the long national nightmare continued in L.A., or was that just a Philly phenomenon? I would think traffic in L.A. would be even worse. Have an official drink of summer for me,

Kathie

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**Subject: Nightmare on Wilshire**

Date: Tue, 15 Aug 2000 22:45:19 EDT

From: kHenderson@learfield.com

Dear Kathie,

I must tell you the paces I'm put through to file my stories. I've been unable to use my cell phone for reasons which have been explained to me but not fixed. That means when I use special equipment to "dial up" a special telephone line to feed my radio reports, I'm using the only available phone line in my hotel room. Problematic if you're trying to talk to the folks back in Des Moines to ensure the radio reports are coming down the line properly. .

SO, here's the new system: I set-up the phone line in my hotel room, start feeding sound down the line, then run out my hotel room headed for the elevator bay on floor 18. There's a house telephone there and I pick it up to be immediately connected with the hotel operator. After a few minutes of explaining I don't want to be connected to another hotel room, I convince them to dial the 800 number to the Radio Iowa newsroom, giving me a chance to ask the news guys back in Des Moines if things are set up properly.

Once I find out the phone line in the hotel room is operating properly, I set down the phone in the elevator bay on floor 18 and run down to the end of the hallway and my room. Once inside, I cue up my radio reports, and feed them down the phone line.

"Ok," (gasp for breath) "this is this afternoon's special (gasp for breath) "report" ...you get the idea.

Afterwards, I run back down the hallway to the elevator bay and check with the Radio Iowa guys to ensure everything went fine. Today as I chatted by the elevators with my office, Governor Vilsack showed up in his running togs, ready for a workout. No doubt he was a bit puzzled I was using the house phone in the elevator bay to talk with my office. AND, today when I ran back to the elevator bay to check on the afternoon radio report, some helpful person had hung up the phone so I had to explain all over again to the hotel operator HE had to dial my office for me, as I didn't want to talk to any hotel guest.

Perhaps this explanation doesn't adequately illustrate the game-show-like gamut I'm running here, but let me assure you I am cutting my workout time by about 10 minutes each day because of the mad dashes back and forth down the hotel hallway. Hope no one's complaining about the woman running in the hallway. At least I'm not running with scissors.

OKay

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**Subject: And on day two, there was Kristin**

Date: Tue, 15 Aug 2000 22:32:23 EDT

From: kHenderson@learfield.com

Dear Kathie,

Al Gore's 23-year-old, Harvard-educated daughter Kristin stopped by the Iowa delegation meeting this morning and gave a less than two minute speech in which she said thank you five times. She's a comedy writer for the FOX TV show "Futurama" but failed to tell one joke to start the Iowans' day.

The whole event this morning got off to a slow start as the crack hotel staff had no idea how to run the sound system they'd set up. Senator Tom Harkin's press secretary, Jennifer Frost, had to crawl around and figure it out, which she did, so the show could go on.

Another Harkin aide, Shannon Tesdale (of Iowa City) is "on-loan" to the Democratic National Committee this week and she's a "liaison" for Fox news, I'm told. Harkin's daughter, Jen, is on the convention floor each night wearing a "Trouble Shooter" t-shirt and running errands for Iowans and other delegates. Barb Leach, former Atlantic resident who now lives and works in D-C, is another "Trouble Shooter" on the floor.

You ask about the garb of the Iowans on the convention floor. Margo McNabb from Ames, attending her first convention ever, is getting a lot of camera time as she is wearing a quite garish hat. And the Rage Against the Machine concert did spawn what we all suspected. Secretary of State Chet Culver and his wife, Mary, got shuttled out the wrong door of the Staples Center and once they got through the security maze, they were pretty close to the riot scene and nowhere near the shuttle buses. The Culvers quickly hailed a cab and high-tailed it to Westwood and the hotel.

Now, a brush-with-greatness moment: Connie Bear-King of Sioux City spied Joe Lockhart (President Clinton's press secretary) in the convention hall early yesterday and worked up her courage to go up to him and ask if he knew anything about the Child Welfare Act amendments being proposed to update the law. He didn't. Now, because of her short conversation, he does. Bear-King is the executive director of the Indian Education program for the Sioux City area.

One of the impressions you get when comparing the republican and democrat conventions is the democrats are a bit looser. Retired Ohio Senator Howard Metzenbaum, who must be 80ish, stopped by to give a stem-winder to the Iowa delegation this morning, and even he exhorted Iowans by telling 'em to "get off their ass" and support Gore. At a reception Sunday night, Harkin took the microphone with beer in hand (unfortunately for his union friends, it was a Corona). By comparison, Grassley's receptions were heavy on his favorite food, ice cream, and the booze was scarce.

And the Iowa democratic delegation meetings get a bit revivalist. Harkin said this morning that Clinton's speech was a humdinger that showed "compassion with commitment." When Harkin uttered that phrase, the "amens" started in the form of "good line" "yes, yes" and "tell it to 'em, Tom."

The Iowa Republican meetings were held in a Hampton Inn breakfast area, and suffered from it. And one of the meetings in Philadelphia was a BORING lecture about Social Security reform, complete with darkened lights so the over-head projector could illustrate the numbing numbers on a screen set up in front of the coffee and orange juice counter. That meant guests were continually stepping behind the screen for liquid. Not the best set-up.

Attorney General Tom Miller AND Iowa Ag Secretary Patty Judge gave short speeches on the convention floor this afternoon. Just found out today State Representative Wayne Ford of Des Moines, Iowa's only black legislator, will talk tomorrow.

Tonight's "moment" I thought was Caroline Kennedy S.'s speech. What a story.

OKay

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**Subject: Biden on fire**

Date: Tue, 15 Aug 2000 00:09:14 EDT

From: kHenderson@Learfield.com

Dear Kathie,

Senator Joe Biden stopped by the Iowa delegation breakfast this morning and gave a 30 minute stemwinder in which he raced up and down the aisle, exhorting people to quit harping on Gore and blaming him for Clinton's indiscretions. It was an amazing display, complete with his story about threatening to "knock Clinton on his ass" after the Lewinsky story broke and calling the Republicans the "S-O-B's of Rectitude". Biden brought along his sister, who managed his Iowa campaign for prez. in '88, and his son who is a prosecutor now for the old-time reunion. Told the Iowans just talkin' to 'em made him want to run again. Biden looks none the worse for 12 years of treading in the D-C waters, and the Iowans were gaga over him.

The new U-S Commerce Secretary was the first speaker at this morning's pep rally. He told a story about a phone call he placed to the president of the company that makes Palm Pilots. When he called the guy's secretary, he identified himself as the Secretary of Commerce. When she asked who he was secretary for, he said "Bill Clinton." She whooped, hey, Bill Clinton wants to talk to the boss. No, he replied, I do. At the end of his story, he said all the women who are secretaries in Washington want to be administrative assistants and all the men want to be secretaries. He must have thought that was a joke.

The Iowa Democrats had to call the hotel folk and ask 'em to fix the television in the party's office here at the hotel. Seems their TV wouldn't dial up CNN, and they were sick of watching Fox news.

Clinton gave a performance this evening, and, as Rod Boshart said, it seemed at times he was parodying the parodies of himself. Did you see Iowa Ag Secretary Patty Judge shake his hand afterwards? She was up on the rostrum today, tapped as the convention "parliamentarian" which means she was there to "judge" any questions about party rules. Tomorrow she speaks at the convention for about four minutes. As you might guess, the topic is hard times on the farm.

Found out today the home where Iowans partied Sunday night was Mae West's summer home for 25 years. That's a brush with greatness, eh?

Governor Vilsack went to a private residence in LA this morning for a reunion of sorts. Seems about a dozen folks in the area who graduated from the same private school he did in Pittsburgh (Shady Side Academy) wanted to get together with the rookie Governor from Iowa to compare notes. The Vilsacks sat in the VIP area tonight with the Gore family, On Thursday, Vilsack is to give a three-minute speech at the convention. He gets a minute less than Judge. Go figure. Women secretaries must have more clout than male governors.

This evening, my best friend Rod Boshart of the Cedar Rapids Gazette gave me and a couple of other Iowans a ride to Izzy's deli in Santa Monica. Rod revealed he had a taste for German potato salad, but got a weird look from the guy behind the counter when he asked if they had any.

Today's taxi story winner is Joe Shannahan, the Governor's press secretary. Shannahan paid \$47 for a one-way trip to Union Station. Boshart wins the highest price paid for parking -- \$2.50 for every 15 minutes at a downtown parking ramp.

Well, time for me to take the off-ramp tonight. Talk to you later. Remind me to tell you the keystone cop method I'm using to file my radio reports since my cell phone doesn't work.  
OKay

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**Subject: Iowa Dems in LA**

Date: Sun, 13 Aug 2000 18:05:53 EDT

From: khenderson@learfield.com

Dear Kathie,

I'm here and it's grand. After the no-frills Hampton Inn in Jersey, room service is a luxurious treat. Got here on Friday afternoon after a slight but not out of reason delay in Denver. United offered a most unusual explanation for the flight delay, however. The co-pilot's chair was broken and they had to install a new one. As I waited to board the L.A.-bound plane, I overheard Angelinos joking about all the democratic convention-goers in the same way we in Des Moines joke about all the tournament-goers in February and March who come in to see their high schoolers play or wrestle at state tourney time.

Ran into Secretary of State Chet Culver and his wife, Mary, at the airport shuttle stand. We piled into a van (Culver got squished in the back seat with four other people) and I sat by an L.A. native who said lots of people were going on vacation this week to avoid the convention hassles. No evidence of this exodus in freeway traffic patterns, however.

Got to the hotel, and YES, the chocolate chip cookies were there (Double Tree hotels give you cookies when you check in). Taxi-pooled with some of the democrat staffers already here to Santa Monica for food at a restaurant called Largo, and yes, I had the salmon (with plum sauce).

The news upon my arrival is three of the Iowa democratic party staffers had their hair done Friday afternoon (and colored) at a nearby salon run by "Ali". Having your hair temporarily colored is, to me, a better option than the permanent tattoos several Iowa republicans got in San Diego at the '96 convention.

The REALLY big news of Friday night is that Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack's chief of staff, John Norris, proposed to his girlfriend, Jackie Dyke, in the hotel bar. (I can think of other places to stage a proposal -- we are in LA, the ultimate backdrop for big moments.) She is now sporting a ring. Jackie is working for the Gore campaign these days, having moved on with them after helping to run the Iowa Caucus effort for Gore. (As you may recall, Jackie was finance director for Vilsack's campaign in '98.) In a couple of days the Iowa Gore campaign workers plan a reunion at a bar in Westwood, so I'll keep you updated on what's happened to the others.

Norris on Saturday went surfing with friends in the area, or as he called it "boogie boarding." His first wave was fantastic, but he hit the deck on the second wave.

My new best friend is Rod Boshart of the Cedar Rapids Gazette because he has a rental car. We went down to the media reception last night in downtown L.A. It's a weird downtown, not very big. Looked but did not find any car sporting an "LA LAW" license plate. Big Bad Voodoo Daddy and others performed at the party. Ate all sorts of cuisine, such as Mexican, "soul food", oriental and sweets (as in brownies).

Jonathan Roos from the Des Moines Register is here as well. One of his cab drivers on Saturday had rigged up a DVD player in the cab and played Roos an Eric Clayton concert. It must keep the passengers distracted so there's no freaking out on the freeway.

Boshart and I stopped in Santa Monica today and grabbed some food at Izzy's deli. We knew it was the place to eat because a.) there were valets to park your car and b.) there were CHIPS inside. No, it was not Erik Estrada. Rod doubts Mr. E. could fit back in his costume from the show.

My cell phone's not working yet. Seems AT&T didn't register my number for some reason and I'm waiting for them to do so. U.S. Cellular says there are no other options than to wait for AT&T. Great. I love deregulation.

I have no credentials, either, but should be getting them from a D-C-connected person sometime today or tonight. The Iowa Democrats are going to be bused to an ocean-side party at the home of John Law (former Iowa Dem. Party executive director) in a couple of hours. Smashing views, I'm told, and direct access to the beach.

Boshart has already been to the beach once today. He went down for sunrise, and shared the space with people who call the beach home. He was a bit out of place with his Starbuck's coffee cup.

As I sit here in the broadcast booth (Ok, it's my hotel room), I'm looking out at the UCLA campus and beyond the smog out there is the ocean. I'll dip my toes in it tonight.

Peace out,  
Kay

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**Subject: Final night**

Date: Thu, 3 Aug 2000 22:37:16 EDT

From: kHenderson@Learfield.com

To: kathie

Dear Kathie,

Ran into some good stories today -- Congressman Jim Leach and Dick Cheney shared an office together in D-C for a couple of years during their work in the Nixon Administration. I asked Leach who was Oscar and who was Felix, and was later told my reference to the "Odd Couple" is going to fall flat in a few years as more and more of us think "The Simpsons" is an old sit-com. The funniest part of landing this story was that Jane Norman from the Des Moines Register and I had been interviewing Leach for 22 minutes and concluded our chat when he paused at the hotel door, turned to us and said "Did I tell you Cheney and I worked together once?"

Leach refused the limo and driver Delay offered him as a member of Congress. He was riding the bus. Never saw Congressmen Nussle or Latham at all. Ganske walked through the lobby briefly to pick up his credentials at the hotel, but I've been told he had a big fundraiser in the area for his colleagues in the medical profession and he played some major golf course built by somebody I would know if I knew much about the game where you hit that infernal white ball around a well-manicured course, muttering.

Sat down with Senator Charles Grassley today, and he allowed as how (a southwest Iowa phrase of my youth) it was important for him to stay at the Iowa delegation hotel because it's important to build grassroots support for his re-election in 2004. So, consider that an announcement he's running again. He's held elective office longer than I've been alive.

Three of the Iowa delegates had a debate in the streets of Philadelphia (cue music from the movie) with a gay rights protestor. After it was over, the



protestor walked off but a table-full of guys drinking beer nearby who heard the whole thing asked the Iowa gals to sit down and have a beer they were so impressed. (The Iowans were headed to free food and drink at a reception for Senator Grassley, so they politely declined the kind offer.)

Well, I thought George PRESTON Bush was the hit of the night. He is the Grand Old Party's John F. Kennedy, Jr. He certainly wowed 'em. All sorts of people were turning to one another and saying, "I like that boy." Overheard some state troopers talking about Jeb Bush, G.P.'s dad, wishing HE would run for President instead of G.W.

Well, Uncle George certainly had some nice turns of phrase. That tribute to his father's generation, the line that they "liberated concentration camps and delivered us from evil" was splendid. He almost made his dad cry, though. The attacks on Gore's tendency to call everything he opposes (and Bush proposes) a "risky scheme" was certainly amusing. OH, I forgot, you were enjoying yourself at the I-Cubs baseball game. Bush said Gore would have told Edison the invention of the light bulb was a "risky anti-candle scheme"...etc.

You can sense how hungry these Republicans are to win back the White House as they went nuts for the wooden line "They have not lead. We will."

(I thought it was strange the RNC video bio, though, showed George W. stumbling, mumbling about the birth of his daughters.)

Cheney's little granddaughter is certainly a favorite of the tv networks. I thought Cheney's speech last night was superb. I like a dry wit, and he certainly has one. The delegates had been starved for red meat, and he made the delivery. Lynn Cheney's introduction was so well written. Humanized the man.

It will hopefully be a millennium before I eat again at a Chili's restaurant. It was my only option, though, for most of the week as there is nothing else around my hotel. Just boxed up the broadcast studio and called Fed Ex to arrange for pick up. It's on to Los Angeles in a week.

OKay

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**Subject: Day Three**

Date: Wed, 2 Aug 2000 15:51:48 EDT

From: kHenderson@learfield.com

Dear Kathie,

I have to say, people in this 'burb have gone out of their way to be accommodating. The hotel's sales manager, who knew my name by the second day, asked me to e-mail her from Los Angeles, as she's now interested in what's going to happen at the Democratic National Convention.

The hotel makes chocolate chip cookies every afternoon and there's nothing better to help the vocal delivery than a little cookies and milk. The smell ain't bad either. The woman who mans the kitchen area found a quite patriotic apron, which several delegates are coveting.

The Iowa delegation isn't seen much on TV this year because none of them are wearing wacky, red-white-and-blue stuff. And they have no cowboy hats to wear. As you may have noticed, cowboy hats are the "thing" this year. And those smacking salamis Jim mentioned were actually balloons. They had some sort of mylar treatment which made them a little harder than the average balloon, and rather than tying

'em off, there's a sticky substance. They deflated, so no luck on bringing one back. Sorry. Last night's featured noise maker was a patriotic rattle. Can't wait to see what tonight brings.

I continue to be amazed by the talk about the poor fashion choice Laura Bush made on opening night. And last night, Conde Rice washed out in that light blue suit in front of the light blue background. In this television age you'd think the Bushies would have tested the colors for these major speeches. And did Elizabeth Dole button her suit wrong? That was a question one Iowa delegate asked this morning. It was a funky neckline that threw people off.

Today the Iowa delegation is being treated to food and drinks purchased by John Ruan. He's flown in on the private jet, brought along a couple of friends to tour his ancestral home in West Philly. It's been turned into what I understand is a pretty cool civil war museum. I love how all the republicans refer to him as "Mr. Ruan." I wonder if Bill Knapp, the patron of the Iowa Democrat Party, will make a similar flight to L.A.

My new best friend, David Kotok, was accosted yesterday. It wasn't a protestor. It was a republican. Seems the Omaha World Herald's work space routinely gets trashed by people who get food at the concession stand next door. Yesterday, a woman sat down with her food in Kotok's work area, and he said he "politely asked her to leave" (I don't doubt it was polite. The guy has always been chivalrous to me.) Anyway, Kotok turned his back and the woman smacked him. "Can't a lady find anywhere to sit?" she huffed as she picked up her lunchbox and walked out. This exchange was evidently seen by other reporters and it's been plastered in newspapers across the country (like the Vegas paper) and it's now airing on the Radio Iowa network.

There are two junior/senior duos here from Iowa. Chuck Larson, Junior (the state legislator from CR) and Chuck Larson, Senior (the head of the Iowa Parole Board) and Edward Failor, Senior (President of the Iowa Taxpayers Association) and his son, Edward, Junior who's a member of the state party Central Committee. The four-some was chatting with Congressman Leach at breakfast when Leach noticed a bus pulling away from the hotel. Leach got that perplexed look on his face, and said, "Oh, no, I think that's my bus." Chuck SENIOR jumped up, ran after the bus and stopped it so the Congressman could jump aboard. Seems Chuck Senior is having a good experience with the bus system. Yesterday, he lost the Rayban sunglasses he's had since his days in the military. A bus driver found 'em and returned them to him.

O.Kay

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**Subject: From the protest zone**

Date: Tue, 1 Aug 2000 22:58:04 EDT

From: khenderson@learfield.com

Dear Kathie,

The protestors have arrived, but they've basically created headaches for Philadelphia commuters and reporters trying to cover their antics. The convention itself is going on as security's incredibly tight around the hall, which is First Union center.

The opening night of the convention was a hit, I think. Laura Bush was wearing the wrong color, as FIVE different Iowa delegates told me over Cheerios this morning, but she made some important points. Powell spoke pretty powerfully, and I thought his lecture on crime and punishment was interesting for this "three strikes and you're out" party.

Tonight, Daddy Bush's segment mentioned working with democrats and he gave his politician-sons permission to disagree with their dad's policies. And the TV cameras caught a defining moment tonight

when the former President turned to Nancy Reagan and smiled and she smiled back. It captured his warmth and that genuine touch people often associate with him.

You may see Becky Beach on TV every once in awhile. She is in charge of the VIP section in the hall. She's the granddaughter of former RNC Chair Mary Louise Smith, a Bush friend. Beach's present Boss, Senate President Mary Kramer of West Des Moines, just got to the convention late late late last night. That nasty thunderstorm/flood here created some travel woes.

As I type, McCain is speaking, but he appears to be falling pretty flat in the convention hall. I don't think it's much better for TV viewers either.

The bus system continues to be a joke. Last night some of the lowans spent two hours on the bus coming back from the convention. Seems the bus driver didn't know where he was going and led them down residential streets, with the tree limbs scratching the bus. The convention "organizers" hired bus drivers from other cities who've come in and have no directions and don't know their way around the city.

As a radio person, one of the most impressive things about this convention thus far is it's happening by the clock. Powell quit right at 11 p.m. eastern, when the networks wanted to dump out and McCain quit at about the same moment just now. Wow.

OKay

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*Re: Opening night*

*Date: Mon, 31 Jul 2000 22:41:58 -0500*

*From: Kathie*

*Kay:*

*Watched part of the opening night on TV -- flipping between Fox News, C-Span, MSNBC, PBS and, of course, Monday Night Football. I can report that Dennis Miller made NFL broadcasting history in his first night as color commentator, using the phrase "Sword of Damocles" and the word "pooch-alicious" within an hour's time.*

*He also offered some political humor to the effect of "Sure, Gore is lacking in charisma, but c'mon -- his personalized license plate is a random series of letters and numbers."*

*The convention finally captured Jim's attention when Brian McKnight performed. His comment: "Hey, there's some booty-shakin' going on up there!" I'm sure you'll be reporting back on Laura Bush's speech -- I thought she did pretty well, but using the Benetton commercial kids as props was a little too precious. And I know you're not into the fashion commentary, Kay, but that pale green dress was truly phlegmatic on TV. Loved the lei on Babs, though.*

*Dubya's satellite link-up from Ohio was poorly dubbed on Fox -- he looked like he was auditioning for a part in a old Godzilla movie. The kids behind him looked more like extras in "Night of the Living Dead." All the talking heads gushed over Colin Powell, though, especially his affirmative action schtick. Was everyone as mesmerized as it seemed?*

*We'll look forward to your report on the news, but please also advise: What the heck are those blue and red salamis that everyone seems to be waving around on the convention floor? Jim wants one, of course.*

*Kathie*

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**Subject: Opening night**

Date: Mon, 31 Jul 2000 16:48:13 EDT

From: kHenderson@learfield.com

Dear Kathie,

Yes, opening night for the political junkies. Don't want to get into a fashion revue. Just know that I wore sandals last night and never again. The tennis shoe option is best, regardless of what you're wearing. Even black tie and tails.

Bush isn't even here yet. He's in Ohio, which coincidentally is where Harkin is. Harkin called me on my cell after his news conference here in Philly. It was just too tough to cover the Iowa delegation in one state while he's appearing 45 minutes away in another.

Got a call from Bob Haus this afternoon. He's here, working the rounds on behalf of the Bush campaign. His "person to place" is former American Farm Bureau president Dean Kleckner. I'll quiz Kleckner, but if there's no news, there's no news. Just think about Haus. He worked for Gramm in 1995 and Forbes in 2000 -- now he's landed well in the Bush camp.

Montana's Governor apparently couldn't find the hotel this morning, so the Iowa delegation was entertained by the Governor of Virginia, the Honorable James Gillmore. His speech was followed by an issues briefing by some guy in Bush's think tank group. It was as if it were the husband of Charlie Brown's teacher speaking to the group. Wah wah, wah wah wah wah. The eyes were glazing over, as the speakers were about an hour late. And these delegation meetings are being held in the "continental breakfast" area of the Hampton Inn, so people are popping bagels in the toaster and eating Special K (my favorite, of course) while the party leaders are trying to go through roll call.

One of the "guests" of the delegation (you get a special pass for the convention hall if you are a "guest" -- most of whom are married to a "delegate") had her credentials stolen last night. She is sort of shell-shocked, since it happened at a party of fellow delegates. The folks are being told to wear their credentials inside their clothing until they must be shown for entry. I'm not sure the theft ring here is as bad as it is at the tourist sites in Italy where the kids can slice open your purse, steal your passport and skeedaddle before you realize it's gone.

I've spent the day at the delegation hotel and happened upon one of the better stories of the week. Three Iowa delegates flew from DM to Chicago Sunday, then their flight to Philly was cancelled because of the thunderstorm which dumped rain in biblical proportions here last night. The three and a guy from the South Dakota delegation rented a car together and drove straight out to Philly, aka "Planes, Trains and Automobiles." None of the four claims to be the John Candy character, which as we all remember was a shower curtain ring salesman.

I cannot reveal my source, but I may come away from this convention with a "Convention Barbie". Watch your e-mail for further updates.

Convention Kay

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**Subject: Call me a cab**

Date: Sun, 30 Jul 2000 22:23:48 EDT

From: khenderson@Learfield.com

Dear Kathie:

What did Branstad intend to do with the Barbie? He told me tonight he was just straightening out a dent in the doll's package and was not trying to deface a fine little retirement investment. The former Gov tells me he just returned from a cruise in the Mediterranean w/Chris.

Tonight my cab driver said he didn't know where Mt. Laurel, New Jersey was, and his dispatcher didn't either, so I had to use MY cell phone to call the Hampton Inn to find out how to get there/here. It's about 1000 percent humid here, too, and this glorious cab didn't have air conditioning. The other option for my return trip was to ride a bus from downtown Philly to the First Union Center, then switch buses and ride to my hotel, which is last on the route. Didn't have the time to spend riding a bus for two hours, as I've got to be here to send my Monday a.m. report tonight at 10 a.m., your time.

The best thing about these cab rides is they cost \$40. Upon my return tonight, I briefly talked with the two State Police officers stationed at our hotel for convention security. The Philadelphia Eagles game was on. I am smart enough to know the Dallas Cowboys are in the same division, so a brief and quite pleasant conversation ensued. The most notable thing about their uniforms is they tuck the pants into the boots. Interesting, huh. These are lace-up boots, though, not ala Senator Lyle Ziemer.

Today I discovered I am not registered to receive "convention credentials." This will deny me access to the floor of the convention hall itself. The woman manning the entrance at the House Radio TV Gallery where credentials were issued suggested my best alternative for the situation was to fire my secretary. Little did she know I have friends in high places and have a proper pass in my hot little hands. The hand-off was made on a street corner, in broad daylight, as I met the kind person who made my special arrangements in downtown Philly tonight.

This evening's Iowa reception was held in downtown Philly, and luckily the buses which were to take the Iowa delegation to the event were an hour late. This meant we all got to stand in the hotel lobby and kibitz. Found out our very own Senator Tom Harkin is due in Philly tomorrow for the "message of the day."

There was a brief conversation about tattoos, but there do not appear to be any "parlors" nearby for permanently marring the skin. We were regaled with the various locations of the tattoos various Republican staffers obtained while at the last convention in San Diego.

O.Kay

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*RE: Screaming at the governor*

*Date: Sun, 30 Jul 2000 4:01pm CDT*

*From: Kathie*

*To: O.Kay*

*New Jersey! Lord, what a kick in the pants. I guess it's clear how the Iowa delegation ranks. So is Chili's party central for the week? If Rep.*

*Rosemary Thomson starts singing the "I want my babyback babyback babyback" song, I want to hear about it, immediately.*

*What do you think of Gov. Rasciot? I met him at the GOP convention two years ago in Cedar Rapids -- he's been putting out feelers for awhile. Think he's serious? Or just seriously fly in his Montana boots and tight blue jeans? I can't wait to hear all about The Donald in Sin City. Could there be a more natural element for him?*

*Exactly what was our former governor planning to do with that Barbie? Put on a puppet show? What is a Convention Barbie anyway? Does she have a sequined American flag vest and a hangover? Any tattoos?*

*Speaking of tattoos, any action on that front yet? Or did certain members of the Iowa delegation learn their lesson at the last national convention?*

*Say hi to Kotok for me. Bless his little heart for having the foresight to become your chauffeur for the week. I've been reading some of his stories on the [World Herald's website](#) -- good stuff.*

*What do you think is going to happen with the RNC Rules vote on the primary schedule for the next cycle? Is Iowa going to stay first in the nation?*

*Kathie*

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**Subject: Screaming at the governor**

Date: Sun, 30 Jul 2000 11:35:08 EDT

From: kHenderson@Learfield.com

Dear Kathie,

I just yelled at former Governor Terry Branstad, and folks are still laughing. More on that later.

Did I mention the Iowa delegation is staying in NEW JERSEY???? It would have been more convenient to stay in New York City and take the train down to Philly. It takes a hour to get anywhere, parking's a mess, but we found a terrific place to eat last night.

Kotok and I went to the media reception at the Convention Center. As we ascended the escalator, we could hear clapping and cheering Philadelphians ("Glad you're here. You're great. Welcome to Philadelphia."). The city folk had made a tunnel of well-wishers into the food festival. Ok, I had some crab cakes. And some key lime pie. And some pasta. And some local beers. And the second-best margarita I've ever had. It was made with the liquor that's like Grand Marnier only it's raspberry (the liquor destroyed the brain cells which stored the elixir's name). Oolala. Baby! Luckily, these fine treats were served sample size, or I'd be the fat lady in the circus this morning.

Kotok, who as I mentioned is my new best friend because he has a CAR, drove out to the airport to pick up Omaha World Herald photog Jeff Bundy. The three of us made it back to downtown Philly, where we happened upon a wonderful restaurant, Philadelphia Fish & Co. on Chestnut Street. The proprietor spent some time chatting with us at the conclusion of our repast (ok--guess what I ordered, yes, it was the salmon). Seems the magnificent sculptures inside the restaurant were made by his neighbor in Maine. 1.) Wanna meet the neighbor. 2.) Wanna live in Maine this time of year. Kotoch gave the guy grief about the rather unimaginative name of the restaurant, and we were treated to the story of his trying to CHANGE the name but the damn media had a field day. "Philadelphia's not good enough to be in your establishment's name?" So, it'll be Philadelphia Fish & Co. in the new millennium.

Walked around downtown Philly. Went to Xandu, a local coffeeshop franchise that's funky. Bundy had cheesecake, but I was able through sheer willpower to resist (not to mention the key lime pie, "Chocolate Confusion" and other desserts I enjoyed early in the evening converting directly to ride my butt for eternity).

AFTER A 45 MINUTE DRIVE, we made it back to the hotel, and crashed. I'm in the midst of interviewing all sorts of people and yelling at former Governors. Explanation: every delegate got a huge briefcase full of crap: binoculars, Kraft Macaroni and Cheese (in case we get stranded in Jersey, I guess), maps, etc. BUT it includes a special edition "Convention Barbie." As I was chatting with Kayne Robinson, the chair of the Iowa GOP, Branstad was rifling through his goodie bag and took the doll out. He started poking at the box, which I saw out of the corner of my eye, so I SCREAMED "STOP." My involuntary reflex kicked in

before I could keep myself from speaking. Didn't want to see him ruin a nice little investment by getting his Barbie out to play with it. Keep the box intact, please. People are still recounting the story as I write.

Well, this Malibu Kay had better get on the road to the Convention Center to pick up her credentials. Talk to you later.

OKay

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**Subject: Philadelphia Story**

Date: Sat, 29 Jul 2000 16:27:17 EDT

From: kHenderson@Learfield.com

Dear Kathie,

Let me tell you a little story about air travel. Using the word travel in that sentence would not tell you much about my Friday, most of which was spent in the Omaha airport. Ticket agents said there was "weather" in Chicago and St. Louis, backing up flights galore. I had been under the impression those two cities had weather all the time, it just changed in degree from good to bad, but I have been educated by the fine folks at TWA and American.

So, instead of arriving in Philadelphia on Friday, I got here today. My travel day started at 3:30 a.m., when the paltry alarm in my Holiday Inn Express room in Omaha went off. The cab arrived 20 minutes early, so I raced downstairs to be greeted by a tandem cab crew. Evidently the woman driving the cab doesn't feel safe enough to drive alone, so a man was riding "shotgun" -- although I have to admit I saw no weapon. The two were sharing a bag of Fritos, which are the world's best junk food by bulk, and offered me some. I have to admit I declined, citing the absurd hour.

The gal (can I use that word without offending anyone?) advised me it would take awhile to get to the airport, but I would be charged no more than \$11.50 "cause that's state law." Upon questioning by this intrepid reporter (yes, intrepid is a fine adjective, not just a tire), she said no cab driver in Omaha can charge you more than that to get you to or from the Omaha airport. I suspect it's a city ordinance or some such thing, but was a bit miffed to find this out as my cab ride Friday night to the lovely Holiday Inn Express was \$13.50. Seems the gentleman got a few more bucks than he deserved.

Well, the plane from Omaha took off at 5:45 a.m., and stopped in St. Louis, where we picked up passengers who had been sleeping overnight in the airport. So the Holiday Inn Express is looking a bit better at this point. We arrived in Philly and the airport is kinda skanky (you spell that way, don't you?). And the fine host folks were totally disorganized. They've set up a tent outside the airport that's the size of my living room, and that's the venue through which the 45,000 people who're headed here this weekend will attain shuttle service to their hotels.

Well, finally made it here to the Hampton Inn in Mt. Laurel, which is in NEW JERSEY. It's behind a Chili's restaurant, so at least there's direct access to beer and nachos. After a few fitful minutes of trying to find the Fed Ex box with my broadcast equipment (is it ok to threaten litigation in that situation), I entered my room and the dank smell of chlorine and sweat socks wafted up to my nostrils. DELUXE. A lovely welcoming basket featuring a chocolate replica of the Liberty Bell was sitting on the bedspread, and I ripped open the packaging to chow it down -- my first and best meal of the day.

By now, I've got the "broadcast booth" set up in the hotel room and tested it out. Ran over to the Chili's to eat and learned all sorts of things about

our upcoming week. Donald Trump is sending a bus to the hotel on Tuesday at 11 a.m. to take the lowans to the boardwalk in Atlantic City. Does he know these people are Republicans -- and they can get their fix in our own casinos? Perhaps he'll run as a Republican in 2004 and is laying the groundwork. Seems Governor Rasicot from Montana is coming on Monday to speak to the delegation. More on him later. Gotta get downstairs to meet Dave Kotoch from the Omaha World Herald who HAS A CAR and is going to give me a ride to the convention center & tonight's press party.

Later,  
O.Kay