

Attend me, Jeeves

Brothers use 'perfect valet' to operate cleaning business

United Press International
NEW YORK — In one of P.G. Wodehouse's early Jeeves satires, hero Bertie Wooster remarks on the subject of money that he is "one who always has rolled fairly freely in the right stuff."

This perfectly describes the kind of customers on both sides of the wide Atlantic that Jeeves of Belgravia caters to — the man who is eager to pay \$3 to have a single shirt laundered or from \$9.75 to \$15 to have a suit cleaned, pressed and a few stitches taken here and there, instead of the \$3.75 the neighborhood drycleaning shop would charge.

Jeeves customers cheerfully pay \$45 to have a favorite pair of shoes overhauled and sometimes they will pay several thousand dollars when they are moving to have the Jeeves operatives come pick up the entire family wardrobe, clean and overhaul all the garments and deliver them to the new address.

Jeeves of Belgravia was founded in London in 1969. The name of the fictional perfect valet was obtained on license from author Wodehouse's estate.

There's a Jeeves of Belgravia on Madison Avenue (where else?) in New York and Sydney Jacob, one of the two brothers who

founded the firm, was in town on one of his periodic visits.

"My brother, Ronald, runs the New York branch so I don't really have to check up on things, I just like New York," he confided and added sadly, "but inflation is going to force me to cut down on my visits."

The raison d'être of Jeeves of Belgravia is not really snobbishness or trading on literary romanticists, Jacob said. "Our business really is based on the practical notion that a lot of people in the world like to own clothes that are finely cut out of beautiful fabrics, want to keep them for many years, and are willing to pay to

have them carefully maintained. It doesn't make much sense to run very expensive garments through a high-speed dry cleaning machine or a mechanical washer, perhaps using too strong cleaning fluids and detergents," he said. "Nor does it make sense not to repair the smallest tear or worn spot in such a garment routinely."

That's the kind of service Jeeves gives, the kind of service the fictional Jeeves gave Bertie Wooster, the service Wodehouse described in such glowing terms.

The Jacob brothers still are in their early thirties. They have sold franchising rights in Europe

and the basic London retail shops for \$2 million to Tricoville, Ltd., a British high-fashion house, and they are looking for persons to operate Jeeves franchises in the proper American cities.

The London Jeeves shops have attracted many blue chip customers, one or two of Europe's ex-kings, Princess Margaret (the Queen's sister), Prime Minister Maggie Thatcher and actors Anthony Quinn and Peter Sellers, for example.

Jacob said not all the customers are rich; a surprising number of persons of moderate means like expensive clothes and are willing to pay to have them well cared for.

Refining find hikes gas yield

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Ashland Oil Co., a major refiner which sold off much of its oil-producing properties before crude price decontrol began, now has a sheaf of coveted refining patents to prove it made the right decision.

The company's stock jumped 2 1/4 points recently on the strength of an announcement that its engineers have devised a "reduced crude conversion process" that could make Ashland's refineries the envy of the oil industry.

The new process dovetails nicely with current administration policies for scaling down oil imports by discouraging the use of heavy residual oil in power plants.

In fact, Ashland officials predict reduced crude conversion could cut United States oil imports almost in half if it becomes widely accepted by the domestic refining industry.

The process — a high temperature, low pressure catalytic conversion technique — is capable of boosting a refinery's gasoline yield from the average barrel of crude oil to 70 percent, the firm said.

The most modern and efficient refineries run by Ashland's competitors currently make just 45-50 percent gasoline out of every barrel of crude. In Europe, the average gasoline yield is much lower.

The rest of the crude passing through refineries becomes other products like diesel, home heating oil, kerosene, petrochemical feedstocks and heavy, residual boiler oil.

Although it's theoretically possible to turn the whole crude barrel into gasoline, refining costs above current yield levels can be prohibitive. Yet U.S. gasoline use remains high while demand for products like

home heating oil has fallen. A virtual ban on lead octane boosters and the depletion of the efficient light, sweet crude oils yielding gasoline fractions vastly complicate the job of refiners seeking to produce more gasoline.

"The best chance for better (from) imported oil is to develop a line," said George Babikian, an Atlantic Richfield official. "The good way is to crack residual fuel oil) and make light products from it."

To the extent you can get products from residual, you can out imported oil."

Basically, Ashland's reduced crude conversion serves the same purpose as two existing refining techniques — hydrotreating and coking. It re-refines residual fuel oil from the bottom crude oil barrel into gasoline.

But Ashland's process is more efficient, permitting same yield with 20 percent less crude. It also does a better job of removing heavy metals and sulfur from the oil and can handle a type of heavy crudes now dominating the world market.

In addition to the ability to upgrade heavy oil to gasoline, the process permits us to produce a yield of gasoline with 20 percent more crude oil or, alternatively, to produce a much heavier crude oil suitable for a much heavier crude oil market.

Jack Haney, a Conoco spokesman, said Ashland's process is a commercial application. His company has also been looking for some way to refine its heavy oil from South Texas.

Ashland is now building a barrel-a-day refinery in Kentucky, to try out the technique.

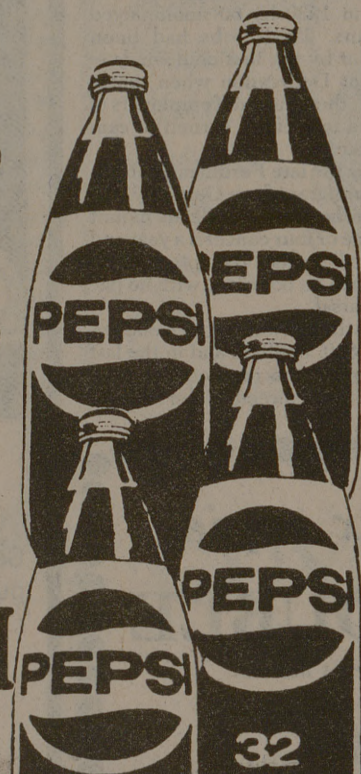
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Barking frogs invade Virginia

United Press International
RICHMOND, Va. — Virginia has been invaded by a wave of immigrants that thrive in roadside ditches, woo their mates with dog imitations and show every sign of becoming permanent residents.

Barking tree frogs, a nametag attached by admiring scientists, have adopted the state as part of their habitat during a northward expansion that shows no sign of stopping.

"They weren't recorded outside of northern Florida and south Georgia in the early part of the century," said Dr. Charles R. Blem, a Virginia Commonwealth University biologist who is fascinated by the creatures.

"But now they've gotten as far as the south bank of the James River and will probably eventually cross over it. They're going to reach an edge somewhere, but nobody knows where that will be."

As the largest native North American tree frog, the "barking" variety reaches snout-vent lengths of 2 inches to 2 1/2 inches and is bright green with a light stripe along its side.

"It's one of the prettiest animals in the state," said Blem. "It's at least as attractive as some of the birds we have."

During its summer breeding season, he said the male of the species emits a loud call that gives the name.

"It sounds just like a dog barking," he said. "You can hear it up to a mile when conditions are right and it's a quiet night."

What hidden instinct has made the tiny amphibians so mobile? "If I knew the answer to that, I would be famous," Blem said. "There are several theories. One is that vegetation has changed since the Civil War. Another is construction of the state system. I-95, for example, provides a perfect ditch area for up its length for breeding. It may also more farm ponds being constructed now than ever before."

Blem believes the amphibian creature will eventually reach most of the eastern seaboard. The successful population was established recently in New Jersey and is expected to reach the Virginia population's verge with its Garden State neighbor.

"They are not destructive and are actually of very little consequence. They eat insects and other small things that are harmful to the forest."

INFLUENZA STUDY VOLUNTEERS

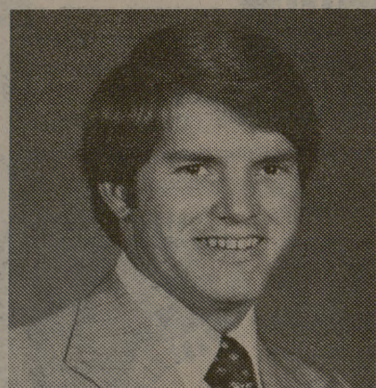
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Kevin P. Calvert

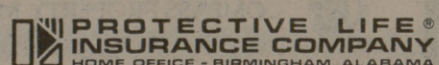
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