

Warped

by Scott McCullar



Rise and shine!

Telephone wake up replaces alarm clock

By JEAN MANSAVAGE
Reporter

If the buzzing of an alarm clock irritates you in the morning, the telephone wake-up calls of Good Morning Great Day Wake-Up Service offer an alternative.

Entrepreneur Charles McElroy, a Texas A&M graduate student in the Department of Geosciences, says he began the wake-up service this semester because he believed that students needed something other than an alarm clock or a radio to get going in the morning.

"Reality says that we have to get up and out into the world, and in this case our world is the University," McElroy says. "This service gently wakes up the clients and gets them going into the day."

A \$13.50 fee covers the five-day-a-week service and an additional five wake-ups whenever the client wishes. Most students are awakened in the morning for daily classes. Some of the unusual circumstances in which clients like the additional calls include visiting parents and strange schedules kept during test weeks and finals.

The one or two minute wake-up calls both get the clients out of bed and inform them about what happened while they were asleep. News, sports, weather and other interesting information are relayed from one of 13 callers to the more than 2000 clients. All of that is done with a smile in the caller's voice, McElroy says.

"It is important to have a good attitude about college because it sets the foundation for what rung of the ladder at which we begin," McElroy says. "We can change the attitude about getting up from negative to positive, and that is important."

"Callers must be light-hearted, yet stern about waking people. You can't alienate clients by being nasty, but the importance of the call has to be maintained."

"The callers have to remember that they are talking to a human being, someone that is as hard to get up as anyone else."

In addition to providing a wake-up service, McElroy says he believes he is offering employment to students who do the calling.

"The wake-up service has been a method to turn friends on to a way to make money," he says.

Each of the 13 callers receives a commission of \$250 per month. Callers operate out of their homes,

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so they must have telephones. Callers also should have a television to keep up to date with news and weather. The job is good for students because they work before their classes begin and their evenings are left free for studying.

The callers keep a diary of the calls they make and are made aware of important dates by the clients so they can remind them of those dates when necessary.

"They get to know their clients, but not in a pushy way," McElroy says. "The callers know their clients only as well as the clients wish. The first name of the clients and their phone numbers are all that is given out."

Anonymity is an overriding concern of the wake-up service, he says, because it is necessary to maintain respect for both parties' rights to pri-

vac. There is a chance for a friendly working relationship, but if the fine line of anonymity is crossed, that relationship is endangered, McElroy says.

Barbara, a caller, thinks the service is a good idea.

"It is more personal than an alarm clock," she says.

Barbara calls her clients and talks with them until they are awake, informing them of the day's weather and the overnight news.

McElroy describes the clients as a diverse group. Heavy partiers, students disinterested in school, very studious people and even athletes all need help getting up, he says. McElroy says there are more female clients and that he thinks this is because they may need more time to get ready in the morning.

Paula, a client, heard about the service through a friend and decided it would be useful to her.

"I was awful about the alarm clock in the morning," she says. "So many times I would turn off the alarm without realizing it, and now that can't happen."

"It is a not-too-loud, friendly way to wake up. I get the news and that is nice because I don't always have time to read the paper before I go to class."

McElroy says the idea for the service came from a friend who would sleep through her alarm. He would call to make sure that she was awake. The friend suggested that it could be done for more people and so, Good Morning Great Day Wake-Up Service was born.

He refuses to use computers to call more people, McElroy says he believes that would destroy the personal effect of the calls. The impersonal wake-up would only be transferred from the clock to the telephone, he says. A computer cannot tell you to go out and have a great day and truly mean it, McElroy says.

Communications technology being stifled

Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — The Justice Department is stifling competition and the introduction of new communications technology, the chairman of Ameritech told delegates to the United States Telephone Association convention Monday.

The federal agency is operating from a "pre-divestiture, pre-competition mindset," said William Weiss, also chief executive officer of Ameritech, one of seven regional Bell tele-

phone holding companies.

The Justice Department, he said, has "set itself up as the arbiter of what is best for the future of the industry."

The telephone industry, he said, was restructured to eliminate dominance by any one player. Now that the task is complete, the Justice Department "has simply added one more layer of pervasive regulation," he said.

Weiss made his remarks in a

speech to about 3,000 delegates attending the USTA convention. USTA represents nearly all of the 1,400 local telephone exchange companies in the United States.

"The divested Bell companies are being regulated more vigorously than ever," Weiss said.

"Moreover, the emphasis is still on what not to do rather than what can and should be done, and time after time, the customer gets lost in the shuffle," he said.

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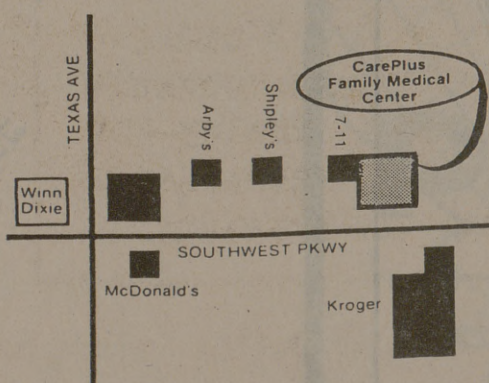


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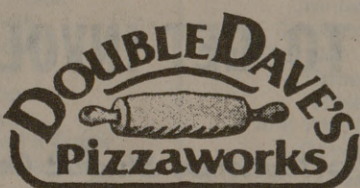
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