

General Mills wants to introduce Betty Crocker into modern society

The company is encouraging aspiring Betty wannabes to participate in an essay contest.

GOLDEN VALLEY, Minn. (AP) — Betty Crocker, the white-bread-and-mayonnaise symbol of middle America, is getting a multi-ethnic makeover. General Mills Inc. said Monday it will select photos of 75 women — to celebrate the Betty Crocker company's 75th birthday — and digitally "morph" them into a new Betty.

Chances are, she won't be the fair-skinned, blue-eyed homemaker whose image has appeared on and off on cookbooks, cake and brownie mixes and Hamburger Helper over the years.

"I guess they want to put some fire under her tail," said Lehman Brothers analyst Caroline Levy. "I think it's a great idea to revitalize the brand."

The new face, to be unveiled in February, will be the eighth Betty Crocker since the fictional character was created in 1921.

Small changes were made over the years — she smiles in the 1955 portrait and wears a pearl choker in '65 — but she always remains prim and proper. The latest incarnation, in 1986, wears a red business suit and bow tie.

University of Minnesota marketing professor Akshay Rao said the idea reflects the increasing percentage of mi-

norities in the nation.

"The face of the nation is going to be very different than it was 20 years ago," he said. "If they can identify with the person on the brand better because it looks like them, this is a wise thing to do."

Quaker Oats Co. has given periodic makeovers to Aunt Jemima, who has slimmed down and become more sophisticated-looking over the years.

General Mills is asking Betty wannabes to send in their photos along with an essay on how they embody the company ideal of family and community spirit, creativity and interest in cooking. Winners will be chosen on the basis of the best essays.

What if an aspiring Betty happens to have a nose ring, cheek tattoo or perhaps a lime green mohawk?

"I have no idea what the judges will do, but I don't think there will be a significant number of fringe winners that will affect Betty looking mainstream," General Mills spokesman Barry Wegener said.

And what about a male version of Betty? Such applications will be read, but "we are looking for women," project manager Cindy Guettler said.

Toni Green, director of marketing for the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, wasn't all that impressed with the campaign.

"If I am going to buy cake mix, it doesn't matter if she is white," said Green, who is black. "I think sometimes they overthink these things, and I think there are more pressing issues in the world than trying to get a more politically correct woman."

NEWS BRIEFS

Bush addresses juvenile crime changes

AUSTIN (AP) — It likely will take at least three years for a juvenile justice overhaul to affect the crime rate, a state youth probation official says.

Gov. George W. Bush addressed a conference on juvenile justice reform Monday, saying that the new legislation should make a difference.

Bush, who described the new legislation as an effort to "intercede early with tough love," said it's hard to tell when it will pay off.

"The ultimate answer ... is will we have a cultural shift so that from house to house, people understand there is a concept of individual responsibility?" he said. "I know this: The status quo was unacceptable."

Injunction stops removal of gunslinger's remains

EL PASO (AP) — High noon for the descendants of notorious gunslinger John Wesley Hardin will come in a courtroom early next year.

State District Judge Kathleen Olivares issued a temporary injunction Monday forbidding Hardin's family from removing the remains from an El Paso cemetery until the dispute goes to trial Jan. 29.

She ruled that moving the body would cause irreparable harm to both the historical Concordia Cemetery and to his remains.

Some Hardin descendants, led by great-grandson John Billings, want the gunslinger reburied in Nixon, Texas, east of San Antonio, where Hardin lived briefly with his first wife, Jane.

Harding was credited with killing seven men before he was 17.

Bad radio link slows shuttle's film project

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Endeavour's astronauts Monday struggled with a bad radio link to a huge, dish-shaped satellite designed to grow super-thin semiconductor film in the pure vacuum of space.

The shuttle crew released the Wake Shield Facility nearly two hours late because of on-and-off communication between the satellite and ground controllers.

The trouble persisted after the release, and only one of two planned satellite-thruster firings was completed,

slowing the separation between the satellite and Endeavour and delaying the project.

By afternoon, hours after the satellite was released, the communication link appeared to be solid. If it breaks up again, the astronauts — rather than ground controllers — will have to send all commands to the satellite.

Scientists have just two days to try to produce semiconductor film on the Wake Shield. The five astronauts are supposed to retrieve the spacecraft on Wednesday.

Boy Scouts of America shuns Gramm's campaign

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Boy Scout must be trustworthy and loyal — but not too political.

That's the message from the Boy Scouts of America to the GOP presidential campaign of Texas Sen. Phil Gramm.

David Park, an attorney for the Boy Scouts, sent Gramm's campaign a letter asking the senator to stop using photos of the Boy Scouts in campaign literature.

A recent campaign pamphlet shows Gramm with a saluting Boy Scout. This could be mistakenly interpreted to mean that Gramm has the organization's political support, Boy Scouts spokesman Richard Walker said Monday.

Because the scouts' group is a non-political organization, images of scouts and the organization cannot be used in a specific campaign, Walker said. However, scouts may be used as flag bearers at political rallies because this is considered to be more of a patriotic act than a political one.

Women's conference moves toward accord

BEIJING (AP) — Like worried parents everywhere, delegates to the U.N. women's conference struggled with questions about teen-agers and sex. Does access to contraception and sex education encourage promiscuity? Do parents' responsibilities outweigh teen-agers' right to privacy?

The delegates decided Monday night that the needs of both must be taken into account.

The agreement on parental responsibility, and on other hotly disputed issues including sexual freedom and abortion, brought predictions that the Fourth World Conference on Women will end Friday with an ambitious plan to achieve women's equality.

Delegates from 189 states were still working night and day to reach agreement on other issues, including discrimination against lesbians, inheritance rights for girls, and funding for programs emerging from the meeting.

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Rock \$5

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Monopoly celebrates 60 years in the game

Parker Bros. may have passed go 60 years ago and collected much more than \$200, but they misspelled Marvin Gardens on the gameboard.

Parker Bros. in 1935. He misspelled Marvin Gardens, a neighborhood in nearby Margate whose name he used for a street. The name combined the first three letters of Margate and Ventnor, another nearby town.

Players apparently never minded: The game has sold more than 160 million copies and is available now in 25 languages and 45 countries.

Neither did the residents of Marvin Gardens.

"It doesn't bother us a bit," Bernie McCabe, 66, said at a ceremony Monday marking the game's 60th anniversary.

The ceremony featured Uncle Pennybags — whose round-headed image appears on the game — Mayor James Whelan, the mayors of Ventnor and Margate and Miss Ameri-

ca Heather Whitestone. A full-color 25-by-25-foot replica of the board was laid out on the Boardwalk in front of Convention Hall. A 2-by-4 foot bronze sign will be placed in Marvin Gardens acknowledging the mistake.

To show there were no hard feelings, Ventnor Mayor Ted Bergman presented the Parker Bros. spokeswoman with a souvenir piece of the city's Boardwalk and invited her to visit.

"But we ask that you obey the laws," he said. "Because in Ventnor, we don't accept 'Get Out of Jail Free' cards."

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP) — Forget about passing "Go." Apparently, the makers of Monopoly never passed spelling.

"It [the misspelling] doesn't bother us a bit."

— Bernie McCabe Marvin Gardens resident

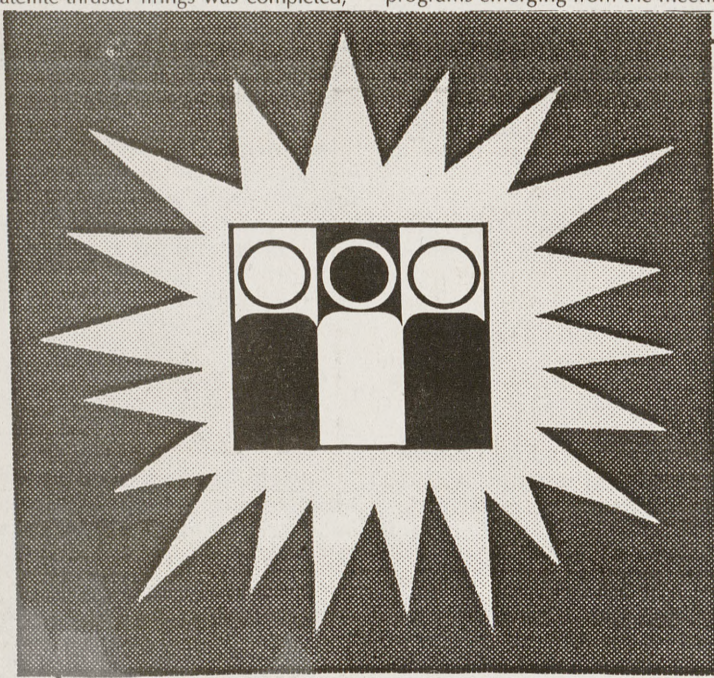
A 60-year-old error in the spelling of Marvin Gardens was acknowledged Monday by the makers of the world-famous board game.

Still, "Marvin Gardens" won't be corrected because it would cost too much, said Carol Steinkrauss, a spokeswoman for Parker Bros.

"That would be extreme. In the grand scheme of things, it doesn't mean all that much," she said.

Charles Darrow developed the board game on an oil cloth in his kitchen, using Atlantic City-area landmarks. He sold the game to

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