

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Spencer settles with the Express

LONDON (AP) — Earl Spencer accepted an undisclosed settlement Wednesday from a newspaper that questioned the handling of money raised by a concert staged in honor of his sister, Princess Diana.



DIANA

Spencer had sued the Express on Sunday for libel over its Dec. 16 story. His attorney, Simon Ekins, said the story "gave rise to the inference" that the earl had control over the concert proceeds and had used some of the money to defray the high costs of running his country estate. In fact, Ekins said, the June 28 concert at the estate was organized by an independent company and Spencer had no control over the proceeds. The newspaper withdrew its allegations and apologized, blaming an editing error. The concert raised \$320,000 for the Diana, Princess of Wales, Memorial Fund.

Costner, friends open restaurant

COSTA MESA, Calif. (AP) — Kevin Costner and some famous pals are working on opening their second restaurant.



COSTNER

Costner, Robert Wagner and champion golfer Fred Couples attended the groundbreaking Tuesday for another Clubhouse restaurant, scheduled to open this fall. Costner, Wagner, Couples and old friend Jack Nicklaus are partners in the first Clubhouse, which opened in Chicago in 1997.

Connery makes Mann impressions

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Sean Connery made an impression at Mann's Chinese Theater.



CONNERY

Connery, accompanied by wife, Micheline, pressed his hands and feet into the famous concrete Tuesday. The actor was joined by Catherine Zeta Jones, his co-star in the movie "Entrapment." It opens April 30.

Reeve to deliver commencement

WILLIAMSTOWN, Mass. (AP) — Christopher Reeve will give this year's commencement address at Williams College.

The Superman star was paralyzed from the neck down in a 1995 riding accident and has become a spokesperson for the disabled and spinal cord research.

The college's 210th commencement will be June 6.

Reeve traces his theater career to 1968 when at age 15 he got a summer apprenticeship at the Williamstown Theater Festival. He has a home in Williamstown.

Graham honored by Gospel Hall of Fame

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — The Rev. Billy Graham will be inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame next week for his support of Christian music.



GRAHAM

He will be represented by singer George Beverly Shea at the ceremony April 21. A video acceptance speech by Graham will be shown.

WEEKEND PREVIEW

Thursday, April 15

• 7 p.m. - Occasional String Band is performing swing and folk music at Brazos Blue Ribbon Bakery.

• 8 p.m. - Steamroller and Streamline are performing at The Theatre.

• 9 p.m. - Seth Walker will be performing inside of The Cow Hop, while Linus and 24-7 will be playing outside.

• 9:30 p.m. - Bobby Hall and Ice Cold Blues Band are playing at Crooked Path.

• 9:30 p.m. - EMS is performing at Fitzwilly's.

Friday, April 16

• 7 p.m. - Occasional String Band is performing swing and folk mu-

sic at Bazos Blue Ribbon Bakery.

• 9 p.m. - Amy Atchley is performing folk at Sweet Eugene's.

• 9 p.m. - Cane Breaker is playing at The Cow Hop.

• 9:30 p.m. - Hazy Train is playing at Crooked Path Ale House.

• 10:30 p.m. - Pi Sigma Epsilon presents Sour Mash at Shadow Canyon.

Saturday, April 17

• 9 p.m. - Sweet Eugene's presents Mother's Monkey, an alternative band.

• 9 p.m. - Dagwood will be playing at The Cow Hop on the inside stage, while Squelch is performing outside.

• 9:30 p.m. - Voo-Doos is performing at Fitzwilly's.

Jones steps down from stand

PONTIAC, Mich. (AP) — Completing three days on the witness stand, talk show host Jenny Jones said Wednesday that a man who killed a fellow guest after a segment on gay crushes was an adult and made "an informed choice" to appear on the program.

Jones stepped down after 12 hours of testimony in the \$50 million lawsuit against her show.

Jones, who is not being sued, insisted that she and her show were not responsible for the 1995 shooting death of Scott Amedure, a gay man who had described his crush on fellow guest Jonathan Schmitz during a "Jenny Jones Show" taping.

Schmitz has said he is heterosexual and was humiliated.

Schmitz was convicted in 1996 of second-degree murder.

The conviction was overturned because of an error in jury selection, and his retrial is set for Aug. 19.

In the lawsuit against the show and its producer, Warner Bros., Amedure's family accuses "The Jenny Jones Show" of tricking a mentally troubled Schmitz into appearing on the program and leading him to believe his admirer was a woman.

Jones said, "I don't think we exploit people." Schmitz, she said, "was an adult."

He knew the person with the crush could be a man or a woman. He was given enough information to make an informed choice."

\$197 million Massachusetts jackpot claimed by Chilean immigrant

BRAINTREE, Mass. (AP) — In an instant, Maria Grasso went from baby sitter for a millionaire to millionaire baby sitter.

The 54-year-old Chilean immigrant came forward Wednesday to claim the \$197 million Big Game jackpot, the world's biggest lottery prize ever won by one person. She beat odds of 76 million-to-1.

"I couldn't believe it," she said. "I haven't had time to think clearly."

She decided to take the money in a lump sum of \$104 million — \$70.2 million after taxes — instead of in 26 annual installments.

The divorced mother of two said she is not sure what she will do with the money, but she mentioned her family and handicapped children as priorities.

Since finding out she won on April 6, her only major purchase was the navy blue suit she wore to the news conference at state lottery headquarters.

"I'm a very down-to-earth person," she said. Until she quit last week, Grasso worked for the family of Chris Gabrieli, a Boston venture capitalist who ran for Congress last year.

Since 1996, she has lived in the family's Beacon Hill townhouse and looked after Gabrieli's children. There are now four children, ages 1 to 11.

"She's the kind of person who deserves a good turn in life," said Gabrieli, who is worth some-

where between \$25 million and \$125 million himself, according to campaign records.

Grasso bought the winning ticket at a grocery store near baseball's Fenway Park while shopping for the family.

Grasso said she does not play the lottery regularly but did this time because the jackpot was so big.

"At first I couldn't believe that it could be. There are so many million chances."

— Maria Grasso
Big Game Jackpot Winner

She said she chose the winning numbers at random.

With the winning ticket beside her bed, she had difficulty sleeping the night she won.

"At first I couldn't believe that it could be," Grasso said. "There are so many million chances."

Grasso, one of six children, came to the United States in 1971, earned her high school equivalency diploma in 1976 and became a U.S. citizen

in 1984. She has worked as a teaching assistant for the mentally handicapped.

"This has been my priority, to work with children, special needs children," she said. "I think this will be a chance for me to keep helping."

She also will be able to help her family — both her two grown children and her relatives in Chile. "She fully deserves what has happened to her," a woman named Ana, who said she is Grasso's sister, told National Television in Chile. "She has worked hard all her life to help her family, especially our mother."

Grasso said she waited until Wednesday to come forward because she needed time to get a lawyer and clear her head.

During that time, rumors abounded that the winner was a Nigerian immigrant cab driver. After colleagues at the man's taxi company spread word the driver had won the jackpot, the man got so much attention that he had to hire a lawyer to deny he was the winner.

"I felt sorry for him," Grasso said. The nation's biggest jackpot was \$295 million, but that was split last July by 13 Ohio machinists who pooled their ticket purchases.

A 1997 lottery drawing in Spain — named El Gordo, or the Fat One — had a \$270 million purse, the richest in the world. But the money was split among many winners, and the biggest single prize was only \$2 million.

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