

No bragging rights

Denver television stations relive actions during coverage of Columbine incident

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — When the three executives responsible for what most Americans saw on TV in the horrifying hours after the Columbine High School massacre share their stories, what is most striking is what they leave out.

There is little boasting, no talk about who had the best camera angles, whose news helicopter was first on the scene or who was quickest to divulge the names of the two boys who killed 13 people and themselves this spring in Littleton, Colo.

Instead, they are more apt to talk about what didn't make the air. Or why a psychologist was secretly sent to speak to reporters. Or why three people who live to beat each other on stories actually met to plan coverage together when Columbine reopened.

The lessons that news directors of KCNC-TV, KMGH-TV and KUSA-TV in Denver offer today have more to do with sensitivity than speed in telling the story.

"For the most part, we sort of put the competitive situation be-

hind because we all wanted to see this come out the right way," Angie Kucharski of KCNC at a recent panel run by the Radio and Television News Directors Association in Charlotte, N.C. said.

Each of the stations covered the developing story live on April 20, and their reports were fed to the world via cable news stations and broadcast networks.

Two experts who went back and reviewed the coverage praised how the local stations handled it.

"I think they did a remarkably good job, considering the situation, considering the stress and the kind of pressure they were under with live television," said Alicia Shepard of American Journalism Review, who is devoting a chapter to Columbine in a journalism textbook she is writing.

"They were tremendously sensitive to the culture and the audience," she said.

Kucharski said it was important not to fill air time with speculation for fear of terrifying parents.

Lynch's latest effort explores new realm in filmmaking: G ratings

(AP) — The camera pans over the fields of a seemingly sleepy rural American Midwest populated only — or so it first appears — by scampering dogs.

Zooming in one particular house, it proceeds to introduce us to Dorothy (Jane Galloway Heitz), a rather lumpy woman with an eye patch who is waddling in sand outside with food. The woman suggests a true eccentricity at best — or more than that — at worst.

So far *Blue Velvet* has been the defining David Lynch film, the 1986 story that located the hell that lies beneath America.

The real shock of Lynch's lovely new film, *The Straight Story*, is how direct it is.

Virtually every other Lynch tale, from *Eraserhead* and *The Elephant Man* through to the overripe *Wild at Heart*, occupies a vaguely hallucinatory world where nothing is what it seems and human behavior is more often than not, well, horrific.

This time, he has entered the realm of the G-rated, where G could stand for gentle, in addition to the notable absence of two

Lynch mainstays — sex and violence.

Has the new movie been offered up in atonement? Whatever Lynch's reasons for making it, one fact is clear: This portrait of a 73-year-old man who has embarked upon a long journey is inspiring.

Not that Alvin is in any condition to drive a used John Deere mower 300 miles across state lines in order to visit his estranged elder brother, Lyle, who is suffering from a stroke.

Troubled with emphysema, his hips so bad he can barely stand, Alvin won't submit to medical tests, an operation or the use of a walker. Two canes mark his only concession to age.

"I'm not dead yet," he tells daughter Rose (Sissy Spacek), with whom he lives, before setting off on the five-week trek from Laurens, Iowa, to Mt. Zion, Wis.

Is Alvin's decision mad or gallant? A mixture, clearly, of both, though John Roach and Mary Sweeney's screenplay is too graceful to pass judgment on a character who exerts his own unexplained fascination.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Retired military pilot loses suit to Jimmy Page

WINDSOR, England (AP) — A decorated former military pilot met his match when he faced off in court against a neighbor, rock guitarist Jimmy Page.

Dudley Burnside, who is retired and lives on a \$26,500 military pension, said he may have to sell his home to pay Page more than \$40,000 in legal expenses as ordered by a judge last week.

Page, 54, a founding member of Led Zeppelin, had refused to remove some trees that Burnside claimed blocked out the light and caused cracks in cement on his property. *The Independent* reported yesterday. The trees have grown 33 feet high.

A court dismissed the former World War II and Korean War pilot's claim against Page and ordered him to pay Page's legal fees.

"I served in bomber command, whose 55,000 casualties are a reminder to the postwar generation, of which Page belongs, of the cost of the liberties they now enjoy," Burnside told *The Independent*.

"I would have hoped he would have thought of that for a moment before he refused our legitimate request to remove his trees."

Former SNL cast member lectures on finding success

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Garrett Morris, one of the founding cast members of "Saturday Night Live," says he found success in show business by imagining where he want-

ed to be in life. Morris told Dillard University students Saturday they should spend 20 minutes each day picturing themselves with perfect, 4.0 grade-point averages.

He said they will also need a passionate drive to succeed. "Imagery is no excuse for not working," Morris, a New Orleans native and 1958 Dillard graduate, said.

Morris accepted one of the school's "Excellence and Heritage" awards. Morris joined "Saturday Night Live" during the first season in 1975 and stayed until 1980.

Since then, he has acted on and off Broadway and appeared on television. "Saturday Night Live" is currently celebrating its 25th season on NBC.

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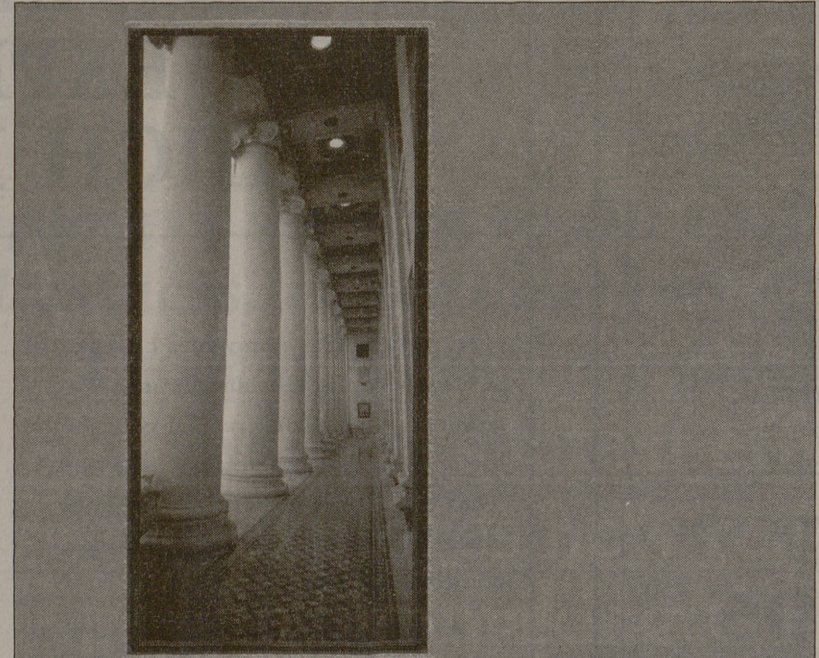
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