

Better Living

Wed. 04.14.10

'Ugly Betty' made facing controversy a fashion statement

By LAURA WIDES-MUNOZ
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

During its four-year run, ABC's "Ugly Betty" skewered the New York fashion world, nabbing celebrity cameos from the likes of Lindsay Lohan, Shakira and Isaac Mizrahi.

It turned America Ferrera, who played the plucky-but-style-challenged Betty Suarez, into a household name. And it landed a prestigious Peabody Award.

As the credits roll on the wacky dramedy's last episode tonight, Latinos, gay rights groups and fans are lamenting more than the loss of Betty's cringe-inducing outfits and the melodrama of the Meade family — owners of the show's fictional fashion magazine Mode.

UGLY BETTY
10 tonight,
ABC

The hourlong show was also among the rare network programs to tackle such controversial issues as gay teens, body image and illegal immigration.

The show contrasted Betty's

See **UGLY BETTY** Page F-5

America Ferrera's final turn as plucky "Ugly Betty."



COURTESY LIBERTY SCIENCE CENTER

Exercise equipment is just part of the interactive fun at "Diabetes: A Deeper Look."

Diabetes exhibit gives inside look, has hands-on feel

By JENNA MOONJIAN
STAFF WRITER

There are red, flashing lights — a loud, pulsing heart-beat. And no, you're not getting pulled over. This is the inside of "Diabetes: A Deeper Look," on display at Liberty Science Center in Jersey City.

Walking into the 2,500-square-foot replicated blood vessel is like taking a step right onto the Magic School Bus. The walls are lined with diabetes facts — how to prevent and manage the disease, information about sugar and insulin — as well as a match-up wheel for kids and adults to find their BMI.

WHAT: "Diabetes: A Deeper Look."
WHEN: Through May 16.
WHERE: Liberty Science Center, 222 Jersey City Blvd., Jersey City; 201-200-1000 or lsc.org.
HOW MUCH: \$15.75, seniors and children \$11.50.

an injection simulator; a walkway with rotating step pads representing the importance of staying balanced; and ...

See **DIABETES** Page F-6



STAFF PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH LARA

Ramsey designer transforms grounds into fire-and-water fantasylands

By SACHI FUJIMORI
STAFF WRITER

Man is naturally drawn to fire and water.

These are not the words of an evolutionary biologist but of Chris Cipriano, a Ramsey-based high-end landscape designer, who turns his clients' back yards into suburban utopias.

We're not just talking patio grills and lap pools here.

No, these homeowners want to swing open their back doors to flaming volcanoes, "Survivor"-style fire pits and whooshing waterfalls.

Cipriano's projects range from \$25,000 outdoor kitchens to multimillion-dollar renovations that transform properties into something like a Mediterranean resort.

"Every client requests some type of fire and water feature," Cipriano says. "There's something relaxing and captivating about it."

And while these outdoor projects are designed for the entire family to enjoy, Cipriano notices a certain trend: "In 80 percent of my projects the husband is the driving force," he says. "They want areas that are just for themselves."

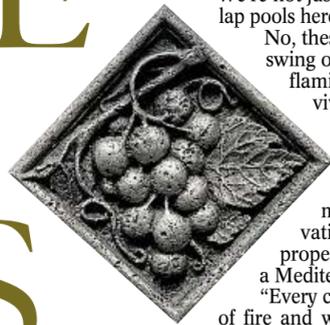
Strides made in the gender equality movement aside, certain immutable truths still hold: The back yard, generally speaking, remains the man's domain. Give him a fired-up grill, a pair of tongs and some juicy steaks, and you have one happy husband, father, bachelor — or all of the above.

One Mahwah homeowner, a Wall Street executive, had a vision for a natural-looking backyard pool, waterfall and spa like the ones he saw while traveling. "The pool we had was very ordinary," he says. "In the back of our property, we have a wildlife preserve; I wanted it to look like an extension of that."

While planning the project with Cipriano, this father of two teenagers had to negotiate with his wife to get his grown-up playground. "She *did* think I was going over the top," he says. "But I didn't care. It's better for us to enjoy it."

See **LANDSCAPER** Page F-3

THE WHOLE NINE YARDS



Top, Chris Cipriano built a clock tower with a fireplace at its base for an Allendale client; above, a refreshment bar done for a Saddle River homeowner.

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FAMILY

A man with deep pockets is both wealthy and wise

In addition to taking nifty pictures, that dandy little camera I bought myself in December really does (as advertised) fit comfortably in my pocket.

The bad news: I'm all out of pockets. I suppose this is what I deserve after whining last month about ice and snow and endless winter.

The temperature finally goes up and my pockets disappear like dying movie stars, two and three at a time.

No more winter coat! (Three pockets, gone with the wind.)

No more hoodie! (Another two pockets, out the window.)

No more long-sleeve "lumberjack" shirts. (And another two bite the dust.)

I've been praying for warm weather since the first week of November. But, in the last three weeks, seven much-needed pockets have up and left me.

This is how life is nowadays.

I call it Sandra Bullock Syndrome: You get something you really, really want and then you lose something else — to the back of your closet, that musty old bureau in your basement or some

biker chick with "Pray For Us Sinners" tattooed on her forehead.

So now what?



BILL ERVOLINO

When women get angry, they often say they wish they were men.

"It's a man's world!" one angry woman in particular is always telling me. "Guys can't even imagine all the problems, responsibilities and dismal, depressing junk that we women carry around

with us all day!"

Perhaps. But at least women have something to carry all their dismal, depressing junk in.

What do men have?

At this time of year, four pants pockets.

The end.

Sit-coms always get an easy laugh any time a woman has to empty the contents of her handbag, which always seems to be filled to the brim with brushes, tissues, eyelash curlers ...

You name it, it's in there. Handbags have always scared me, though, ever since I was 8 years old and saw Mary Poppins open hers and pull out a coat rack.

And any time I tried to peek inside one of my mother's handbags, I got screamed at like some character in a horror movie.

"Don't go in there!" she'd yell, as if I might inadvertently release the poltergeists she had imprisoned inside it.

Last week, just for fun, I emptied the contents of my pants pockets onto my dining room table: camera; cellphone; identification badge for work; reading glasses (in their case); \$43 in change; allergy pills (for pollen); lactose intolerance pills (for milk products); diarrhea pills (in case I forget to take the lactose intolerance pills); gum; lip balm; keys; handkerchief; and my slender, falling-apart-at-the-seams phone book.

I also had my wallet crammed into the back right pocket, my cash stuffed into the left front pocket, and my Magic Eight Ball, neatly sunk in the corner pocket.

I separate the wallet and cash in case some crook ever corners me in a dark alley and says, "Give me your wallet!"

Do crooks even do that anymore? If I were a crook, I'd just say "Give me your pants!"

Much as it pains me to say it, I still vividly recall the "All in the Family" episode (almost 40 years ago) in which Archie berated son-in-law Mike for carrying a "man purse" over his arm. Mike called it a "European carryall."

Handsome! Trendy! Practical! And yet ...

Seeing him hold it (even in the "unisex" era) was jarring, since most men have a natural aversion to carrying ANY bags.

Have you ever been to some social event where a woman has asked her date to take her handbag — even for a minute? The man immediately tenses up and holds it away from his body, between his thumb and his index finger, as if he just changed a diaper and is waiting for a garbage truck to pull up and take it off his hands.

Needless to say, "European carryalls" never caught on. They were eventually replaced by gym bags (manly, but a little too bulky) and back packs, which we had to strap over our shoulders. (With a back pack, I never felt as though I was carrying a handbag. I just felt like I was wearing a brassiere.)

The Nineties gave us fanny packs, but they made you look nerdy. Or, dangerous, since criminals often hid guns in them.

I have no guns, but for weeks, I've had plenty of other junk to deal with and no reasonable solutions.

Then, on Saturday, I ran into a friend who was wearing — shazam! — a pair of khaki cargo pants.

"Six pockets!" he told me, "and the two on your legs are really deep!"

He then proceeded to empty them, to show me how much they could hold. And I was really impressed.

"Wow!"

Especially when he pulled out the coat rack.

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COVER STORY

Landscaper

From Page F-1

One concession he made, however, was to plan to leave room in the back yard for his 12-year-old daughter, a gymnast, to have a large trampoline. But as the project grew over eight months, his wife asked, "Where is the trampoline going to go?"

Cipriano mounted moss-covered boulders around the pool and two large waterfalls that released 1,200 gallons of water per minute. Beside the waterfalls he installed a volcanic fire pit by feeding a gas line through a mound of red crushed

glass. When the fire is lit at night, the glass illuminates to resemble lava, creating a dramatic scene.

And now that the dad's project is completed (the trampoline ended up on the side of the house), the whole family enjoys it. "It's a place for relaxation with our kids and friends," says the owner, who asks to not be identified.

An Allendale client, a real estate broker, pined for a clock tower in his back yard, modeled after one he saw on a golf course in Ireland. Working from the client's description, Cipriano constructed one with a fireplace at its base. At night, low-voltage lighting illuminates its copper roof, stone detailing and mantel. Sitting by the fireplace, the owner lights a bunch of candles on the mantel and leans back into his lawn chair. "It's his spot to come out and relax," Cipriano says.

The client's cabana had some work done on it, too. Cipriano covered it in stones to match the outdoor fireplace and installed a full kitchen and a 70-inch waterproof flat-screen TV, good for watching sports from poolside.

Cipriano found a huge boulder in a Pennsylvania quarry that was perfect to create the pool's waterfall. "It was still sitting in the mountain; it had not fallen out. I asked them to cut it out and give it to me," he says. A 150-foot crane was required to get the massive rock installed. All the effort paid off, though. Not only does the waterfall spray 400 gallons a minute; when it's switched off, the owner's teenage daughter likes to use the rock as a sunbathing platform with her friends.

A Saddle River client, a father and husband, wanted a poolside refreshment station for when friends come over. The outdoor covered bar area has a bluestone countertop, along with a refrigerator, ice maker, bottle storage, two sinks and a spot for cutting and serving food. The backsplash behind the bar is grape-coin tile. Four speakers pipe in music.

The homeowner is also big on barbecuing. Cipriano renovated his 12-foot-long barbecue, extending the counter space and adding burners. That means the owner can boil corn on the cob without having to run back inside the kitchen.

"The outdoor kitchen is an extension of the house," Cipriano says. "It's all of the comforts of indoors, outdoors."

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THEATER

Some of rock's jukebox heroes

Leiber and Stoller songs provide energy, but 'Smokey Joe's Café' has history, too

By **JIM BECKERMAN**
STAFF WRITER

A jukebox musical is a show that is all song and no story. And "Smokey Joe's Café" is a jukebox musical. So much so that when the curtain rises, it reveals ... a jukebox.

But even a no-story show has a kind of story — if it's only the sum of all its songs.

What's great about the Paper Mill Playhouse production of "Smokey Joe's Café" — apart from the energy, sass and raise-the-roof voices — is that it tells the right story.

After that obligatory jukebox is disposed of, we meet the band — excellent musicians and a welcome sight on stage, rather than hidden in the pit. And then the show gets real.

A brick wall backdrop comes down, to remind us that this music belongs to a downscale, urban world. Four excellent harmony singers (Eric LaJuan Summers, E. Clayton Cornelious, Bernard Dotson and Dennis Stowe) — the show's stand-ins for The Coasters, the black R&B cutups for whom Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller wrote some of their best songs — are at a train station, suitcases in hand. "Keep on Rollin'," they sing. Also that they're "Searchin'."

OK, it's not — literally — a depiction of the birth of rock-and-roll. It's not literally the story of the black musicians who migrated to the big cities during and after World War II, creating sounds so irresistible that all the white kids — including two precocious teens named Leiber and Stoller — began imitating them.

But it does suggest that story, in an impressionistic way. And throughout the production, director Mark S. Hoebee keeps up a similar realistic undertone. The suburban kids who took up this music in the 1950s sometimes did it well — as Andrew Rannells, channeling Elvis, demonstrates in his slam-bang second-act rendition of "Jailhouse Rock." But this is mostly wrong-side-of-the-tracks music — and this production doesn't let us forget it.

In doing a revue of some of the most beautifully crafted songs of 1950s rock-and-roll, including "On Broadway," "Love Potion No. 9," "Treat Me Nice," "Fools Fall in Love," and "Stand By Me," all more or less from the

pens of Leiber and Stoller (they had a few outside collaborators), it would have been easy to do the cliché thing. Which is: malt shops, saddle shoes, poodle skirts, leather jackets and — bluntly — white teenagers, living in a "Happy Days" never-never land of hot rods and sock hops. That's how this 1995 show is sometimes staged.

But the Paper Mill production, which has a largely African-American cast, is coming from a different place.

When Maia Nkenge Wilson brings the first act to a barn-burning climax with "Saved," belting out the lyrics and banging on the tambourines of each of the backup singers in turn, she's burlesquing gospel, all right — but she's doing it with true gospel fervor.

And when Summers adds layers of impassioned riffing and vocalizing to his powerful rendition of "I (Who Have Nothing)," he might have stepped off the stage of the Apollo Theatre on a good night.

Hoebee's staging, along with the often inventive choreography by Denis Jones, rarely descends into the sometimes gritty reality of the lyrics — even during the comedy numbers like "D.W. Washburn." Many of Leiber and Stoller's songs are about loneliness and humiliation: "On Broadway," "Stand by Me," "Shoppin' For Clothes" (in which the punch line is that the would-be Beau Brummell is denied credit), "I (Who Have Nothing)." Whatever neighborhood we're in here, it's not Richie Cunningham's.

There are a few mistakes, mostly minor. It's too bad that "There Goes My Baby" had to be turned into a joke; worse that the joke isn't funny. And a couple of the songs, including "Young Blood" and "Ruby Baby," are done at the wrong speed — a peppy Broadway 65 mph, rather than R&B's more relaxed 45 to 50.

But on the whole, this is a joyous rock-and-roll show — the more so for capturing some of the pain beneath the party.

See Sunday's *Better Living* section for Jim Beckerman's interview with Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller.

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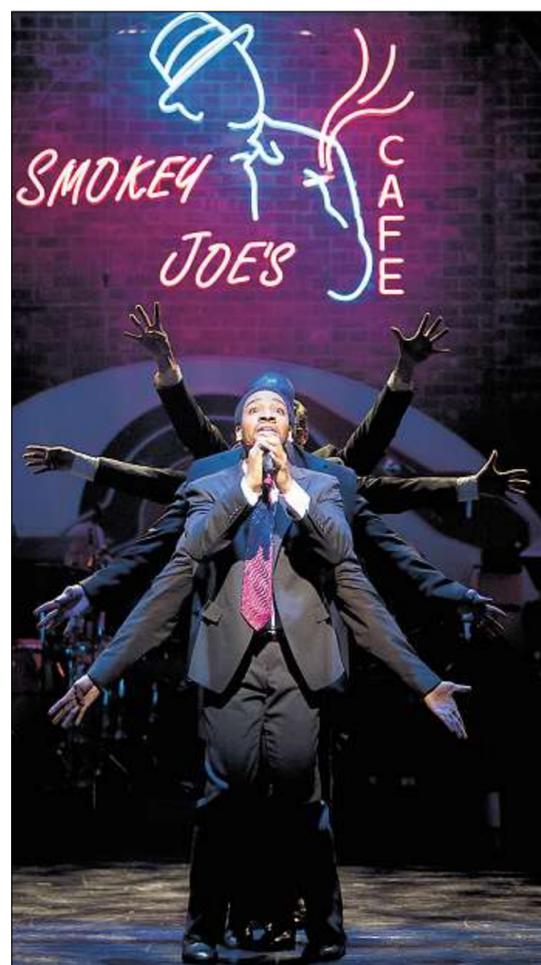
REVIEW

SMOKEY JOE'S CAFÉ

Songs by Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, choreographed by Denis Jones, directed by Mark S. Hoebee. At the Paper Mill Playhouse, Brookside Drive, Millburn, through May 2.

With Felicia Finley, Bernard Dotson, Jackie Burns, E. Clayton Cornelious, Carly Hughes, Andrew Rannells, Eric LaJuan Summers, Dennis Stowe and Maia Nkenge Wilson.

7:30 p.m. Wednesday; 1:30 and 7:30 p.m. Thursday; 8 p.m. Friday; 1:30 and 8 p.m. Saturday; 1:30 and 7 p.m. Sunday. Tickets: \$25 to \$92. 973 376-4343 or papermill.org.



PHOTOS BY T CHARLES ERICKSON

The Paper Mill Playhouse staging of "Smokey Joe's Café" dumps the malt shop cliché in favor of a look at the African-American influence on 1950s rock-and-roll.



ADVICE

Live-in boyfriend uses daughter as excuse to avoid marriage

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend and I have been together for a number of years, and were close friends before dating. We have lived together for 10 months now and pretty much act like a married couple. I feel I am ready to become engaged.

He, on the other hand, feels we should wait until his 16-year-old daughter, "Lacy," moves out — either back with her mother or on her own. He doesn't feel it's "right" for us to marry before then.

We are both adults, and while I don't want to disregard Lacy's feelings, I think this is something WE should decide. We

have told her many times that our relationship doesn't mean Daddy loves her any less.

Something in me is beginning to think he's just making excuses and he won't "buy the cow" as long as he's getting the milk for free. I feel like I am ...

— **Floating in Limbo in Delaware**

DEAR IN LIMBO: You and your boyfriend need to have a frank talk, because it appears you thought moving in with him would bring you a firm commitment and he appears to be happy with the status quo. If you haven't already done so, tell him exactly what you have told me, because what you have written makes perfect sense. And if he's unwilling to budge, then it's time for you to "moo-ve" out.

DEAR ABBY: I recently attended a fu-

neral of someone close. It was a sad time for me, but it sparked an idea that may bring comfort to my family and friends when it's my time to go.

Abby, would it be out of line to make a goodbye video of myself? It would include fond memories that would put a smile on someone's face and allow my family and friends to remember me as I was alive, not as I lay in a coffin. Instead of a plastic bookmark, I could leave a DVD of my final goodbyes.

I have a health problem and don't know how long I have, so I'd like to know what you and your readers think about my idea. I trust your advice, Abby, so please let me know.

— **Final Farewell, Upstate New York**
DEAR FAREWELL: As long as your video is done tastefully, I see no reason

you shouldn't do it. We live in an age when video and YouTube are a part of our everyday lives. I'm sure your memento will be treasured by the loved ones you leave behind.

DEAR ABBY: For Valentine's Day, I bought a dozen red roses and had them delivered to my girlfriend's workplace. On her way home that evening, she made a stop at the grocery store and encountered a distraught young man near tears because he couldn't afford to buy flowers for his girlfriend. She offered him money but he refused, so she gave him the roses I bought for her. (Abby, they had cost me more than \$82!)

The whole episode still has me upset. I know the roses were a gift and she had every right to do with them as she wished. But I think what she did was

thoughtless and insensitive and didn't take my feelings into consideration. She says I am narrow-minded because I don't see it from her perspective. What do you think?

— **Grinched in Iowa**

DEAR GRINCHED: I can see how, having spent as much as you did for the roses, you could be upset. I can also see how your kindhearted girlfriend might have had pity on the guy and acted on impulse. While the roses were hers, she could have accomplished the same thing by giving him one or two of the roses to give to his girlfriend. However, if you care about this relationship, you'll stop brooding and drop the matter.

Write Dear Abby at dearabby.com or PO Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



DEAR ABBY