

# 1355 VALENCIA APARTMENT 6 NEWSLETTER

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## Things Are Too Far Away

Productivity at historic low, whining levels off

Objects in the apartment tend to be too far away, residents have concluded. This finding was announced after weeks of comprehensive field work and painstaking analysis.

"It's a funny thing," said apartment denizen Chris Crane. "Once something finds itself inside the apartment, more often than not, it'll end up somewhere that's not at all near where you want it to be when you need it."

Crane and co-resident Eugene Park first noticed the phenomenon while watching television in the living room of the apartment. The two were playing a program recorded on a TiVo digital video recorder, which allows viewers to fast-forward through commercials. They discovered that every time it was time to skip a block of advertisements, the TiVo remote control was not within arm's distance.

"I couldn't believe it," said Park. "Anytime one of us would use the remote, we'd set it down close by on the coffee table or on an armrest. But then five minutes later, boom: neither of us would be able to reach the remote. I mean,

without fail, one of us would have to sit up and lean forward to get it."

"One time I had to go all the way to the kitchen to get the remote," Crane added with a look of restrained indignation. Evidently someone had brought the remote control into the kitchen while in search of a quesadilla or Limonata and had forgotten to carry it back.

"That was the worst," said Crane. "Worst Tuesday ever."

After the initial revelation about the remote control, the roommates recognized that the spatial relationships between them and other objects in the abode fit a certain pattern. Before long they acknowledged that there appeared to be a generally distal character to all the items in the apartment.

On one occasion, Park was reclining on the living room sofa when his mobile phone started to ring. When he tried to answer the phone, Park realized that it was not in the front pocket



**FAR TOO REMOTE:** Resident Chris Crane finds that the remote control, like many other things in the apartment, is too far away.

of his pants, as he had originally thought, but was instead sitting on the coffee table a vexing four inches beyond his grasp.

"Needless to say, the call went to voicemail," said Park.

In an effort to validate their initial findings and to obtain an outside perspective, Crane and Park consulted with their longtime friend Eric Saxon.

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What does that light switch next to the fireplace do? The answer just may surprise you.

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Find out which movies are worth viewing, and which are not, on cable and DVD.

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Am I haute or not? A revealing look at current apartment couture.

#### Also Inside:

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## Residents Start Clubs, Join Them

At 1355 Valencia Apartment 6, there's often a faint odor of bacon and scrambled eggs in the air these days.

"The Wednesday Bacon Scramboree has been going strong for some time at 1355, and I should know," said Eugene Park proudly over the noisy stove. "I started it!"

Park, apartment resident and co-founder of the Cured Meats Association, understands that people are more health-conscious these days, but he founded the CMA to help promote a

positive image of bacon, sausage, and salami around the apartment.

Co-tenant Chris Crane also is active in an organization he co-founded, *The News Hour with Jim Lehrer* Fan Club, whose origin lies in a popular PBS news program. The club members do their best to convene every weekday in the living room as soon after the newscast has been recorded on TiVo as possible.

"We're devout recorders of *The News Hour*," admitted Crane. "But we're not devout viewers."

It seems that all it takes to start a club in the apartment is a passing interest in an activity—any activity—and a will to start a tradition *(continued on page 4)*



Dustin Perkins

**LEHRER IN THE LAIR:** Co-presidents and co-founders of *The News Hour with Jim Lehrer* Fan Club Chris Crane and Eugene Park catch a weekday broadcast of the PBS news show with contained enthusiasm.

# Light-Switch Mystery Solved

The controversy over a seemingly useless light switch has finally been resolved after months of dispute and conjecture.

Residents and visitors alike have long debated whether the light switch served some purpose, electrical or otherwise, or whether the switch was the unintended by-product of a drunken contractor's job gone awry.

"In the beginning I thought it had to have been put there for a reason," said former resident Brian Kumnick, who had initially believed that the switch controlled the gas fireplace situated immediately to its left. "But I later concluded that there's no point to it. It's entirely meaningless."

Others found the idea of a pointless light switch too unsettling to accept. Max Heilbron, a regular visitor to the apartment, insisted that the light switch must have been designed and created by an intelligent being with an explicit purpose in mind.

"There ain't no way a light switch just comes along by some kind of funny accident," said Heilbron with an uncharacteristic Southern drawl. "Folks, that's just a fancy new flavor for your granpappy's poppycock."

The light switch, located in the living room on the western end of the northern wall, had been flipped to the *on*—as well as *off*—position many times with no discernible change in the apartment whatsoever.



**SEEING THE LIGHT:** Apartment residents Chris Crane (top) and Eugene Park solve the mystery of the light switch.

Chris Crane realized that the mystery switch operated an outdoor light located above the door to the fire escape. He made the discovery

"It was as though the light switch defied the conventional rules regarding cause and effect."

"It was as though the light switch defied the conventional rules regarding cause and effect," said Eugene Park, a current resident of the apartment. "Is this some sort of quantum light switch? I would frequently ask myself and, less frequently, ask others. 'Does it turn on a bizarro lamp in some parallel bizarro universe where a bizarro version of me is enjoying the notably unbizarro illumination it provides?'"

Speculation on the nature and function of the light switch ended when fellow resident

late one night when eating a quesadilla on the fire escape while simultaneously looking up.

Crane, 26, remained modest about his find. "It was just a lucky accident," said Crane. "Like with penicillin. This is a lot like discovering penicillin."

Both Crane and Park had been out on the fire escape countless times before one of them noticed the outdoor light.

"It took us fifteen months," Crane beamed, "but we can finally put this mystery out to stud."

1355 VALENCIA APARTMENT 6 NEWSLETTER

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## Overheard in the Apartment

LARA FLYNN BOYLE IS A BONY PIECE OF SHIT

**Eugene:** Lara Flynn Boyle has turned into kind of a bony piece of shit.

**Chris:** (*surprised*) I can't imagine you saying "fat piece of shit."

**Eugene:** She's the thin equivalent of a fat piece of shit.

**Chris:** What?

**Eugene:** You don't agree?

**Chris:** I don't even know how to agree with that.

# Apartment News Briefs

## ERIC SAXON PAYS A VISIT

Eric Saxon came over. He and Chris Crane watched *Animal Face-Off*, *The Office* Christmas special and other things. Saxon put on his new shoes, which, by all indications, will take a long time to break in. Santos Marroquin came over. They all watched a poker tournament from 1993. Saxon tried his best to drink all the beers in the refrigerator. It was fun. He took BART to the airport.

## BETTER POKER THROUGH PROP COMEDY

At a tense moment during the weekly poker game, Eugene Park lightened the mood by placing his spectacles on a bottle of Corona, thereby giving life to the World's Smartest Beer.

## CONSENSUS: DEADWOOD NO GOOD

Roommates Chris Crane and Eugene Park finally admitted to each other that neither

enjoys the HBO show *Deadwood*. After more than a year of dedicated viewing, the two agreed to remove the Season Pass for the show from the TiVo. The decision has freed up an hour of their Sunday evenings that they now use to watch syndicated *Seinfeld* reruns.

## CRISIS OF DORITOS

A sudden craving for Nacho Cheesier Doritos on a damp Easter afternoon drove the apartment inhabitants out of their home and toward the corner market where they met with nothing but Cool Ranch-flavored disappointment. Fortunately the liquor store one block further had a 13oz. package of the corn tortilla chips in the flavor they so desperately sought.

## BRITA FILTER FINE FOR NOW

After performing arithmetic incorrectly in his head, Eugene Park erroneously believed that the filter in the Brita water purifier needed to be replaced. A brief period of confusion followed, but Park soon recognized his mistake and realized that it had only been two months since he had last changed the filter.

## MALAPROPOS OF EVERYTHING

Where does one draw the line between amicably vulgar guy talk and veiled homoeroticism? This is a question every-

**HOW DO YOU DO?** The World's Smartest Beer enjoyed the playful banter he observed at the poker table. "The exchange of witticisms in the midst of friendly competition provides a method, acceptable to the civilized mind, by which man can sate his primordial need to spar with his peers without inflicting any lasting damage," said the World's Smartest Beer.

one failed to ask himself last week during *the most inappropriate poker night ever*.

## IMITATION AS INTIMIDATION

Eugene Park recently announced that he has been working on an impression of frequent visitor and friend to the apartment Trevor Koski that he has yet to unveil. Koski has since expressed discomfort with the constant threat of impersonation under which he must now live.

## PHD IN CAROUSING

Davis Lee, a nuclear scientist with a doctorate in physics, paid an unscheduled visit to the apartment after being bumped from a connecting flight at SFO for excessive drunkenness. Somehow the night ended with a barely averted street brawl with a pack of ne'er-do-wells—Lee suffered a punch to the face—and a series of late-night acts of drunk dialing to friends in much later time zones. It was a night of bad calls.

## PROP COMEDY PROMPTS PROPORTIONATE RESPONSE

Shortly after the appearance of the now-infamous World's Smartest Beer, general disgruntlement and drunken churlishness combined to make a volatile cocktail of anti-prop-comedy (APC) sentiment at the poker table. After simmering momentarily, that cocktail exploded in hilarious fashion when poker player and nearby neighbor Gideon Lewis-Kraus put an unwieldy green metal lime-squeezer atop the same bottle of Corona and announced that he had created "the World's Dumbest Beer." Other poker players were almost injured as APC shrapnel tore through their tickle-bones and nearly severed their funny-spines.

*Gideon Lewis-Kraus and Eric Saxon contributed to this piece.*



## CONTRIBUTORS THIS ISSUE



Best known for his lively portrayal of Rum Tum Tugger in *Dudes* (an all-nude version of *Cats* performed without the aid of makeup), contributing editor **CHRIS CRANE** is author of several works of fiction and nonfiction. His most recent effort, *The Case of the Missing Vampire*, is a challenging novel which compels the reader to choose his or her own adventure.



"It's funny that there's no good word for it," says contributing editor **EUGENE PARK**, whose work has appeared in *Semio Tagger API Manual* and *TjX Web I/O Processor: Installation and Administration Guide*. "When you've been with someone a long time and it's not about love or sex or friendship—what do you call that? Is that *disdain*?"



The art of identifying and segregating raves and faves has fascinated cultural columnist **CHADD** for most of his career. Author of the upcoming book *Ravin' the Fave: Fave-Ravers in a Rave-to-Fave Society*, Chadd sees a future in which technology picks raves and faves for us. "Auto-raving. Cyber-faving. Computers."

## Clubs

(continued from page 1)

that will likely end the following week when the fun of a week earlier is just a memory.

The residents have founded and then joined over thirty-two clubs in recent months, including the Classic Movie Club and the Hip Rectangular Eyeglasses Collective. Most of the clubs established by the residents have a widespread appeal capable of wooing both Crane and Park into their folds.

“Eugene and I have co-founded a number of apartment organizations,” said Crane. “And I’m proud to say, as co-president of many of those groups, that more than half of them boast memberships that include one hundred percent of the inhabitants of 1355 Valencia Apartment 6.”

While it may seem that there is a club for every interest, some in the apartment complain that certain desirable groups have gone unformed. Notably there is no club to meet to talk about basic things such as who is supposed to take out the trash.

“We do have an organization in charge of cleaning the house in general,” said Crane. “But Eugene’s the only member. *Chump.*” ■

*Eric Saxon contributed to this article.*

## Too Far Away

(continued from page 1)

It did not take long for Saxon to corroborate Crane and Park’s results.

Immediately after arriving at the residence with a case of Tecate, Saxon found that none of the twenty-four beers were ever sufficiently close to him throughout his stay at the apartment unless someone other than himself went to the refrigerator and delivered one to him.

“Too far away indeed,” said Saxon. “There’s something about this place that seems to distend space itself.”

Once fully aware of the idiosyncratic properties their apartment possessed, the residents resolved to curb the frequent whining that each employed to coax the other into fetching far-off things for him. In addition, the two



# Everyone’s Favorite Fave-Raver Chadd Rates and Ranks the Newest Favorites

By Chadd

Hello again, raver-faves! It’s that time again. Ha ha, you know how I rave. Where was I? Oh yeah, I was just about to do you all a favor and hook you up with a dose of that rave/fave flavor! That’s right, it’s time for me to let you shitheads [OMG] know what’s ravin’ and favin’ in this part of the 94110!



Here are some items sent in by all y’all readerz, randomly selected and analyzed for rave-osity and fave-itude...

### 1. RAVE OR FAVE: CENSORSHIP

What? You know it’s all about freedom of speech in the thirteen fizzy-fizz! To all you government potato-partners [?] out there who want to silence the faves by ravin’ on the favemeister, I say, “Rave My Lips: No Ravin’ My Faves!” [NOT SURE WHAT THIS MEANS]

### 2. RAVE OR FAVE: BOSSES

Bosses? How am I supposed to rave my faves with topics like this? C’mon, kids: more favin’ the faves, less ravin’ your raves [PLEASE CLARIFY]. You know what I think of bosses, dogg: no faves no raves! [WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THIS CHADD] Chris and Eugene can rave my faves! [OK SEE US IN OUR OFFICE CHADD]

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** Due to the fact that Chadd has failed once again to produce a “Raves and Faves” feature in which the point of the feature is at all discernible, this column has been suspended indefinitely.

As for Chadd, his behavior of late has been entirely unacceptable. Over the past few weeks, Chadd has consistently and repeatedly demonstrated his contempt for any and all authority. On numerous occasions he has even gone so far as to invite us and others to “rave his faves,” often accompanying this suggestion with an outthrust pelvis and a lewd joggling designed to eliminate any confusion regarding the identity of the “faves” in question.

Things really came to a head last week when he made photocopies of his so-called faves and passed them out to the entire staff. Before doing so, he wrote the word “Rave” on one fave and “These” on the other. It really became a problematic work environment, and the decision to let Chadd go was the only sensible thing to do.

All of us here at 1355 Valencia Apartment 6 would just like to put this behind us, and forget about Chadd and his awful, hairy faves.

decided to utilize their newfound insight to shed light on some past experiences that they may have misinterpreted.

Crane recalled various incidents in which he developed an urge to urinate while watching TV but resisted the impulse because he perceived the distance to the bathroom to be “disproportionate to the urgency of the situation” and therefore “not worth trekking over.”

“I used to think that maybe I was being a tad lazy,” said Crane. “But now I know better.”

Park also waxed stoic after reflecting on his tenancy in the apartment.

“Like most people my age, I’ve got hopes and aspirations for my life, both personal and professional,” said Park. “But since I’ve moved into this apartment, my dreams seem farther away than ever. I guess now I know why.” ■

**CAN YOU HAND ME THAT?** Residents and guests of the apartment notice that mobile phones and cans of Tecate are among the items that can be out of reach at times.

# Chris Crane's Film Corner

By Eugene Park

## TAKING LIVES

In this Hollywood thriller, Angelina Jolie is an FBI profiler on loan to the Montreal police department who is assigned to track down a serial killer. I could tell Crane had lost interest in the movie when he got up to make a quesadilla for the second time. He left the room for a good twenty minutes once Kiefer Sutherland appeared on screen, and at that point I was inclined to think that Crane would give *Taking Lives* no more than half a Crane.



## PLAYING BY HEART

A to-die-for cast that includes Sean Connery, Gena Rowlands, Gillian Anderson, Jon Stewart, Angelina Jolie, Ryan Phillippe, Jay Mohr, Ellen Burstyn, Dennis Quaid, and Madeleine Stowe could not save this small independent film from Crane's prickly invectives. When the credits started to roll, Crane wrested the TiVo remote from my hand with an exasperated grimace and a complete absence of words. Even so, by my estimation, his demeanor suggested disappointment rather than bona fide distaste.



## THE THIRD MAN

Although more than half a century has passed since the release of Carol Reed's cinematic masterpiece, *The Third Man* stands as a model of suspense and a touchstone for contemporary filmmakers. Set and filmed in a battered post-war Vienna, it features impeccable performances by Joseph Cotten and Orson Welles as well as a haunting zither score courtesy of Anton Karas.

Crane was three sheets to the wind by the time we started the DVD, but I was able to infer from his still expression and his lack of slumber that he enjoyed the subtle use of oblique camera angles and Welles's renowned cuckoo-clock speech. The annoyed glances he gave in response to my nearly incessant drunken commentary led me to conclude that the movie had successfully captured his full interest and that he would likely bestow *The Third Man* with four Cranes, the highest possible rating I am allowed to imagine that he would give to a movie.



## LAST 15 MINUTES OF THE STUPIDS

Crane was doing some late-night channel-surfing and caught the tail end of this Tom Arnold vehicle on Encore Wam. To my dismay, I could hear his misplaced chuckles from the next room.



## THE CITY OF LOST CHILDREN

Take the visionary French directors behind the fiercely original and otherworldly *Delicatessen*, add the music of Angelo Badalamenti and the costume design of Jean-Paul Gaultier, and what you get is a film nothing short of *Cranetastic*. No quesadilla or pee breaks during this sensory tour de force.



## THE JIMMY SHOW

Written by, directed by, and starring Frank Whaley, *The Jimmy Show* chronicles the gradual unraveling of a dimwitted grocery clerk's already threadbare life.

The wholly unlikeable title character, Jimmy O'Brien, fancies himself a stand-up comic, religiously participating in the weekly open-mic night at a local comedy club. Sadly his routine amounts to little more than a bitter exercise in self-flagellation and a litany of complaints against those closest to him born out of an undue sense of entitlement. The story focuses on Jimmy's activities outside the comedy club, but the narrative is punctuated by brief glimpses of Jimmy performing his so-called stand-up material on stage—a conceit that avails the audience with regular installments of his shallow commentary on the ever-worsening events in his life. Thus the movie *in toto* consists of scenes in which we see Jimmy's life falling apart and scenes in which we see Jimmy *talk* about his life falling apart presented together in alternating fashion. It is a cinematic parfait of the dismal and the awful.

When we finished watching this movie, Crane immediately deleted it from the TiVo in disgust, and the act was so satisfying that he expressed a desire to record the movie again just so he could delete it again.

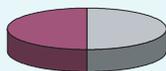
This is the movie that inspired Crane to pose an official challenge to see which of us could record the worst movie. Crane remains the reigning champion.

## No Cranes

*Chris Crane is a discerning film aficionado, and Eugene Park is a careful observer of human behavior. The reviews featured here are based on Eugene's speculation on Chris's opinions and may or may not accurately represent Chris's true tastes and preferences.*

## Fun Food Facts

50% of residents eat pasta for breakfast



residents

50% of residents eat pork chops 50% of the time



residents

time

Source: Gallup



## Overheard in the Apartment

ROBERT TOWNSEND IS BASICALLY A WHITE GUY

**Eugene:** (*watching the 1991 HBO special Robert Townsend & His Partners in Crime*) Early hip-hop is so boring. It's just a beat and repetitive lyrics—

**Chris:** (*laughs*) Yeah.

**Eugene:** —with some black guy who thinks he's a white guy.

**Chris:** What?

**Eugene:** Robert Townsend is basically a white guy.

**Chris:** You should write that down.

**Eugene:** Really?

**Chris:** You should write it down so you can read what you're saying.

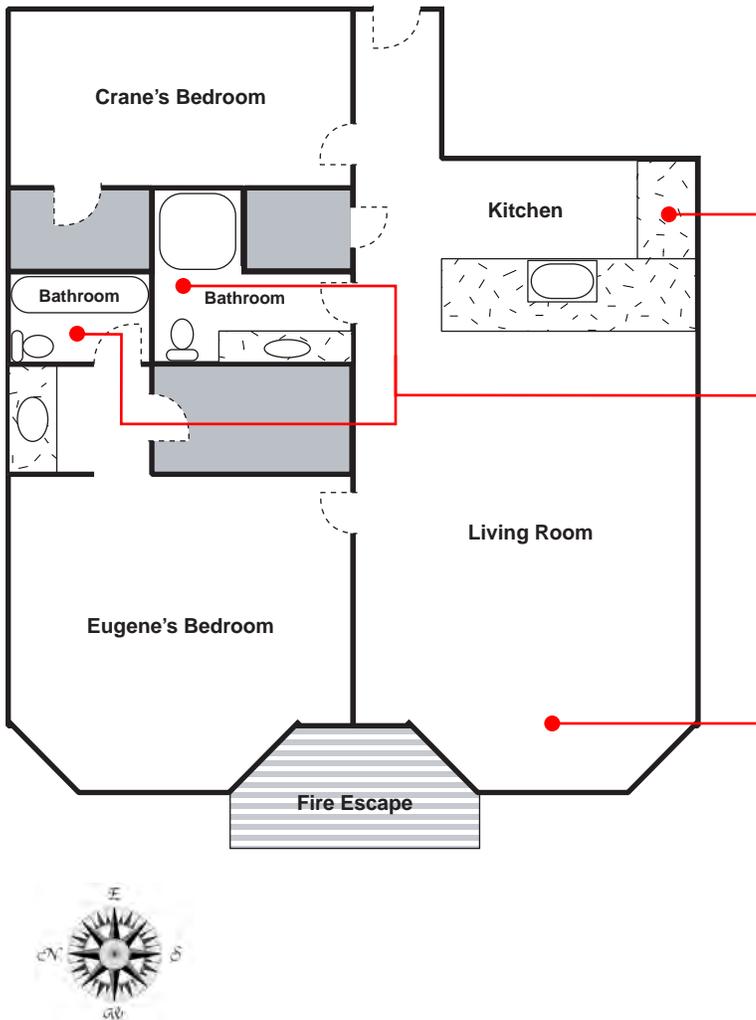
# Guide to 1355 Valencia Apartment 6

What to see and do when visiting the apartment

Head over to 1355 Valencia Apartment 6 on an autumn eve and you'll find a comforting setting: a curvaceous off-white sofa bed with a matching one-and-a-half chair, a motley display of fruits ripening on the kitchen shelf, and an expanse of brazenly austere walls that demonstrate once again that when it comes to home decor, less is indubitably more. Skylights and bay windows brighten the top-floor apartment well into the early night and keep the indoor climate cozy as an evening chill sets in outside.

A leisurely stroll through the dwelling reveals a diverse locale comprising distinct, independent pockets, each one making its own signature contribution to the abode. The kitchen district lays claim to some of the best food offerings in the entire residence, while the living room is the frenetic center of apartment nightlife. Those looking for some regional color may want to explore the two bathrooms, known to locals as Bathroomtown and Little Bathroom, which provide a refreshing change of pace with art, food, and activities not found in the apartment's cultural mainstream.

The apartment has so much to offer, it seems visitors can't help but spend days roaming its quarters. Of course, many guests don't have time to explore the premises for hours on end. Fortunately this guide provides all the information the first-time visitor needs to make a rich and rewarding trip to 1355 Valencia Apartment 6.



## KITCHEN DISTRICT

Gourmands delight in the fresh face of food emerging from this region of the apartment. Occupying the southeastern corner of the kitchen district, the refrigerator, cupboard, and oven form a small contiguous area appropriately dubbed the "culinary cul-de-sac" that serves as a convenient place to find anything from a light snack to a hearty three-course meal. Fettuccine alfredo and grilled pork chops with a balsamic vinegar reduction are house specialties, but the adventurous epicure may want to explore the less-traveled terrain on the gastronomic landscape by trying some meatless chicken fingers covered in a mayonnaise-tapatío mixture or perhaps instead the no less palatable Cheez Whiz sandwich, or "cheez sammich," which has met with some acclaim.



## CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Visitors concerned that the apartment is "too white" or "too Korean" can find respite in Bathroomtown and Little Bathroom. While some complain that these areas seem cramped and smell of urine, they boast colorful murals and a particular character not found elsewhere. The regional cuisine is reason enough to visit; you haven't truly had a corn dog until you've had it Bathroom-style.



## THE LOUNGING CHRIS CRANE

Come to the living room in the morning, early afternoon, late afternoon, evening, or night, and you will see a rare spectacle: the Lounging Chris Crane.

## This Shirt Again?

What goes around comes around in the world of fashion



Like the stock market, fashion is cyclical. A desirable asset now may endure a bearish period later, possibly one that comes on the heels of a rather sudden "correction" thrusting it abruptly out of popular favor. But before you forsake your lot of has-beens for their *au courant* counterparts, remember this simple truism: today's passé is tomorrow's retro vogue.



With this principle in mind, fashion iconoclast **Chris Crane** regularly challenges received wisdom regarding sartorial term limits. Every morning, rather than browse through his closet of as-yet-unworn garments, Crane looks to the pile of clothing on the floor for his day's attire. From there he routinely retrieves what has become his second skin: a "Rats Off to Ya!" T-shirt depicting a hand-drawn anthropomorphic rat cordially doffing his hat to the observer.



"What works on Tuesday will work on Wednesday," said Crane. "Who's to say what shirt should be on whom on what days? Well, I do. On me. Any which day."

Like a Warhol with images or a Moby with hypnotic down-tempo beats, Crane employs repetition liberally but not without scrupulous calculation. "Every morning I'm like a mad Danish prince," Crane laughed. "Hesitation. Deliberation. It's a whole process."



The process in question involves a rigorous smell-check of the ROTY shirt and a forecast of the people he may interact with later in the day. Treatment with deodorant spray is an optional step, one that can boost the shirt's chances of passing the odor test. The shirt is examined for egregious stains; inconspicuous blemishes are scrubbed lightly with a touch of saliva and a fingernail.

Ultimately the step most critical to the procedure is introspection. Is today a "Rats Off to Ya" sort of day? "Sometimes it's not," said Crane. "But usually, yeah—it is."

## ▶ Kitchen Couture

Who was that seen walking around the kitchen last month in a pair of plaid boxers? That was **Eugene Park** of Eugene's bedroom, located in the heart of the fashionable west side of the apartment.

Rarely has preparing a morning pot of coffee occasioned such a distinctive expression of simple chic. By combining modest elements to form a stylized ensemble, he takes underwear to ready-to-wear with an enviable air of nonchalance.



## ▼ On Eugene



Jockey classic boxers, \$17



Achewood "Good With Computers" T-Shirt, \$18



Barbasol shaving cream, \$1

## APARTMENT TIPS & TRICKS

### TIP #163

When transferring cubes from the ice tray to the ice bucket, try this time-saving technique: only empty half the tray so you don't have to refill it with water, and leave the rest for the next guy.



## Overheard in the Apartment Car

A MINIATURE BEAR COULD WALK AROUND LIKE A DUDE

- Chris:** *(riding in the passenger seat of Eugene's car)* If you could shrink down any animal and keep it as a pet, which animal would you choose?
- Eugene:** Hmm. What would you choose?
- Chris:** I would want an elephant.
- Eugene:** *What?!*
- Chris:** You could make it little trees to knock over...
- Eugene:** Why wouldn't you choose a bear?
- Chris:** Why a bear?
- Eugene:** It could walk around like a dude. *(Makes arm movements as though he's marching.)*
- Chris:** What?
- Eugene:** It's so small and light, it could walk around on its hind legs the whole time *like a dude.* *(Continues to march with even more pronounced arm motions.)*
- Chris:** *(laughs)* Yeah.

Chris Crane & Eugene Park  
1355 VALENCIA APARTMENT 6 NEWSLETTER

