



A chance meeting at a stop light in Winnipeg reunited world travellers Patrice Ryder, second from left, and Hans Niederndorfer. With them are wives Francoise Ryder and Ursula Niederndorfer.

CP Laserphoto

Globe trotters reunited

WINNIPEG (CP) — A red traffic light led to a chance reunion Monday of two motorcyclists from different parts of the world who had not seen each other for 10 years.

Patrice Ryder, 35, who lives in Australia, and Hans Niederndorfer, 28, an Austrian who spent the last two years in Bermuda, became friends when they skied and worked

together in the Austrian Alps 10 years ago.

They were both passing through Winnipeg Monday while on round-the-world motorcycle trips with their wives when they stopped beside each other at the red light.

"It's just astonishing, you just can't believe the world is really so small," said Niederndorfer.

by MICHAEL GELB
WASHINGTON (Reuter) — Crouched on the car's front seat, teeth bared, "Rex" the German shepherd always rides along to provide security on his mistress's driving trips.

He is an intimidating sight. Yet he couldn't hurt a flea.

The once-ferocious Rex, it turns out, is just a shell of a dog — literally, the carcass of a beloved pet, stuffed by taxidermist Lee Burch for a Cleveland woman.

How is Rex doing on his ghostly watchdog mission?

"I've never got any complaints," said Burch, who explained in an interview that the dog's mistress had it preserved "so it could sit in the front seat of the car with its teeth snarling" whenever she had to venture into one of Cleveland's rougher districts.

While his afterlife vocation is somewhat unusual, the dog is part of what seems to be a growing new business in the United States — the preserving of pets for owners who just can't say goodbye.

Rex was "mounted," in the jargon of the trade, by the traditional method in which the animal is skinned and its hide stretched over a skeleton built by the taxidermist.

But many Americans are choosing to have their pets freeze-dried, an exotic and costly method of preservation pioneered in the food field.

Freeze-drying can cost up to \$2,000 for an average-sized cocker spaniel but is preferred by many who say it does a better job of capturing the distinctive look an owner recognizes in his pet.

In this technique, the animal is frozen solid and placed in a vacuum chamber for several months to remove all moisture that might later cause decomposition. Internal organs are removed and the beast is bathed in chemical preservatives, but the skin and skeletal structure are not tampered with.

This allows the animal's beloved facial expression to be preserved forever, devotees say, while the traditionally mounted specimen is essentially an artist's remodeling.

The old way satisfies hunters and fishermen who want a trophy of their conquest — but it is often not good enough for the adoring pet owner, taxidermists say.

"When a fellow goes deer hunting and kills a nice white-tailed deer, the taxidermist mounts it and it looks like a nice white-tailed

deer," says Terry Ehrlich, a taxidermist who offers the freeze-dry option in North Carolina.

"The hunter gets it back and he's tickled to death. But he's not intimately familiar with that deer."

But if a pet is skinned and mounted by conventional means, human error is introduced "and when the customer gets that back, he's not satisfied that it is Fido," Ehrlich said.

In freeze-drying "we don't change Fido's appearance. If he has a certain curl to his lip we can reproduce it exactly."

Lannie Ballard, a conventional taxidermist in Woodbridge, Va., refuses to mount pets because of arguments with dissatisfied owners who refused to take the results home.

"All you can do is put the basic natural characteristics back in," Ballard said. "You cannot put in the smiles they think they had and the attitudes and the personalities."

He also noted the process can take six months or more and, by then, grief may have passed and owners "sometimes change their minds and don't want this animal they've had for 10 or 12 years setting around the house kind of stagnant."

Most taxidermists

demand cash in advance for work on pets.

Some admit to mixed feelings about mounting pets and are content to bury their own. Ehrlich says even many pet owners find the idea of mounting morbid. Yet, he adds, there is growing public acceptance of it in the United States.

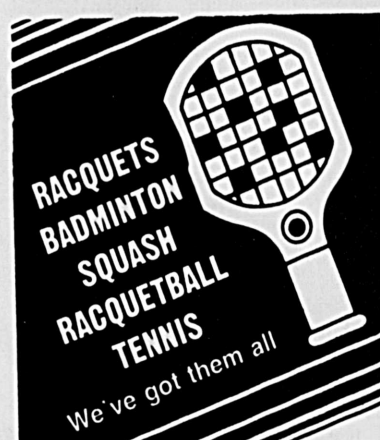
"People get attached to pets like members of their family. They go through the same bereavement as if they've lost a

child," he said. "Most of them are a little older and don't have children or have children who've grown up and gone away."

These people, he said, have usually endured the deaths of loved ones. They try to cheat death by preserving their pets.

"It's a little bit more acceptable to retain your pet than to retain Aunt Bessie," Ehrlich said. "Even though you might want to keep Aunt Bessie, it's not acceptable."

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Niagara daredevils fined

NIAGARA FALLS, Ont. (CP) — Although Steven Trotter has received international attention for his trip over Niagara Falls in a barrel, he was so broke Wednesday he couldn't immediately pay a \$500 fine for performing the illegal stunt.

Since conquering the falls Aug. 18, the 22-year-old resident of Barrington, R.I., has enjoyed instant fame and realized his dream of appearing on The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson.

But when he appeared in provincial court, Trotter — who pleaded guilty — was ordered by Justice of the Peace Jack Irwin to pay the fine plus \$3 in court costs within 24 hours or face a jail sentence.

Trotter said he only had \$270 U.S., but a representative of Starstruck Productions of Buffalo, N.Y. — the management company he recently signed with — eventually came forward with another \$100 U.S. and Trotter returned to the courthouse Wednesday afternoon to pay his fine.

"I'm broke," Trotter told reporters just after the sentencing. "There are promises of endorsements coming and I hope to have money soon."

"People think you make a killing (on this

Escorts rejected

BRANDON, Man. (CP) — Brandon city councillors don't want escort services in their city.

City council hurriedly passed an amendment Monday night to its licensing bylaw which virtually makes it impossible for anyone to establish an escort service.

Mayor Ken Burgess said the amendment was rushed to council after an application was received from the Pink Panther Escort Service to set up shop in this western Manitoba city.

The amendment,

modelled after Winnipeg's escort service bylaw, requires the chief of police to issue a certificate of good character for managers of escort services and the escorts themselves. It also requires that each escort service keep a list of clients' names and addresses and furnish it upon demand to any police officer or licence inspector.

type of stunt). You make nothing. But I didn't do this for the money. I did it for my portfolio."

His barrel — a massive contraption wrapped in inner tubes and equipped with air tanks and a two-way radio — remains in a police compound, to be picked up at his convenience. But Trotter was dogged Wednesday outside the courthouse by a tow truck operator demanding \$105 for hauling it from the river to the compound.

Trotter, who suffered a cut on his arm after becoming the seventh person to survive the 55-metre plunge over the falls, said he hopes to get a full-time job as a stuntman in California.

It was a busy day for daredevils at the courthouse, with John David Munday, 48, of Hamilton, also fined \$500 plus \$3 court in costs after pleading guilty to attempting to try the stunt on July 28.

Niagara Parks Police and Ontario Hydro officials thwarted Munday's attempt by closing the Hydro control gates above the falls to limit the waterflow over the cataract. The barrel was trapped in a Hydro basin, one kilometre upriver from the falls, and he was towed ashore by police and rivermen.

Munday also was placed on two years' probation because he said he would try the feat again later this year or in 1986. If he is convicted of breaching his probation by trying another stunt, he could face a maximum fine of \$1,000 and 90 days in jail.

Corp. Fred Hollidge of Niagara Parks Police said legislation is in the works to increase the maximum fine of \$500 to \$2,500, authorize police to destroy any device used in a stunt and, if they had reasonable and probable grounds, to confiscate a device before a stunt was committed.

Hollidge said amendments to the Niagara Parks Act will go to the Niagara Parks Commission soon and then to the Ontario legislature for final approval.

Nine daredevils have tried to conquer the falls, with three dying in their attempts. In 1960, seven-year-old Roger Woodward, wearing only a life jacket, was accidentally swept over the falls and lived.

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