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SECTION **C**

'Tis the season to be jilted

January is official breakup month

By ADRIAN MCCOY
PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

When poet T.S. Eliot wrote that April is the cruelest month, he probably wasn't thinking about January, which these days is being dubbed the official breakup month.

Sandwiched uncomfortably between the December holiday season and Valentine's Day, it's the time of year when more couples tend to call it quits.

These holidays and all they symbolize can be tough on relationships. For many people, January is a time for new beginnings and fresh starts, which can mean getting out of a bad relationship.

The pattern is magnified in Hollywood, where breakup news is a mainstay of supermarket tabloid headlines.

Actors Hilary Swank and Chad Lowe just split. Last January, it was Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston.

Tom Cruise and Ben Affleck are serial January breaker-uppers: Cruise with Nicole Kidman (2001) and Penelope Cruz (2004), Affleck with Gwyneth Paltrow (1999) and Jennifer Lopez (2004).

The rest of us tend to follow the same pattern: According to a Yahoo survey conducted in the United Kingdom, twice as many breakups happen in January than in any other month. England even observed National Breakup Day on Jan. 12.

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The beginning of the year is a popular time to break up for both celebrities and ordinary people. Tom Cruise cut his ties with ex-wife Nicole Kidman (2001), bottom, and ex-girlfriend Penelope Cruz (2004) in January.



SCRIPPS
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ILLUSTRATION



Phylis Lan Lin speaks about the traditions of Chinese New Year in her office at the University of Indianapolis, where she serves as presidential international ambassador and director of Asian programs, along with other duties. Lin, a U.S. citizen, grew up in Taiwan and has lived in the United States since 1966.

Celebration of rebirth

Chinese New Year festivities steeped in cultural tradition

By ANNETTE JONES
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The most significant celebration in the Chinese culture begins this weekend. Sunday is New Year's Day according to the Chinese calendar. Based on lunar and solar movements, it is 4703, the year of the dog.

Also called the Spring Festival, Chinese New Year festivities celebrate the upcoming end of winter, says Phylis Lan Lin, who serves as presidential international ambassador, among other duties, at the University of Indianapolis.

Lin was born in Taiwan but has lived in the United States since 1966, when she was 24. Seated in her office, furnished with Asian-style furniture and art, Lin talks about Chinese New Year customs.

Families prepare for the holiday by arranging vases of fresh flowers, symbolizing prosperity. Platters of oranges and tangerines and trays of candy are placed on tables for visitors.

New Year's wishes written in gold lettering on red scrolls are hung from doors with greetings such as "Respectfully wishing you luck and happiness for the new year" or "Everything on Earth returns to spring."

"It means a new good start, wishing you luck and prosperity and wealth to your household," says Lin, 64.

The 15-day celebration begins on New Year's Eve with firecrackers, traditionally set off to scare away monsters. The loud noises are also a sign of happiness.

On New Year's Day, a family dinner is served at a round table, which symbolizes harmony. Empty places are set for deceased ancestors, who are held in deep respect.

(SEE REBIRTH, PAGE C6)



This traditional greeting reads "Happy New Year and best wishes" in Chinese. The cultural celebration features special foods that symbolize prosperity and other attributes Chinese families hope to attain in the coming year.

Expect slapstick of yesterday at live stage show

Fund-raiser benefits girl who needs liver

By SHERRI EASTBURN
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Hoosier baby boomers and a sampling of 30- and 40-somethings might wipe a nostalgic tear or two from their eyes next weekend during an old-time matinee at the Artcraft Theatre in Franklin.

The afternoon event will relive live children's TV shows as an organ-transplant fundraiser for Whiteland resident Becca Lanham. The 7-year-old girl needs a new liver.

The show begins at 2 p.m. Feb. 4, followed by the movie "Stuart Little II," rated PG. Admission is \$5 for adults

and \$3 for children at the theater, 57 N. Main St.

A few days before the event, one performer, Robert "Cowboy Bob" Glaze, walked into the Artcraft with his classic Chuckwagon Theater memories stored on a DVD.

His sidekick, Sour-dough the Singing Biscuit, was stuffed into a tote bag.

Glaze spoke with a member of the sound crew to explain his portion of the live show, which will also include appearances by fellow professionals Janie Hodge of "Popeye & Janie" fame and Hal Fryar, better known as "The Three Stooges" host Harlow Hickenlooper.

Glaze's 19-year career as a

host for children's TV shows will partially be told through photos of him strumming a guitar and stirring memories next to the famous chuckwagon where he entertained kids every day around naptime.

During the show, Glaze will croon a few tunes, like "I'm a Kid" and "What the Hay." And, of course, tell a few corny jokes.

Hodge, host of "Popeye & Janie" and "Janie & Friends" on television for more than 20 years, will also perform.

"There's hardly a day that goes by that people don't come up to me and say, 'Aren't you Janie?'" Hodge

(SEE SHOW, PAGE C6)



Becca Lanham, 7, is on a waiting list for a liver.

BENEFIT MATINEE

What: Old-time matinee hosted by Barry Krauss, retired NFL player, with appearances by classic TV personalities

When: Doors open at 1 p.m. for photos and autographs. Show begins at 2 p.m., followed by showing of "Stuart Little II," rated PG

Where: Artcraft Theatre, 57 N. Main St., Franklin

How to get there: Go south on U.S. 31 or State Road 135. Turn east onto State Road 144/Jefferson Street. Follow it into downtown Franklin, and turn left onto Main Street.

Admission: \$5, adults; \$3, children
Proceeds: Event defrays costs of a liver transplant for Becca Lanham, a 7-year-old Whiteland girl

Information: www.lifeforbecca.com

INSIDE

Meet the stars of the show: Page C6



Hal Fryar is best known as Harlow Hickenlooper, the host of "The Three Stooges." Fryar will appear with other classic TV personalities Feb. 4 at the Artcraft Theatre in Franklin. The event is a fund-raiser for a 7-year-old Whiteland girl who needs a liver transplant.

STAFF PHOTO BY SCOTT ROBERSON@roberson@thejournalnet.com