

B&B Seeks Proverbial Needle-In-Haystack For New Post Grape-Nuts Commercials



No Reservations: McDonough furnishes the music for breakfast bash thrown by B&B's film crew for Grape-Nuts mother/daughter finalists and families.

To hear harried producers of television commercials tell it, the quest for the Holy Grail is only slightly tougher than finding precisely the right performer, prop or scenic background to satisfy the exacting demands of agency account executives and creative directors.

Benton & Bowles' television producer, Paul McDonough, can attest mightily to that; for it fell to his lot to be the major participant in what turned out to be one of the most exhausting needle-in-the-haystack capers in the annals of Ad-dom.

Shooting a pool of new commercials for Post Cereals' Grape-Nuts, McDonough recently was required to find:

- a) three mothers with teenaged daughters

(Not too difficult? Wait. It gets more interesting.)

- b) each mother was to have the face and figure of a Lana Turner or reasonable facimile; each daughter to resemble a Tuesday Weld, likewise with figure to match.

- c) mother had to have several

children.

- d) mother and daughter had to attest to eating Grape-Nuts at least three times a week faithfully for the past two years.

(And the topper:)

- e) all mothers and daughters had to be permanent residents of Arizona.

Not to prolong the suspense, McDonough did succeed in his mission, but only after six weeks of arduous interviewing, not to mention culling through literally thousands of snapshots.

Teams of interviewers fanned out throughout the state and on a door-to-door basis questioned some 2,000 families in Tucson, Phoenix, Prescott, Flagstaff, and other population centers.

The search finally narrowed down to 15 of the most articulate and attractive mother-and-daughter combinations, with B&B's McDonough and the writer, Vida Pernick; and Post Cereal's product manager, Tom Rattigan, selecting the three finalists: Mrs. Anne Stevens and daughter

Allayn, Mrs. Caroline Burke and young Dale, and Mrs. Marilyn Simis and daughter Cindy.

An obvious question: Why all the fuss?

McDonough's answer: "It shows to what lengths the Post Cereal people will go to make sure that everyone appearing in their advertising is exactly what she purports to be."

The search was not without its delicate moments, McDonough relates. "Once a mother and daughter were selected, the next step was to photograph them in bathing suits for final judging; 'unfortunately,' he says, 'some mothers were inclined to be a little nervous.'"

To allay their doubts, stringent efforts were taken to assure them that the whole thing was on the up and up, McDonough explained. The subjects were photographed at well-known local swimming pools frequented by families and with a local matron constantly in attendance.

The Herculean quest was finally finished last July, and the company celebrated with a breakfast bash for the semi-finalists at—of all places—an Indian reservation ten miles outside of Phoenix. (No need to mention what was served, but it wasn't firewater.)

As for McDonough, far from being through, he's now producing additional commercials, this time in California.

New Assignments For B&B International

B&B International continues to make news. In England, Benton & Bowles Ltd. is the happy recipient of three new accounts. The Mace Organization, one of the United Kingdom's largest groups of independent grocery retailers; the Fertilizer Division of Fisons Ltd., that country's largest manufacturer of soil enrichers; and the Robbialac Division of the Berger J & N Paints group, have all selected the London agency to handle their advertising.

B&B Ltd. has also picked up additional assignments from current clients. Cerebos, a major commodities producer, has appointed the agency for its Agricultural Division, and General Foods has assigned us its Foods Catering Division.

Back in the Western Hemisphere, the Vancouver, British Columbia, office of McKim/Benton & Bowles was recently selected by Koret of California Ltd. to handle advertising for the company's line of women's sportswear. The agency has also taken on the advertising responsibility for an underwater communications headset manufactured by the Berton Industries.



Mrs. Stevens and daughter Allayn.



Mrs. Burke and Dale.

WHICH ONE IS MOM? Four of the fortunate finalists in B&B's Grape-Nuts mother-daughter beauty search, conducted by Paul McDonough in Arizona. Allayn Stevens and mother Ann; daughter Dale with her mother, Caroline Burke.