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In Entertainment

Wednesday, May 17, 2006

Print this | Comment on this | E-mail

- Insider Homepage
- Events
- Event Finder
- Movies/TV/DVD
- Movie Finder
- Movie Talk
- TV Listings
- Eats & Drinks
- Restaurants
- Recipe Box
- Wine Report
- Books
- CD Reviews
- Casino Guide
- Michigan's Best
- Lifestyle
- Homestyle
- Fitness
- Michigan's Best
- Casino Guide
- Horoscope
- Lottery
- Crossword

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Go

1-week archive:  
 Mon Tue Wed Thu  
 Fri Sat Sun Today  
 Advanced Search

- Essentials
- Homepage
- Photo Galleries
- Weather
- Horoscope
- Lottery
- Crossword
- Contact Us
- Opinions
- Editorials
- Blogs
- Columnists
- CyberSurveys
- Forums
- Autos
- Autos Insider
- Autos Weblog
- Drive
- New Car Photos
- Car Reviews
- Latest Deals
- Model Reports
- Joyrides
- Business



ABC

Detroit's Erik Thompson, left, attaches his invention to an athlete as part of "American Inventor."

## Can our Detroit inventor score big?

It's moment of truth time for Detroit's Erik Thompson

Mekeisha Madden Toby / Detroit News Television Critic

It's moment of truth time for Detroit's Erik Thompson.

The 41-year-old inventor could win \$1 million this week on ABC's "American Inventor."

His creation, the Receiver's Training Pole -- a detachable vest football players and other athletes can wear to train and develop proper catching skills -- is one of four inventions in running.

Thompson will be at Detroit's Fine Arts Theatre (2952 Woodward Ave.) doing a live broadcast of the show. Each contestant will be standing by, awaiting the results of phone v cast last week.

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No worries. Thompson, who has a day job at Federal Screw Works in Romulus, is optimistic about the outcome.

"If I win, I'm done working," he says with all the seriousness of a coronary thrombosis. And if he doesn't win, Thompson says he will still retire in a year to pursue his dream.

Catch "American Inventor" at 8 p.m. Thursday on WXYZ-TV, Channel 7. To join Thompson for the live telecast at the Fine Arts, call (313) 832-0762.

## Juicy man in town

Most people don't know Marty Wall by name, but they certainly know his work.

The Metro Detroit native and veteran producer is responsible for several very cool promos on ABC including last fall's sexy, apple-themed "Juicy" ads for the nighttime soap "**Desperate Housewives.**"

"I wanted to create an ad that would leave you wanting more," says Wall, who graduated from Seaholm High School in Birmingham in 1976 and later Central Michigan University. "Once I heard the track ('Juicy' by Better than Ezra) I knew we could build an ad around it. Remember the romantic spots for "**The Bachelor in Paris**" ? Yeah, Wall did those, too. Now Wall is working on the ad campaign for the third season of "Desperate Housewife" which debuts in the fall. But he's not divulging any secrets about what it will look like or what tune he'll go with this time.

"All I can say is that there will be five beautiful women in it," Wall says coyly.

Like the work? Meet the big-time Birmingham boy when he signs copies of a biography he wrote titled, "Chasing Rubi: The Truth about Porfirio Rubirosa, the Last Playboy" (Literar Press, \$17.95).

He'll be at the Barnes & Noble Booksellers at 3-5 p.m. Saturday at 396 John R Road in . For more info on the signing, call (248) 577-5056.

## Etc.

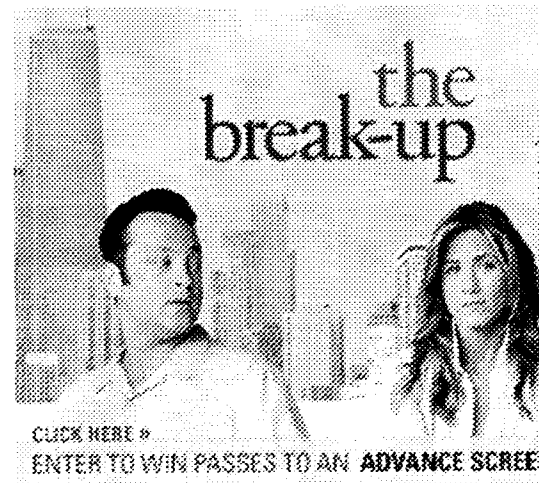
Spike TV announced Tuesday that its new vampire show "**Blade: The Series,**" based on the movie of the same name, will be based in Detroit. That's right, even though the show is actually filmed on location in Vancouver, Canada, it's set here. Now we can add vampires to the list of image problems. "Blade: The Series" debuts June 28.

A couple months ago, WJBK-TV (Channel 2) and WDIV-TV (Channel 4) both latched onto a 21-month-old boy who had the unbelievable ability to not only play the drums, but to play them really well.

That same toddler, Julian Pavone, now 2 thanks to a birthday Sunday, is going to be hanging out with hearth-and-home icon **Martha Stewart** on her talk show.

Look for the Bloomfield Hills son of a drummer man on "**Martha**" at 10 a.m. Thursday on Channel 7. If you can't catch him there, check out [littledrummerbaby.com](http://littledrummerbaby.com).

*Tuned in You can reach Mekeisha Madden Toby at (313) 222-2501 or [mmadden@detnews.com](mailto:mmadden@detnews.com).*



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