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For CFR
One for the Thumb

Cast of Characters

BABS

JIM

RICK

CARL

ZELDA

JEREMIAH

OLIVIA

CONNIE

KEVIN

CELL PHONE GUY

CELL PHONE GIRL

VERONICA

GRETCHEN

MOLLY

CHAUNCEY

DEEP IN DEBT GIRL

MONICA

JOSH

TIM

PANTS MODEL

PAM

GERTRUDE

OLD MAN

Place

A news desk and various remote locations—all can be suggested minimally.

Time

Now.

Author notes

The pace should be fast—really fast. Keep it moving.

The more the anchors and correspondents sound like actual vapid TV personalities, the better.

If anything seems so technical that it's out of your budget, don't worry about it. Feel free to fake it. For instance, instead of a real puppy, use a toy puppy.

No news cameras are necessary or even encouraged. They should be implied.

Shrink or expand the cast however you like, and assign any gender to any role as necessary. A fun way to produce the play would be with four total performers: Jim, Babs, and two quick-change artists who play all other characters.

Have fun!

ACTION NEWS: NOW WITH 10% MORE ACTION!

by Jonathan Rand

(Newscast music plays.)

VOICEOVER. It's 5:59 and you're watching...WOMG Action News. And now...the WOMG Action News news team.

BABS. Good evening, I'm Babs Buttlebee.

JIM. And I'm Jim Pickles. Thanks for joining us at WOMG Action News—the area's *only* newscast that starts at 5:59, therefore delivering *your* news...*first*.

BABS. Before tonight's top story, we'd like to welcome you to our new home here at Studio Nine, a home that's both functional and attractive. It was built specifically for WOMG Action News and features state-of-the art touchscreen technology, a world-class Doppler radar system, and a mini-fridge.

JIM. Thanks, Babs. Tonight's top story: Puppies. They can be adorable, but also deadly.

BABS. For more on this exclusive story we bring you *live* to the Southside where Rick Awesomestache has the story. Rick?

(RICK holds an adorable, tiny puppy.)

RICK. Thanks, Babs. This little fellah right here is known as Patches, and let me tell you, he is adorable as it gets. His little button nose alone could make a grown man—MY FACE!!! IT'S MAULING MY BEAUTIFUL FACE!!!

(The puppy has suddenly begun mauling him. Lights out on RICK.)

JIM. Thanks, Rick. Terrific report. And now for the latest in the world of *boxing*, we turn to the Short Sport Report and our very own Carl Muffintop—or the man we lovingly refer to as “the heavy-weight champ.”

(JIM and BABS laugh.)

(Lights on CARL. He joins in on the laughter.)

CARL. *(Maintaining his cheerful demeanor throughout:)* Jim, I'm actually fairly self-conscious about my weight.

JIM. *(Chuckling:)* All right, Carl.

CARL. And the report isn't about boxing.

JIM. (*Chuckling:*) All right, Carl.

CARL. And my name is Frank Jones.

JIM. (*Chuckling:*) All right, Carl.

CARL. That being said, earlier today the golf world was *rocked* when ten-time world-champion Panther Shrubs reportedly went through an *entire day* without even a *single instance* of marital infidelity.

BABS. My goodness!

CARL. Your goodness is right, Babs. But it gets worse. According to TMZ, Shrubs was caught on camera spending a wholesome week-end with his wife and kids at *Sea World*.

JIM. Astonishing.

BABS. Indeed it is. And now, as we always do at the end of the Short Sport Report, Jim and I now bring you...a two-person version of The Wave...

(JIM and BABS do The Wave twice—making that “Wohhhh!” noise that everyone makes when doing The Wave at sporting events.)

CARL. Never gets old, you guys.

BABS. Thanks, Carl Muffintop!

(For a quick moment it looks like CARL is just about to protest—smiling face and all—but then lights go out on him.)

BABS. Shocking news today from the world of religion. A priest, a rabbi, and a minister walked into a bar. After learning the kitchen closed at ten, they decided they should maybe look for a Chili's.

(A bell rings.)

JIM. Uhp! If I'm not mistaken, that's the WOMG dinner bell! Which means I've got a question for our viewers: Whoooooo's hungry?

BABS. Does that question mean what I *think* it means?

JIM. Probably not, Babs. You're most likely thinking of something irrelevant and stupid, since you only made it through the fourth grade.

BABS. So did you, Jim!

JIM. Third, actually. In fact, Babs, what that bell means is that it's time for Cook Or Be Cooked with our very own Zelda Chickenfoot.

(Lights on ZELDA and JEREMIAH.)

ZELDA. Thanks, Jim! I'm here *in studio* with world-renowned gourmet chef, Jeremiah Crockpot.

JEREMIAH. Great to be here, Zelda.

ZELDA. Now, our producers tell us that you'll be preparing a very special treat for us today.

JEREMIAH. That's right.

ZELDA. Now I don't know if I'm pronouncing this correctly, but it says here the dish is called...BahgOHVsheeps?

JEREMIAH. Actually, it's pronounced "bag of chips."

ZELDA. My mistake. So now you're going to show us how to prepare this highly refined delicacy.

JEREMIAH. That's right. So first you start with this? (*Produces a bag of chips.*) And then you do this. (*Opens bag.*)

ZELDA. Back to you, Jim.

(*Lights out on ZELDA and JEREMIAH.*)

JIM. Babs, I'll be honest—I would *not* be able to handle that recipe. In *my* house, little miss *wifey* does all the cooking.

BABS. That's because you're a loathsome misogynist.

JIM. And how.

BABS. Next up: according to a 1988 survey, somewhere between zero and one hundred percent of people don't like going to the dentist.

JIM. Which is why a *new* study led by scientists wearing long white coats tells us of a groundbreaking new way to cut down on those pesky cavities. Our own Olivia Blackplaque filed this report.

(*Cut to OLIVIA holding up a microphone to CONNIE's mouth as she nonchalantly brushes her teeth as anyone would. OLIVIA is frozen—focused and fascinated. This goes on for far too long.*)

(*Lights shift.*)

JIM. Remarkable.

BABS. And now for the latest on the Apocalypse, we bring you *live* to Kevin O'Geddon from his living room couch.

(*Lights on KEVIN.*)

KEVIN. Technically it's a loveseat.

BABS. Kevin, what can you tell us about your brand-new, state-of-the-art Apocalypse Machine?

(The Apocalypse Machine is a some sort of homemade, hastily thrown together assortment of random, interconnected items.)

KEVIN. Well, it's...quite sophisticated, actually...it uh...this red light bulb here connects to uhh, this over here, which then winds its way through these things here, which moves through here over here to these wires, which connect toooooo...the Bible.

JIM. Terrific.

BABS. Any word yet, Kevin, on whether or not the end of the days is upon us?

KEVIN. *(Lifts a wire or pokes at something:)* No.

BABS. Thanks, Kevin. *(To camera:)* We'll check in with Kevin later on in the broadcast.

JIM. But first, a word from our sponsor.

(Lights up to ad. Cell phone rings; CELL PHONE GUY answers it.)

CELL PHONE GUY. Hey, honey!

CELL PHONE GIRL. I'm dumping you.

VOICEOVER. AT&T—Never miss a call.

(Lights back to studio.)

JIM. And we're back!

BABS. Now, as everyone is well aware, the race for Assistant Comptroller is heating up faster than you can say Assistant Comptroller.

JIM. *(Fast:)* Assistant Comptroller!

BABS. Even faster than that.

JIM. *(So fast it's barely understandable:)* Assistant Comptroller!

BABS. Even faster.

JIM. That's fast.

BABS. Now for an exclusive, in-depth analysis of the early exit polls, we take you to our very own Veronica Stump who is standing by *in studio* with WOMG's brand-new, state-of-the-art Touchscreen of Technology.

(VERONICA stands by a digital screen that displays some colorful charts and numbers.¹)

VERONICA. Thanks, Babs. Now if you'll watch closely here on the WOMG Touchscreen of Technology, if we double-tap here to zoom

¹ A poster board would be fine here.

in on the eighth district... (*Nothing moves. A pause. Then simply:*)
Yeah, it's broken.

BABS. Thanks, Veronica!

JIM. Now, in order to see first-hand what the people are saying about this political firestorm, we take you *live* to Pickwick Park with our very own Gretchen Fieldgreens.

(*GRETCHEN is standing by MOLLY, who holds a baseball bat. Perhaps others are nearby.*)

GRETCHEN. Thanks, Jim. I'm here with members of the community to take the *pulse* of what historically could be an historic day in history. (*To MOLLY:*) Excuse me, do you mind telling us who you voted for in today's election?

MOLLY. I'm seven.

GRETCHEN. Back to you, Jim.

JIM. Thanks, Gretchen.

BABS. Breaking news in the world of fashion: Plaid is in, denim is out, and extra-black black is the new black. Also permanently out of style: bikini-while-pregnant.

DEEP-VOICED VOICEOVER. CRIME WATCH!

BABS. That deep voice that just said Crime Watch means it's time... for *Crime Watch*.

JIM. For the latest on crime in *your* neighborhood, we take you *live* to our Crime Watch specialist, Chauncey Peephole.

CHAUNCEY. Okay you guys: Like ten minutes ago I was watching "Cops"—I'm not watching it right now; I'm watching "Tyler Perry's House of Payne"—but ten minutes ago on "Cops" they broke down this guy's door and he had an amazing mullet.

JIM. Thanks, Chauncey.

DEEP-VOICED VOICEOVER. CRIME WATCH!

JIM. Thanks, Deep Voice.

BABS. And now a word from our sponsor.

(*Lights up to ad.*)

VOICEOVER. Are you in thousands of dollars of credit card debt?

DEEP IN DEBT GIRL. You bet I am. What should I do?

VOICEOVER. Win the lottery.

(*Lights back to studio.*)

BABS. And we're back!

JIM. In entertainment news: a new investigative report now reveals that celebrities sometimes engage in the same activities that *non*-celebrities engage in, such as going to grocery stores, walking their dogs, or getting fat.

BABS. Now for the latest on your ride home from work, we take you *live* to the WOMG Eye-in-the-Sky Trafficopter for a traffic report from our very own Monica Speedbump. Monica.

MONICA. The WOMG Eye-in-the-Sky Trafficopter has landed here at the airport for gas, so I really can't see anything, but according to my iPhone here, there's some traffic.

BABS. Thanks, Monica. What is that, the iPhone 3?

MONICA. No, 4.

BABS. Good for you. We now check back in with our Apocalypse Expert, Kevin O'Geddon. Anything new to report, Kevin?

(Lights on KEVIN, who glances at the Apocalypse Machine.)

KEVIN. No.

BABS. Thanks, Kevin!

JIM. And now for our newest segment, Michael on Music, where we take you *live* to our music correspondent: Josh. What have you got for us, Josh?

(Lights up on JOSH, who's listening to an iPod with headphones. We can't hear the music, but he certainly can. He's jamming away to it, really getting into it, sometimes air-drumming while making different kinds of drum noises—maybe some hi-hats; maybe some snares. He might unintelligibly sing a part of the song. And so forth.)

(Lights out on JOSH.)

BABS. Thanks, Josh.

JIM. And now it's time for World Wide Weather with meteorologist Tim Doppelflop. *(Beat.) (Confused.)* Wait, "meteorologist"...? That can't be right.

TIM. No, that has something to do with meteors.

JIM. That's what I thought.

TIM. My official title is weather...oxigist...man.

JIM. And now it's time for World Wide Weather with weatheroxigistman Tim Doppelflop.

TIM. Thanks, Jim. For all those long-time WOMG viewers out there, you may have noticed a difference in our Doppler Radar System Device System. And you'd have noticed right. The WOMG Doppler Radar System Device System is now...*world-class*.

BABS. Oooooooooooh.

TIM. Ooh is right, Babs. Not only are all the suns wearing sunglasses now like 3-D and junk, but as of today, all of our forecasting has become *one hundred percent* accurate.

JIM. That's a relatively high percentage.

TIM. It's pretty close to the highest, Jim. After all, this is a brand-new, world-class system.

BABS. Now Tim, did you mention the system was state-of-the-art?

TIM. No it's not. It's just brand-new and world-class.

BABS. Oh.

TIM. (*Indicating on the screen:*) Now if you'll look right here in this area, you'll see the neighborhood where this very studio is located. And if you look here, the WOMG DRSDS tells us with 100% accuracy that right now it's 85 degrees with sunny skies. Well, Jim—I guess we should hit the beach after the broadcast!!

JIM. Tim, you *do* realize our building is currently in the middle of the worst snowstorm in town history.

TIM. ...Uhhh, no, that's impossible.

JIM. Tim, the snow outside has literally trapped us in the building.

TIM. ...No, as you can see here, it's 85 degrees.

JIM. Tim, you came to work in a sled.

(*Pause.*)

TIM. Yeah I'm bad at my job...

JIM. Tim Doppleslop with World Wide Weather!

TIM. Don't forget your sunscreen!!

BABS. Fannntastic. We'll be right back, after this word from our sponsor.

(*Lights up to ad.*)

(*PANTS MODEL is pointing to his pants.*)

VOICEOVER. Pants, Incorporated: Buy pants.

(*Lights back to studio.*)

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NOT OVER!**

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