

# Hold The Phone: That Fake Number Really Works

BY MARK CARO

© 2011, Chicago Tribune

The politician played by Matt Damon doesn't initially remember the phone number that the dancer played by Emily Blunt gives him in "The Adjustment Bureau."

That's strange, because I sure did. It's 212-664-7665.

In fact, I repeated it in my head for the rest of the movie: 212-664-7665. 212-664-7665. 212-664-7665.

Once home I called it. No answer.

Too bad, because any movie or TV show offering a phone number without a 555 prefix is inviting you to start punching digits. Paul Thomas Anderson rewarded geeky fans of his 1999 epic drama "Magnolia" by including two real numbers. If you called 818-775-3993, which is dialed by Philip Seymour Hoffman's nurse character, you reached a recording of a flustered woman saying, "Please leave a message at the tone."

More entertaining was 1-877-TAMEHER, the number displayed on the infomercial from the sex evangelist played by Tom Cruise. If you called it, you would have heard the Cruise character's spiel for his "Seduce and Destroy" program, which promised to "help you get that naughty sauce that you want. Fast."

Those numbers, alas, don't work anymore. The first one triggers a "Your call cannot be answered at this time ..." recording, and 1-877-TAMEHER (now listed strictly by numbers) connects you to the corporate office of the Los Angeles-based health club Meridian's Bodies in Motion, which didn't return phone messages even though I refrained from using the words "naughty sauce."

But here's a number that does still work: 800-984-3672. It showed up in an episode of "The Office" a few years ago, and if you call it now,

you get a message from an "Office"-related fictional company.

"Hello, you have reached WB Jones Heating and Air Conditioning," a chirpy yet low voice begins before reminding listeners to keep their thermostats at 67 degrees over the winter and 76 over the summer.

"This will keep your home and yourselves comfortable, at the same time decreasing your family's carbon footprint. This makes for a happy planet, and a happy planet makes for happy people. Please wait for the next available customer service representative."

Then come about 30 seconds of

canned music, "Thank you for calling" and disconnection.

Other shows, such as "Scrubs" and "Supernatural," also have included numbers that led to customized outgoing messages, but usually fictional phone numbers aren't intended to be dialed in real life.

The 555 phenomenon dates back to at least the early 1960s, when TV and movie producers were encouraged to use these numbers because they weren't being distributed to customers. The convention has become so well known that it all but screams

to viewers: "Fake phone number!"

That's why "Adjustment Bureau" director George Nolfi asked his producers to find him an alternative for his sci-fi romance about a couple (Damon and Blunt) that tries to conquer predestination.

"I hate 555 numbers in a movie," said Nolfi. "We do so much work to try to help the audience suspend disbelief, particularly in a movie like 'The Adjustment Bureau' with a crazy premise. The idea of seeing a 555 number would really throw me out of a movie like that, so I asked for a real number, and they sent me to Universal's clearance department,

and they said they own a real number."

It turns out Universal, perhaps having learned from the "Bruce Almighty" fiasco, bought its very own number with a New York area code. It appeared in the studio's 2008 movie "Definitely, Maybe." It appeared in the studio's 2010 movie "Scott Pilgrim vs. the World." And now it's in "The Adjustment Bureau."

Universal made no one available to speak on this apparently quite delicate topic.

I asked Nolfi why calls to the movie's phone number don't lead to

an outgoing message.

"This was a very, very difficult movie logistically, and my first movie (directing) too, so I didn't follow up on that," Nolfi said. "It's more of a marketing thing."

Of course, he can't win, because even when a filmmaker goes to the trouble of including a real phone number, a knucklehead like me makes a point of memorizing it instead of just going with the narrative flow (though I still enjoyed the movie). A cheeky outgoing message from, say, Emily Blunt would just encourage such behavior.

And then I'd have to tweet it.

## BEATLES

From Page 1B

the audience to know that we are human and it lets them be able to associate with you. The humor allows us to be fun and not so totally scripted."

By encouraging the audience to get involved with the show, the band hopes to bring enjoyment to everyone in the crowd. That, in turn, makes playing fun for the band.

"For me, the best part of a show is the interaction with the crowd," Madison said. "For me, the reward is looking into the crowd and seeing the smiles on the faces. It is not about that we are good players, because I will tell you what I am not a great musician at all; I will be the first to admit that. But I am in a group of guys that are really good and for some reason this combination is really working. The smiles on people's faces are my reward. I have never played a show where I thought, 'Well, I wish this was over.'"

Saying that everyone, no matter their age, has a personal relationship with at least one Beatles song, Johnson is amazed at how the crowds react to the songs. Because the Beatles' music connects with the crowds on so many different levels, the Abbey Road Band makes a point to cover music from the Beatles' earliest music through the group's last album, including some more obscure music aimed at the die hard fans.

"I love how they soak up the music," he said. "The Beatles' music is so different than anything else I have ever done. People just absorb it so differently, so personally. It just amazes me. I don't have a favorite Beatles song; they are all my favorites. There are a lot of people who don't even know the song they love is a Beatles tune."

Madison admits the members of Abbey Road are honored to get to play the music they do.

"We are very privileged that we have good jobs, we are secure," he said. "We go out and do some tours; we get called to do some really big events and open for some really big acts. We have had some nice opportunities. We don't live together so much traveling that we hate each other. We all know this is a group and there is no one person that is a star. There is no way I could go out there and do this on my own and vice versa, there are no prima donnas in the band. Everybody just does their job very well. If I can make the other guys look good in the band and they make me shine, then we have all done our jobs."

Tickets for the Abbey Road Band concert, as well as a May 16 concert by The Brett Family Trio, are included with a membership to the Yankton Concert Association. Memberships may be purchased at the door and start at \$50 for the season.

Included with the membership will be five concerts next season:

- "A Tribute To Frankie Valli And Broadway," Saturday, Sept. 24;
- Rickie Lee & The Fabulous 50's, Sunday, Nov. 6;
- Voces 8, Sunday, Feb. 12, 2012;
- Fry Street Quartet, Friday, March 16, 2012; and,
- The Lowe Family, Wednesday, May 2, 2012.

For more information about the Yankton Concert Association, contact Zita Hans at 605-660-5004 or Betts Pulkrabek at 605-463-2206.

# PRICE SLICE

## SAVE BIG ON DEEP DISCOUNTS THROUGHOUT THE STORE!

DINING • SOFAS • CHAIRS • OFFICE • BEDROOM • RUGS



get the 19" Sansui LED TV FOR ONLY

# \$99

compare to \$199

**LIMITED TO QUANTITIES ON HAND!**

**With any purchase of \$599 or more. NO EXCLUSIONS!**

**SAVE \$200!**



ALSO AVAILABLE IN MOCHA  
REG. \$553, PRICE SLICED TO **\$359**

**SAVE \$260!**



BONDED LEATHER SOFA  
REG. \$759, PRICE SLICED TO **\$499**

**SAVE \$130!**



**TABLE & 4 CHAIRS \$169**  
REG. \$299, PRICE SLICED TO

**SAVE \$300!**



**TABLE & 4 CASTERED CHAIRS \$599**  
REG. \$899, PRICE SLICED TO

**SAVE \$80!**



**BLACK METAL ELECTRIC STOVE \$99**  
REG. \$179, PRICE SLICED TO

**SAVE \$200!**



**METROPOLITAN ELECTRIC FIREPLACE \$399**  
REG. \$599, PRICE SLICED TO

**SAVE \$380!**



**6PC QUEEN BEDROOM COLLECTION \$699**  
REG. \$1079, PRICE SLICED TO

**SAVE \$500!**



**6PC QUEEN BEDROOM COLLECTION \$999**  
REG. \$1499, PRICE SLICED TO

**SAVE \$100!**



**44" CORNER TV STAND \$249**  
REG. \$349, PRICE SLICED TO  
(AVAILABLE IN BURNISHED OAK, ESPRESSO OR RUSTIC OAK)

**SAVE \$170!**



**52" TV STAND CONSOLE \$329**  
REG. \$499, PRICE SLICED TO  
(AVAILABLE IN BURNISHED OAK OR ESPRESSO)

# UNCLAIMED FREIGHT FURNITURE

A Division Of Furniture Outlets USA

The #1 Furniture Retailer in the Area!

Sioux Falls • 6600 West 12th St. • 334.9027  
Mitchell • 1500 North Main • 996.9820  
Yankton • 2320 Broadway • 665.3446  
Watertown • 17 West Kemp • 886.5883  
Pierre • 540 South Garfield • 224.7200  
Sioux City • 2500 Transit Ave. • 274.5926  
Fargo • 2520 South University Dr. • 237.3360  
Aberdeen • 3315 6th Ave. SE • 225.0812

# unclaimedfreightfurniture.com

\*Discount and savings as specified. \$99 TV available only with \$599+ purchase, while quantities last. Financing may be available, subject to credit approval and minimum purchase requirements. Some exclusions may apply, including but not limited to Hot Buys, rugs, accessories, and select mattress purchases. See store for details. Does not apply to previous purchases. Clearance items are available only while quantities last. Prices valid for a limited time only. An amount equal but not limited to sales tax and delivery charges must be paid at the time of purchase. All items may not be exactly as shown in this advertisement and may not be on display in all showrooms. Style and selection may vary. Although every precaution is taken, some errors may occur in print. We reserve the right to correct any such errors. Expires 4/11/2011.