

Tonopah Times-Bonanza

AND GOLDFIELD NEWS
FOR A GREATER NEVADA

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Baby cooperates in Goldfield celebration

by Brenda Bland

For a few anxious days the officials of the Warner-Lambert company, the makers of Certs, and their advertising firm, wondered whether their much ballayhooed celebration Friday to award \$50,000 would take place without the guest of honor.

Grand prize winner 33-year-old Ralph Wolfe of Cambridge, Mass. had informed the contest officials that even though the winning of that \$50,000 was one of the most exciting things that ever happened to him, being present for the birth of his first child was even more important.

It seemed that his wife, Betty Gilbreath, was due to give birth Aug. 29. He feared that she would have the baby prior to that date and he would miss the event.

Wolfe said that the contest people were very helpful and even went as far as to consider flying him out and back in a private jet.

Still, he did not think he could do it and told the officials he would be sending his brother.

It turns out that mother nature had other ideas and Lucy Wolfe was born Aug. 10.

He said the Certs people were as anxious about the birth of the baby as he was. Wolfe said at one point they jokingly suggested that they name the baby Certs.

Wolfe will be flown into Goldfield the morning of Aug. 19.

Wolfe calls his win an amazing blessing.

"It was such an improbable thing to happen. It will make a big difference in our lives," said Wolfe.

He recalls how only recently he and his wife had scraped together all their savings to make a down payment on a little house they moved into several weeks ago.

That left them wondering how they would find the money to replace their old clunky car.

Their immediate plans for the \$50,000 are to buy a nice, comfortable car and then the remainder is to be set aside for Lucy's education.

"You've got to realize that you can't do everything with \$50,000. But it's enough to do a few things well," said Wolfe.

Wolfe by profession is an architect in Boston, but he is also a map collector, a contest enthusiast, and a fan of word games and scrabble.

His quest for the \$50,000 began April 17 when Certs ran a nationwide ad in the comics section of the Sunday newspaper.

The 11 line verse gave the coded location of the \$50,000.

Over 100,000 people entered the contest. Of that number 889 people came up with the correct answer, the Goldfield sheriff's office.

Although Wolfe has never been to Goldfield he has driven through Las Vegas. He said as there were several references to gold, gambling, chance and luck in the verse his first guess was Las Vegas.

However, the verse had warned to expect a spot most cleverly concealed so he abandoned the idea of Las Vegas and thought the spot must be close to Las Vegas.

He looked at the map that had been printed with the verse. There in southern Nevada was a drawing of three mountain peaks. He took that plus the clue of between a peak, a point, a field and came up with Goldfield as it is between Silver Peak and Goldpoint.

His guess of Goldfield bothered him for about two weeks so he spent time trying to confirm his guess.

He went to the Boston public library where he spent hours with dusty volumes reading about Nevada, gold rushes and Goldfield.

He went to stores and picked up travel guides. One referred him to Tonopah for more information. He called the Tonopah chamber of commerce and received a one page description of Goldfield.

From there he was referred to Virginia Ridgway in Goldfield, an amateur historian on the area.

Wolfe said he questioned her extensively about structures left standing in the area and of course he never let on that he was in a contest.

He finally became satisfied that Goldfield was the correct choice. After that he puzzled over the exact location and determined that bars and stars must refer to the sheriff's office.

"I was obsessed with the contest for about two weeks. I dominated conversations by talking about this contest I was working on," said Wolfe.

continued ➔

Baby cooperates continued

The real crux of the competition

however did not come until the essay portion of the contest.

The essay was necessitated according to the rules of the contest, if there was more than one entry with the correct answer.

Wolfe said that he had had that requirement in the back of his mind since the beginning of the contest.

He said he gave a lot of thought to what would make his essay memorable, stand out, make the judges want to read it again.

Wolfe said he knew it would be tough as every other entrant would be limited to 500 words and would be describing the same clue sequence.

It was then he hit on Sherlock Holmes. He developed a dialog between Holmes and Dr. Watson. Holmes leads Watson through the solution of the verse.

The 500 word limit gave him trouble as he had to work hard to shave his work down.

Wolfe was informed of his win by a call to his workplace Aug. 1.

"I had thought about the contest all summer. I thought I had a good chance of winning. All summer we joked about the contest and naming the things we would buy," said Wolfe.

"I absolutely enjoyed the time spent with the contest," said Wolfe.

As of last week only a few people had tracked Wolfe down to question him about his success.

So at that point ~~he said he still~~ enjoyed talking to people ~~about the contest~~ and telling his story. However he said if he starts to get hundreds of phone calls that might be a different story.

Boston architect is winner of Certs contest

by Dorothy Stowell

We all know that it's nothing for an easterner to come to Nevada and walk away with a \$50,000 jackpot or winning streak! Chances are he will be congratulated by the casino manager, friends and relatives and go home a happier and richer man.

But for Ralph Wolfe things will be a little bit different. He is going to have an "entire" town, county, state and outlying areas show up to see him receive his winnings!

Yes, 35-year-old Ralph, an architect from the Boston, Mass. area is the treasure hunt essay run-off finalist grand winner. Aug. 19, he will stand on the steps

of the historic old courthouse and have the governor of the state of Nevada present his winnings.

Of course, this event will be preceded by a parade, the likes of which have not been seen since Goldfield boasted 30,000 population. This will be the kick-off for two fun-filled days with a schedule of old fashioned fun. How about an Elks' barbecue, street dance, historic slide show, old era bathing suit contest, arm wrestling, mucking and drilling, horseshoe pitch, saddle horse races, miners breakfast, tug-of-war, and many, many activities for the kiddos. Would you believe a horned toad and duck race?

We're important enough to draw P. M. magazine and both local and national media. Come on to Goldfield and join us all in celebrating with Ralph!

Incidentally, Mrs. Wolfe was expecting their first child on the day the award was to be made.

Well, little Lucy decided to join the excitement early and was born Aug. 10.