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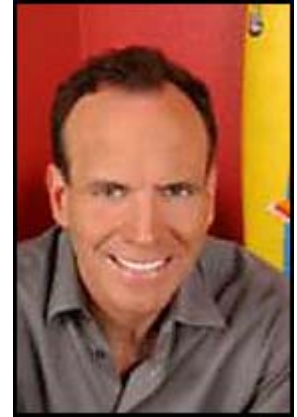
Parker: Shuttered pool hall in LoDo gets ready for the 'Real World'

April 11, 2006



Denver will get real when the seven-member cast of MTV's *Real World* moves into a closed LoDo pool hall to tape the 18th edition of the "reality" series.

The former B-52 Billiards, 1920 Market St., was a virtual hive of activity Monday as a construction crew started gutting the building to make room for the seven "inmates" who will live and (possibly) love together.



Jon Murray

CBS 4 News investigative reporter **Brian Maass** broke the story Sunday night, and the deal was confirmed by MTV through an e-mail press release on Monday.

Construction on the 21,000-plus-square-foot building, which will include adding a full kitchen, basketball court, hot tub, bathrooms and bedrooms, is slated to be complete in May, with taping to follow and 24 episodes of the show to air sometime in the winter.

The show's production team, Los Angeles-based Bunim-Murray Productions, had been sniffing around Denver and talking to city officials since January, but the deal wasn't sealed until they met with **Mayor John Hickenlooper** on March 8. All involved had zipped lips as a result of confidentiality agreements. **Jon Murray**, creator and executive producer of *Real World*, said he first visited Denver shortly after the construction of the 16th Street Mall. He said Denver has been on his television radar screen ever since. "With your downtown, LoDo area, Larimer Square, it's a walkable space. It was time for us to be there."

When I asked him about his reluctance to confirm the *Real World* house address, he said, "Unlike the *Today* show, where people are staring in from windows, we want to film a story about seven strangers. If everybody knows where they are, it's less likely to be real."

KOOL KREW EXITS: The KOOL radio 105 morning "krew" was given their walking papers after the Monday show in a clean sweep designed to boost ratings, according to station honcho **Don Howe**.

Off the air: **JJ McKay**, **Rick "Coach" Marshall**, **Steve Alexander** and **Nick Toenjes**. Temporarily on the air in the 5:30 to 10 a.m. drive-time slot: **Dan Mitchell**, the afternoon DJ.

"We're not ready to announce something, but we're very close," Howe said about the replacement team. According to the fall Arbitron ratings, KOOL, which plays the "hits of the '60s and '70s", ranked sixth locally among 25- to 54-year-olds. During the same ratings period, the morning show came in eighth.

"We want the morning show to be at least as good, if not better, than the radio station," Howe said. "The morning show launches the rest of the day."

Howe said he didn't think the firing was a surprise to the on-air talent. Coach's contract, for example, expired a couple of months ago and hadn't been renewed.

"The others had contracts that were up during the course of the year," Howe said.

LAUGH TRACKS: Comedian **Kathleen Madigan's** new album, *In Other Words*, was taped last year at the Comedy Works in Denver, and Denver gets its props from her as a great city. Funny album, with one gaffe. She has a bit about people who you thought were dead who were really alive. In it she lists **Nipsey Russell**, who died between the time the show was