



This screen shot shows a page of women's products from Pinterest. The site's popularity has exploded in recent weeks; the surge is driven not by the usual geek crowd of young men, but by Midwestern women.

## The public bulletin board goes online

BY BARBARA ORTUTAY  
Associated Press

**N**EW YORK — Oh, you pretty things. Just look at the mama giraffe nuzzling a baby giraffe, that lovely idea for an indoor planter made of mason jars and those perfectly cooked bacon strips cooling on a plate. This is what people are circulating on Pinterest, the latest website-of-the-moment for sharing things you love. Clean and simple to use, Pinterest attracts people who need to organize the chaos of Internet-age information overload. It serves as an online scrapbook of images they find on the Web, a place to post fashion inspirations, decorating aspirations and more. It's a digital dream collage, a recipe box and a corkboard full of magazine clippings all at once.

The site's popularity has exploded in recent months, making it one of the fastest-growing websites in history. Its ascent to 10 million monthly visitors happened faster than Facebook, Twitter or any other site tracked by ComScore.

What makes Pinterest's surge unusual is that it's driven not by the usual geek crowd of young men



Josie Lepe/McClatchy-Tribune  
**Ben Silbermann is co-founder of Pinterest.**

from New York and San Francisco, but by women, many of whom live in the Midwest and the central U.S.

They use the sleek, photo-heavy website for fashion ideas, wedding planning and home design, or just to share photos of puppies.

Angela Bitz, a secretary at a hospital in Davenport, Iowa, says she was drawn by the site's layout and ease of use. She uses Pinterest to collect decorating ideas for her home and for general crafting and cooking inspiration. She also turns to Pinterest for ideas on making jewelry from objects she finds.

"It has well-organized information that is easy to save and share with others, as well as the ability to keep up on what my friends like and are doing," she says.

Pinterest's co-founder Ben Silbermann was one of the most-anticipated speakers this week at the South by Southwest Interactive festival in Austin. As part of a question-and-answer session Tuesday, he explained Pinterest's rapid growth outside of Silicon Valley and discussed the company's long-term goals. People will be watching closely, especially because Pinterest has been media-shy in recent weeks amid its meteoric rise.

Much of Pinterest's appeal is

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## Love? Ladies? Ask him again when he's 30

**E**very so often, when my husband gets a hankering to terrorize our 11-year-old son, he'll ask Jack whether he has a girlfriend. Sometimes Randy will ask how many girlfriends Jack has.

Occasionally he'll inquire, in his best Barry White voice, "How's it going with the ladies?" (The word "ladies," of course, sounds like "LAY-dehhzzz.")

This exchange causes, as my mother would say, major conniptions.

Jack gets a pained expression. He rolls his eyes or shoots them like daggers in his father's direction. Sometimes he leaves the room.

Sometimes he remains calm, not even looking up from his homework or his dinner, and simply says, "Harumph."

One day, friends tell me, my son will fall in love — or at least start caring about what he wears, how his hair looks, how he smells and what girls might think of him.

Maybe so. But these days, he simply can't be bothered. Anything having to do with girls, love, romance, signs of affection, terms of endearment and all things *amour* is the stuff of Jack's nightmares.

Valentine's Day is excruciating. So is that Delilah show on the radio. ("Love someone toniiiiiiiight! ... Aaaaack!")

If forced to watch a romantic comedy, Jack will try to enjoy the funny parts but literally turn his face from the screen or cover his eyes during kissing scenes. (He still hasn't forgiven J.K. Rowling for mucking up the Harry Potter series with those ridiculous Harry-Ginny and Ron-Hermione liaisons. What gives?)

It occurred to me recently, when my son was writing a thank-you card to a classmate and again refused to sign, "Love, Jack" — opting instead for the generic, non-committal "From, Jack" — that this dislike for the lovey-dovey might be because, unlike many other children his age, Jack actually takes this stuff seriously.

Proclamations of love shouldn't be easily tossed about like so many empty promises and



**SUZANNE PEREZ TOBIAS**

**Anything having to do with love is the stuff of nightmares.**

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### PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

## Ricki Lake wants you to help her plan her new show



Katy Winn/Associated Press  
**"The Ricki Lake Show" debuts this fall.**

**Ricki Lake's** upcoming talk show is issuing an invitation: Go online and join a production meeting.

Beginning today (6 p.m. CDT), "The Ricki Lake Show" will put a planning session live on Facebook once a month at <http://www.facebook.com/TheRickiLakeShow>. The goal is to let people get a peek at the series' development and weigh in on it, Lake and producer-distributor Twentieth Television said Tuesday.

Lake and the producers will ask for feedback on program elements including set design, website and music, said Stephen Brown, senior vice president with Twentieth Television.

"The Ricki Lake Show" debuts this fall. The TV show itself will be a "conversation," said Lake, adding that she won't be "the know-it-all who's got it all figured out," but instead will look for answers to life's challenges along with her audience.

### Clooney's next act

Actor and human rights activist **George Clooney** made a quiet visit to a volatile border region between Sudan and South Sudan last week ahead of testimony he was planning to give before a U.S. Senate committee today.

Clooney made the dangerous crossing from South Sudan into Sudan's Nuba Mountains region, Jonathan Hutson, a spokesman for the anti-genocide group the Enough Project, said Tuesday. Clooney saw burned-out villages and met with residents forced to seek shelter in caves because of aerial attacks by Sudan's military.

Violence has flared along the Sudan-South Sudan border since South Sudan seceded last year, and some experts worry the conflict could grow. South Sudan shut down its oil industry this year after accusing Sudan of stealing its oil.

Today's hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Com-

mittee will examine the oil dispute and the limited access aid groups are being given to Sudan's southern regions.

### Guns N' Roses a puzzle

Will **Guns N' Roses** reunite for their induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame?

Behind his dark glasses, hat and big hair, the group's former guitarist **Slash** is staying non-committal on the subject.

The million-selling hard rock group enters the Rock Hall in Cleveland on April 14, an event at which honored acts often perform as part of the celebration. But the group's original lineup fell apart in 1996, so fans hoping to see the band reunite may be disappointed.

"It's definitely an honor and I have no idea what's going to happen on that day," Slash told the Associated Press. "It's more like going into it with blinders on and just see what happens."

**Guns N' Roses** blazed onto the rock scene in 1987 with their "Appetite for Destruction." Fronted by bandana-wearing singer **Axl Rose**, the band also featured **Slash** and **Izzy Stradlin** on guitars, plus bassist **Duff McKagan** and **Steven Adler** on drums.

### Another year older

Today's birthdays: Actor **Judd Hirsch**, 77 ... bassist **Phil Lesh** of the Grateful Dead, 72 ... singer **Mike Love** of the Beach Boys, 71 ... singer-keyboardist **Sly Stone** of Sly and the Family Stone, 69 ... rock guitarist **Ry Cooder**, 65 ... singer **Dee Snider** of Twisted Sister, 57 ... model **Fabio**, 51 ... singer **Terence Trent D'Arby** (aka Sananda Maitreya), 50 ... singer **Bret Michaels** of Poison, 49 ... actress **Eva Longoria** ("Desperate Housewives"), 37 ... musician **will.i.am** of Black Eyed Peas, 37 ... rapper **Young Buck**, 31