



MODEL CITIZENS

America's Next Top Model and other star-making reality shows expand opportunities for predators and scam artists, as well as hopeful teens. William Squire and Laura Boulay, authors of *The Model's Workbook*, have heard plenty of horror stories while teaching young people how the modeling business works.

"There are 750 known predators right now that have a MySpace site," Squire says, referring to the most popular teen networking Web site. "I called every major agency that I know around the world and asked, 'You don't advertise looking for models on MySpace, do you?' I thought maybe things had changed. Everyone of them said, 'Definitely no, we do not do that.'"

Last fall, Squire and Boulay posted a safety survey on their own Web site (www.modelsworkbook.com) to gather more information, checked on photography and modeling offers on the Internet, and decided to take the warnings they've been offering to aspiring models to larger groups of young people. They have spoken at high schools across the country, including in Hawaii. Locally, they called on La Quinta, Palm Springs, and Cathedral City high schools.

William Squire teaches aspiring teen models how to identify legitimate agencies.

"We feel we have been very lucky," says Squire, who has a home in Palm Springs. "We are trying to do something to help." Veterans of the modeling business, Squire and Boulay say the following should raise concerns:

- An "agency" requests money up front, including for photos.
- An "agency" operates as a Web site only.
- An "agency" uses an 800 number for recruiting.
- An "agency" scout or photographer approaches you in a mall.
- The "agency" fee is more than 20 percent.
- Interviews are not held at the "agency."

Additionally, Squire and Boulay discourage teens from sending photographs and money to anyone from a Web site. Rather they suggest asking for a photographer's references, contacting the Screen Actors Guild to check if an agent is registered, and avoiding in-person meetings with someone who advertises for models on the Internet.

Though one piece of advice is often met with groans, Squire says they continue to stress it: "Always talk to your parents about it."

— Janice Kleinschmidt

Tea for Sixty

Add another indulgence to the desert resorts scene. Paseo Palms Bar & Grill in Palm Desert began its first season by putting its own spin on the British tradition of high tea.

On Saturdays, from noon until 5 p.m., the restaurant serves three-tiered silver trays with finger sandwiches, petit fours, opera tortes (mini cakes with almond paste and liqueur, sponge cake, and chocolate ganache), muffins, clotted cream, hazelnut cookies, and chocolate-covered strawberries. To wash it all down, Paseo Palms brews 25 gourmet flavors of tea (including cranberry apple, apple blossom, and white tea), prepared individually to order. Live classical music sets the gracious mood.

The ritual quickly became so popular that the restaurant had to limit the number of guests to 60 (reservations are required by noon on Friday because of the time it takes to prepare the treats). "It's very labor intensive," says Executive Chef Eldon Pico, "but it's something good to offer the public, and we get a lot of great feedback." Pico created a repertoire of finger sandwiches, such as lemon and cucumber, wild mushroom pate, egg salad with thinly shaved ham, apple butter and rose petal jam, and prosciutto and melon. The service also includes a fruit platter and, for those who order the "royal tea," a deli platter.

Women have come in groups from two to 28, says co-owner Darrell Kelley, who describes the high tea as a touch of elegance and leisure and class. Men, he says, are "a definite minority" among the patrons. "It's a time to sit and chat and have ladies' time out."



Christy Arvin, Rebecca Drue, and Susie Peat enjoy High Tea at Paseo Palms Bar & Grill.

— J.K.