

SMART IDEAS

Whine Not

WHAT CAN CALM THE LITTLE BEASTS CHILDREN BECOME ON ROAD TRIPS? MOVIES AND GAMES, OF COURSE.

BY P. KELLY SMITH

WHAT: Survive the Drive LLC
WHO: David and Liz Walsh
WHERE: Havertown, Pennsylvania
WHEN: Started in May 1998

ANY PARENT WHO'S EVER TAKEN KIDS on a road trip knows the biggest driving hazard isn't rain or fog, but boredom and bickering. David and Liz Walsh hope to silence the age-old question "Are we there yet?" with their company, Survive the Drive LLC, which sells and rents portable TV/VCR units for use in cars, vans and SUVs.

The germ of the idea came several years ago during a long car trip. In an effort to appease their four small children, the Walshes rigged up a combo TV/VCR unit using milk crates and bungee cords. Although it may have been just a



crude prototype, Liz says, "When it worked, it was a beautiful thing."

In May 1998, Liz started the business from the couple's basement with only four units for rent. By April 1999, the business had grown enough for David to leave his own business to join Survive the Drive as vice president. A year later, they opened a store; and today, they have more than 500 units that they ship across the country via UPS. Rentals are \$99 for 10 days and \$49 for a weekend. Survive the Drive also rents Nintendo 64, as well as activity kits, audio books and various games. They've also set up shop online at www.survivedrive.com, where 75 percent of their sales are generated.

With sales having tripled in 2000, and with sales expected to double for 2001, the Walshes, both 36, attribute their success to an idea that fills a universal need. "No matter who you tell about traveling with

a family," says David, "they always have a [horror] story."

Playing Their Cards Right

WHAT: AmericanPostcardArt.com Inc.
WHO: Phil Neigh and Liz Coursen
WHERE: Sarasota, Florida
WHEN: Started in May 2000

IF YOU WONDER WHAT YOUR HOMETOWN looked like 100 years ago, don't bother going to the library for a book—just visit AmericanPostcardArt.com. Here, Phil Neigh, 39, and Liz Coursen, 41, have taken thousands of vintage postcards and enlarged them into fine art prints. Coursen has been collecting rare and one-of-a-kind postcards for nearly 20 years. When Neigh encouraged her to share her collection, the two decided to create a Web site. The more than 50,000 different prints,

T-shirts and mouse pads available are divided into three categories—People, Places and Things—and are priced from \$14.50 to \$48.50. Sales are growing by 10 percent per month.

"The thing that's so cool and almost addictive about this is you've never seen everything," Coursen says. "Fifty thousand products is just the tip of the iceberg." ■



VISTA CARDS: Bringing the past alive are Phil Neigh and Liz Coursen's vintage postcard prints.

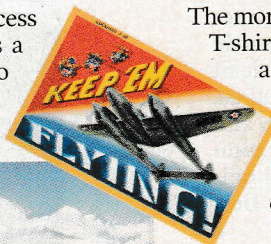
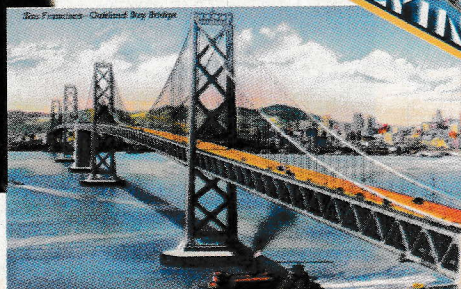


PHOTO © JAMES WASSERMAN

PHOTO COURTESY: AMERICANPOSTCARDART.COM INC.