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Channel 19

THE OXFORD COMPANION TO
**AMERICAN
FOOD AND DRINK**
EDITED BY ANDREW F. SMITH



Truck stops in their mid-century heyday were considered oases of respectable, if meat-heavy, cookery for respectable, if meat-heavy, truckers. ... The surprisingly decent truck stop of old has long since made way for the anonymous, corporate-run service plaza.

The brief nod to truck stops in a "Roadhouses" essay that's part of the new 700-page Oxford Companion to American Food and Drink (Oxford University Press, \$49.95)

Stronger, faster, better?

In the 1970s TV series "The Bionic Woman," Jaime Sommers was upgraded after a skydiving accident. In NBC's current revival of the series, Jaime (played by Michelle Ryan, pictured) gets upgraded after you guessed it - being hit by an 18-wheeler. Did parachute manufacturers complain, or what? In the storyline, the big rig is driven not by a professional but by Sommers' murderous, Terminator-like predecessor, Sarah, but a cliché is a cliché no matter who's at the wheel.



The Love Sponge is a lifesaver

Those "Bubba Army" mudflaps you've been seeing are not a military campaign but a marketing show on Sirius Satellite Radio's raunchy "Bubba the Love Sponge" afternoon show on Sirius Satellite Radio's Howard 101 (the Howard Stern channel). The show's obscene theme song is "Full Trucker Effect" by the band Johnny Socko, and truckers who call in identify themselves by saying, "FTE, Bubba!" Todd "Bubba" Clem (second from left), who broadcasts from Tampa, Fla., may have won new fans in October, when the shock jocks kept a suicidal caller on the line for 40 minutes until police were able to locate the man. The flaps are \$6995 at www.btis.com.



The spindle of your dreams

Sculptor Dustin Shuler's 50-foot-tall Spindle, a trucker's wish-fulfillment fantasy and a landmark at the Cermak Plaza Shopping Center in Berwyn, Ill., since 1989, soon will come down to make way for a Walgreens. Whether the "car-kabob" goes up again depends on whether the Berwyn Arts Council can raise the \$300,000 needed to restore and move the thing. Visit the "Save the Spindle" campaign at <http://berwynartscouncil.org/STS>.



Hey, there's more

odd news and trivia related to trucking than can fit here. See it all at the new [Channel 19 blog](http://Channel19.blogspot.com), Channel19.blogspot.com, and add your comments. You also can share your own offbeat items with Blogmaster Andy Duncan, who will consider them for use on this page.

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