

NATION & WORLD

National Enquirer buys rival tabloids

BY SETH SUTEL
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — In a deal that would combine the best-known supermarket tabloids, American Media Inc. — which owns the National Enquirer, the Star and the Weekly World News — is buying the publisher of the Globe, the Sun and the National Examiner for \$105 million.

The deal to buy Globe Communications Corp. was announced Tuesday.

It is the first acquisition by American Media since it was purchased in May for \$300 million by a New York investment firm headed by former Deputy Treasury Secretary Roger Altman.

The combined company will be "one of the largest publishers of celebrity-driven content in the world," with annual revenue of \$400 million, said David Pecker, chairman of American Media.

Facing declining circulation, the National Enquirer has been trying to improve its credibility by moving away from stories about Elvis sightings and alien abductions.

Other parts of the American Media family are sticking to more traditional tabloid fare. A recent issue of Weekly World News has a story about the exact day the world will end and another about UFOs being piloted by angels and demons.

Pecker said American Media's goal has been to "differentiate and distinguish each of the print properties from one another, and that same strategy will be applied to the Globe properties."

The Globe this week has coverage of the JonBenet Ramsey case and the breakup of radio shock jock Howard Stern's marriage, while the Sun touts features on the world's biggest cat and a clairvoyant's prediction that the Virgin Mary would appear at Lourdes this year.

The two companies will consolidate their Florida properties and establish a combined headquarters at the Globe's main building in Boca Raton. American Media is based in Lantana.

Animal experts study two-headed turtle

STAFF REPORTS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Even the heads of animal experts here shake in disbelief at the sight of a two-headed turtle believed to be the only living one on public display nationwide.

"The amazing thing isn't that it exists, [but] it's that it's alive," said Eric Stine, animal curator at Charlotte's Nature Museum, where the turtle now lives.

Bicephalic turtles, often caused when two embryos are fused together, usually live only a month or so.

But this yellow-bellied slider turtle, half called Peanut Butter and the other half Jelly, was found in Charlotte's Freedom Park in spring 1998. Today, it's three inches long and fits into the palm of a hand.

Catherine Payne, the turtle's previous caretaker, donated Peanut Butter and Jelly to the museum last November because she was worried she wouldn't be able to take care of it when she started classes at Gaston College.

"And I knew that they would be in a better environment," Payne said. "I knew they would take care of them and raise them right."

The turtle couldn't go on display until a special terrarium was built, with a

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Eric Stine
animal curator
Charlotte Nature Museum

warm light for basking and shallow water.

The turtle is a study in diverging wills. Peanut Butter takes two steps forward toward dinner, dragging Jelly along. Then Jelly does the same thing, in the other direction.

X-rays show the turtle has two spines. Stine thinks it also has two hearts and two sets of lungs.

Museum workers hope it will live to a ripe old age — 25 years, if it achieves the average life span of sliders in the wild. It also might grow to eight pounds if it's female, and three pounds if it's male.

Museum workers don't yet know the turtle's gender, or whether it's both, and won't know for another year or so. At that point, they can determine whether it's growing long fingernails, which the males wiggle right in front of the female's face as part of the mating ritual.

BUSH

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to the governor and his security officer."

Bush, 53, was treated at the scene and later traveled to New Hampshire, where he was delivering his third education speech today. He said he felt fine.

"If I needed to, I could go out and run three miles," Bush said Monday evening after landing in New Hampshire.

Staff Sgt. Roscoe Hughey, a 39-year-old Texas Department of Public Safety agent who was following Bush on a bicycle, received bruises to his left side, DPS spokeswoman Tela Mange said. He was treated at the Brackenridge Hospital emergency room and released several hours later, a hospital spokeswoman said.

The DPS declined to say how many other officers were accompanying Bush.

Witness Ernest Bedford, 50, a city pipeline inspector who was working nearby, said about 15 police officers showed up at the scene within a minute.

Bedford said he didn't hear any brakes squeal, just "a big, loud bang."

When he looked up, Bush was in the clear, but "the other guy was reaching his hand up out of the debris," Bedford said.

Bush used Hughey's cellular telephone to call DPS officials at the Governor's Mansion, and they called 911, said Linda Edwards, Bush's press secretary.

"The governor stayed with Roscoe until he was in the ambulance," Edwards said.

"I'm very lucky and so is the DPS agent," Bush said.



Cleanup crews remove debris before righting a trailer that overturned Monday along a hiking trail near downtown Austin, Texas. Presidential candidate George W. Bush suffered minor injuries when he dove off the path to avoid the wreck.

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