









THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

Freebies Abound on Bustling Streets

Throngs of people a lure to those promoting items from coffee to condoms

BY JESUS LOPEZ JR.

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Protesters, scalpers and tourists are not the only people on Salt Lake City's Main Street sidewalks. Men with coffee urns strapped to their backs are giving out samples. Some plug wasp juice, and a Utah AIDS Foundation volunteer dressed as a condom promotes the benefits of safe sex.

It's all part of street scene unlike pretty much anything the capital city has seen, and it probably will last until the Winter Olympics' Closing Ceremony on Feb. 24.

"I love it," says Sean Carlson, the guy wearing the urn and handing out cups of Nescafé cappuccino. "My background is communications and public relations, and it's just fun to get out there and meet people."

Carlson and colleague Aviel Miller

firm hawking the instant coffee through the Olympics.

Nearby, Eddie Clark, sporting a Vespa hat, tells people what the athletes are drinking.

"It's a wasp extract," he says, holding out a water bottle with a wasp floating in yellow liquid. "It's not like tequila — you don't drink from a bottle with an insect." Clark says athletes drink from little bottles produced in Japan.

Down the street, a 6-foot tall Durex condom hands out "safe sex" packets that include two condoms and a glow stick.

"People are really open to it," says Utah Aids Foundation volunteer Jill Sparks, who inhabits the costume. "It's a good way to break the ice with people."

A woman pulls out her camera and poses with Sparks for a picture.

The suit always attracts a crowd, which helps out the foundation's cause, Safe Games 2002.

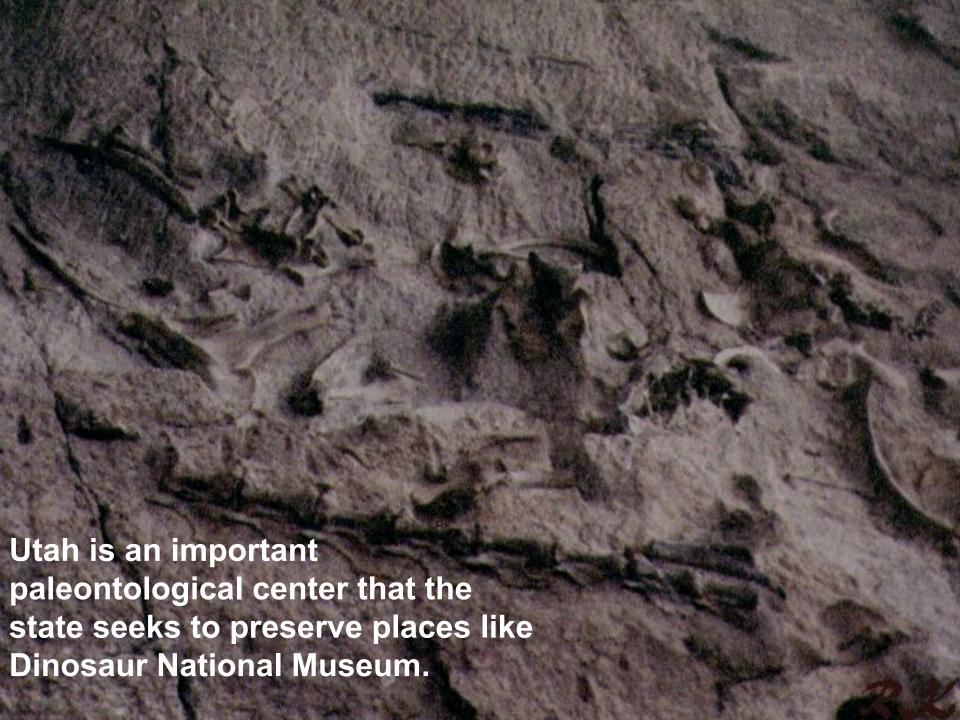
"Everybody loves it," says Sparks' helper, Robert Jones. "Everybody wants a picture. Everybody wants a condom."

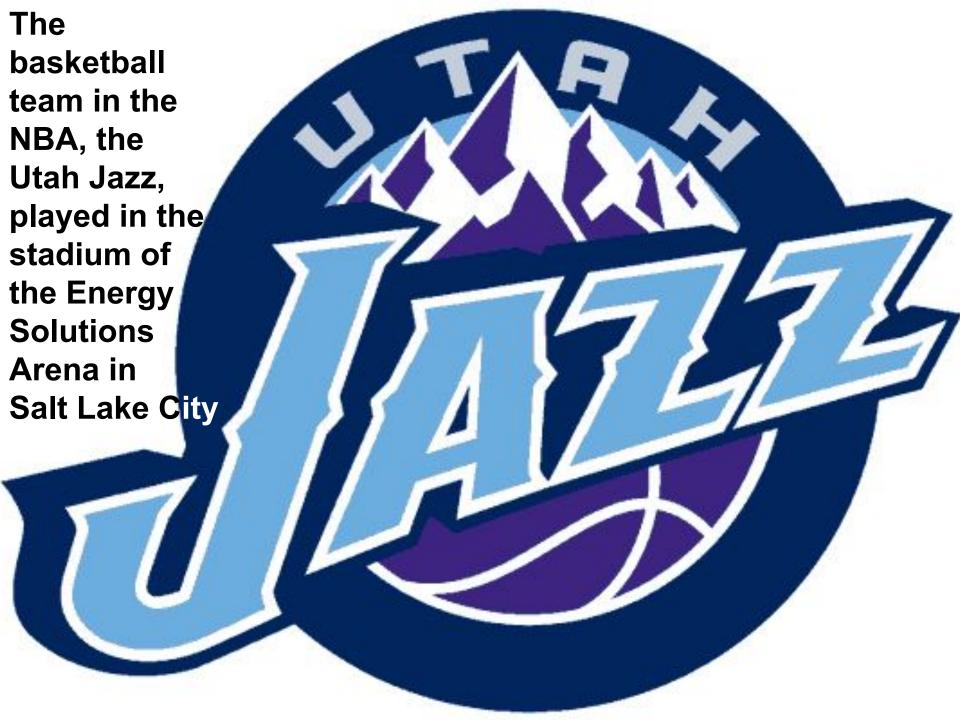
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Jesus Lopez/The Salt Lake Tribune

Sean Carlson totes Nescafé on his back and



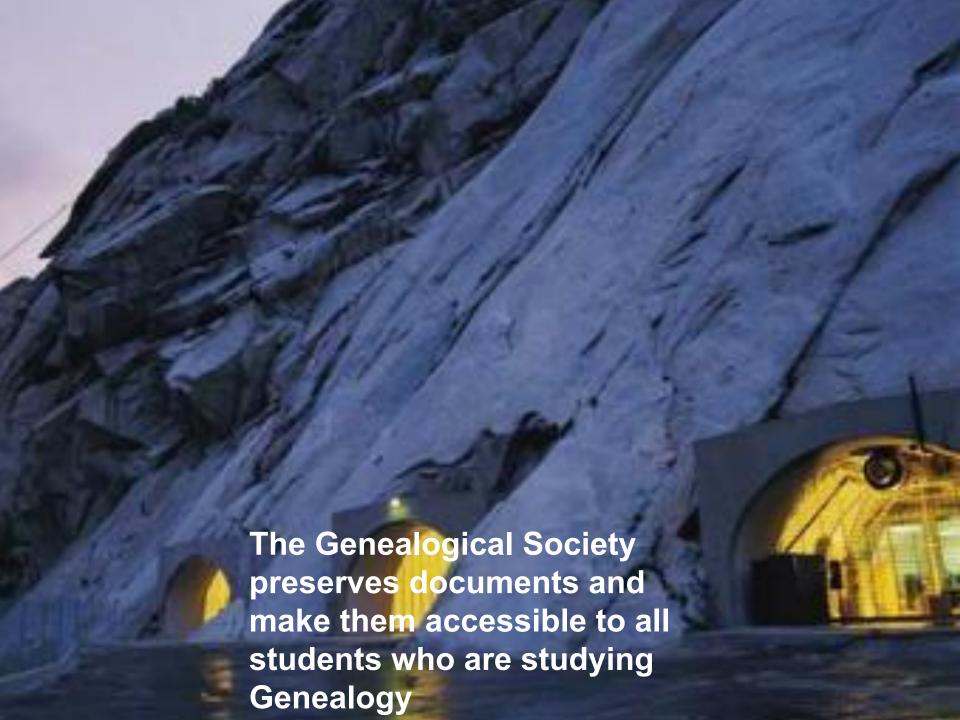










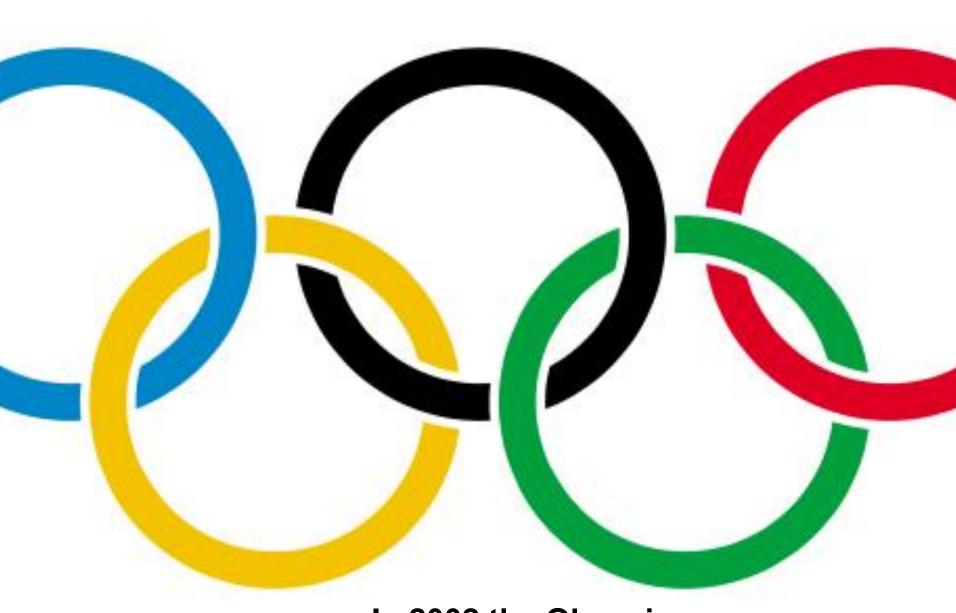




This is the flag of Utah







In 2002 the Olympics were held in Utah