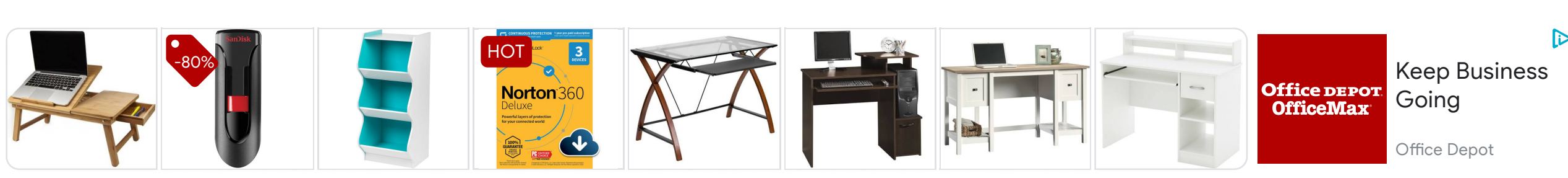


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OUTDOORS

It's the perfect year to step into snowshoeing

By Diane Bair and Pamela Wright Globe Correspondent, Updated January 1, 2021, 12:05 p.m.



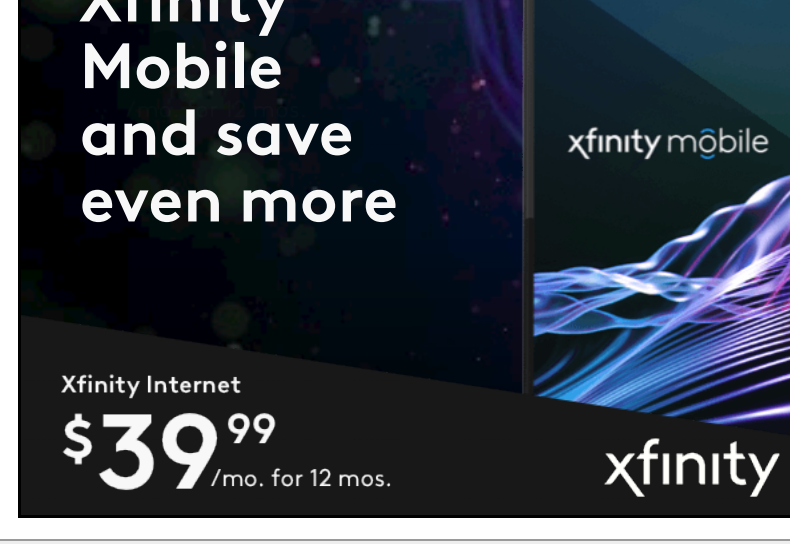
Mia Bilezikian, of Boston, snowshoed through the Public Garden after December's snowfall. JESSICA RINALDI/GLOBE STAFF

Winter 2021. This could be the perfect time to try snowshoeing.

"Snowshoeing is a great opportunity to get outdoors in snow-covered landscapes that are beautiful, peaceful, and rejuvenating to the spirit," says Sue Wemyss, ski school director and active programs instructor at Great Glen Trails in Pinkham Notch, N.H.

It's also a way to get exercise and fresh air, doesn't require a lot of skill or technique, and can be enjoyed in a variety of settings, like a snowy backyard, golf courses, parks, and touring centers. And says Sara DeLucia, guided adventure manager for the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC), "It makes traveling in deep snow easier, so you can enjoy walking or hiking all year."

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Ready? Let's do it!

Bring the kids

Generally, as soon as your kids can walk comfortably in winter boots, they can snowshoe; that's probably around 2 years old or so for most kids. However, it also depends on your child's temperament.

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"When to start snowshoeing is quite individual, depending on your child's tolerance for being dressed and out in the cold, and their attitude and attention span while moving relatively slowly in a snow-covered, natural environment," says Wemyss.

Beginners, regardless of age, should start out slowly. "Short outings are best when you're learning," says DeLucia. "Your backyard is a great place to start. From there, you can try it at a local park or on a nearby trail. Start out on flat terrain and work up to hills."

Touring centers, and organized, guided walks (with COVID-19 safety precautions in place) are also great places to learn for both kids and adults. "Many cross-country ski centers have both groomed and ungroomed trails that are mapped and marked, making them easy to follow," says Wemyss. "Additionally, starting out at an outdoor center gives the new snowshoer access to staff who can advise on current trail conditions and their degree of difficulty."

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Gear up

Rent equipment first to see if you enjoy the sport. Also, the staff in the rental shop will be able to help select equipment. Body weight is the primary factor when choosing the right pair of shoes.

"In general, heavier folks need bigger snowshoes to stay on top of the snow. Also, if you plan on carrying a substantial pack, the weight of the pack ought to be taken into consideration," says Wemyss. "And although there are models designed specifically for men and women, unisex models are quite doable for both sexes."



A snowshoer took a break on Imp Face, located near Pinkham Notch in the White Mountains. JONATHAN WIGGS/GLOBE STAFF/FILE

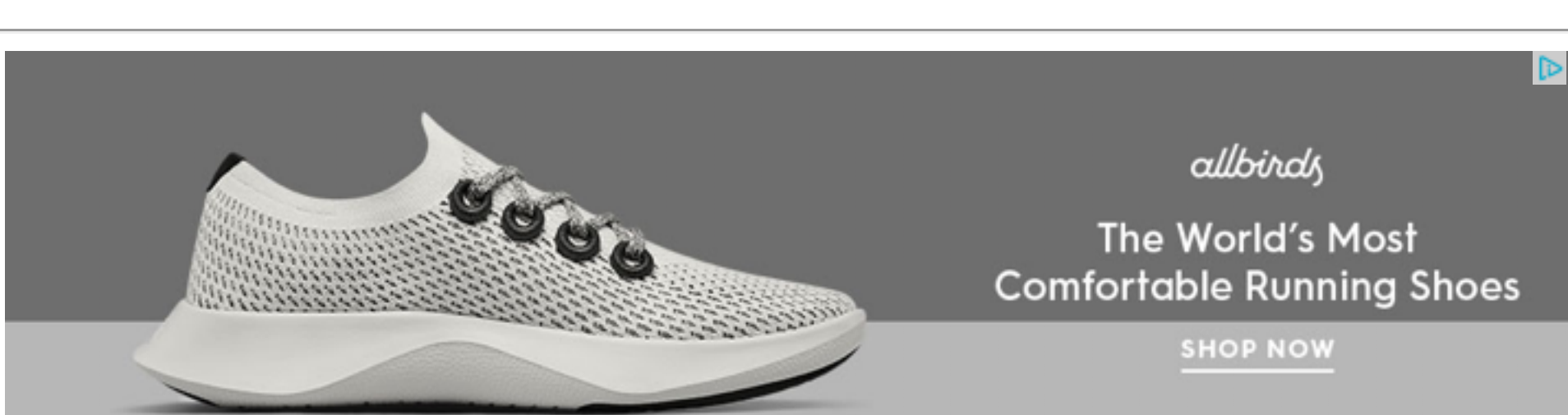
Also, before purchasing snowshoes, consider where you'll be using them. Will it be mainly on packed snow surfaces, like at an outdoor center where snow grooming occurs? Or will you be using them in deep snow that isn't previously tracked? "The deeper the snow, the bigger the snowshoe required for adequate flotation," says Wemyss.

You'll also want to dress in layers: a synthetic, wicking base layer on top and bottom, then an insulating layer, like a fleece or lightweight sweater, topped with a wind and waterproof top and bottom. Wear a hat and gloves, of course, along with a neck gaiter or balaclava on very cold days, and don't forget eye protection. "Start out wearing minimal layers, and add others as you need them," DeLucia advises.

It's easy

Perhaps you've heard the adage, if you can walk, you can snowshoe. There's truth in that.

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"All you need to do is walk without stepping on the other shoe. It's really that simple," says DeLucia.

Wemyss agrees, "Snowshoeing is quite straightforward. And good, modern day snowshoe bindings are hinged under the ball of the foot, so you can walk and toe off normally."

That said, planting your shoes and leaning forward helps you go uphill, and poles can help maintain balance. "Make sure your poles are outfitted with winter baskets, and purchase ones that are adjustable so you can find what's most comfortable for you," says DeLucia. "In general, they should be at a height where your arm is at a 90-degree angle when the poles are straight up and down."

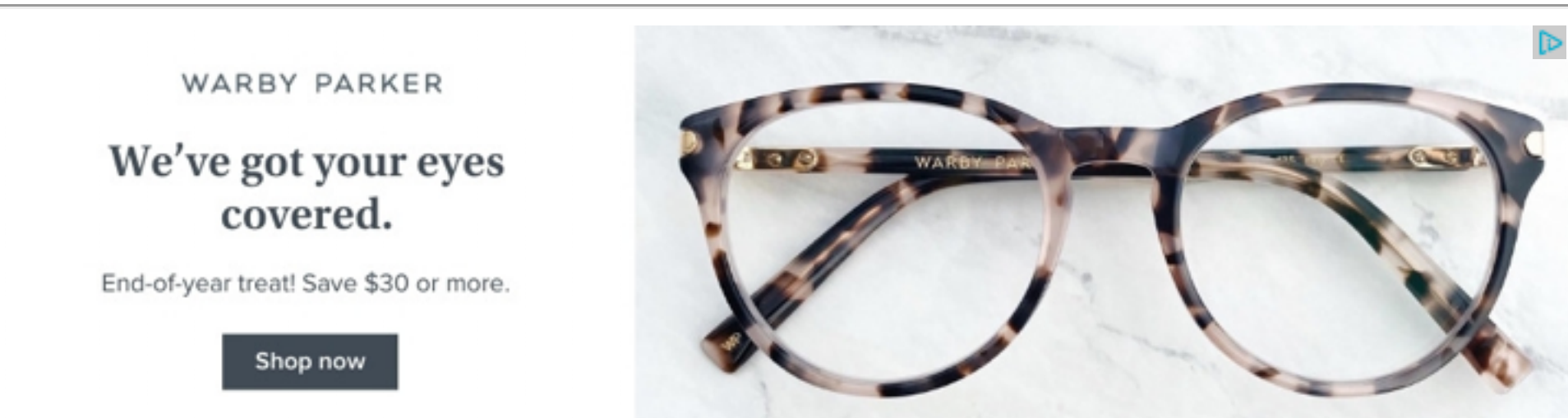
And if you fall, don't panic. If your snowshoes are stuck in the snow, roll on your back to free them. If you're on a hill, position your snowshoes across the hill (not pointing downhill), get on your knees, and stand up. If you're really struggling, you can always take off your snowshoes and then get up.

Stay safe

Be prepared, including planning an outing that's appropriate for your skill level, and bring extra clothing, food, and water. "Cold injuries are possible with snowshoeing, and prevention is key," says DeLucia. "Keeping warm, dry, and hydrated, and eating enough calories are all important."

Route finding can also be a challenge, especially after a recent snowstorm, so plan your route carefully and pay attention to signs and trail markers. And remember, snowshoeing can be very labor-intensive, especially in deep snow. You'll need to make the return trip from wherever you started.

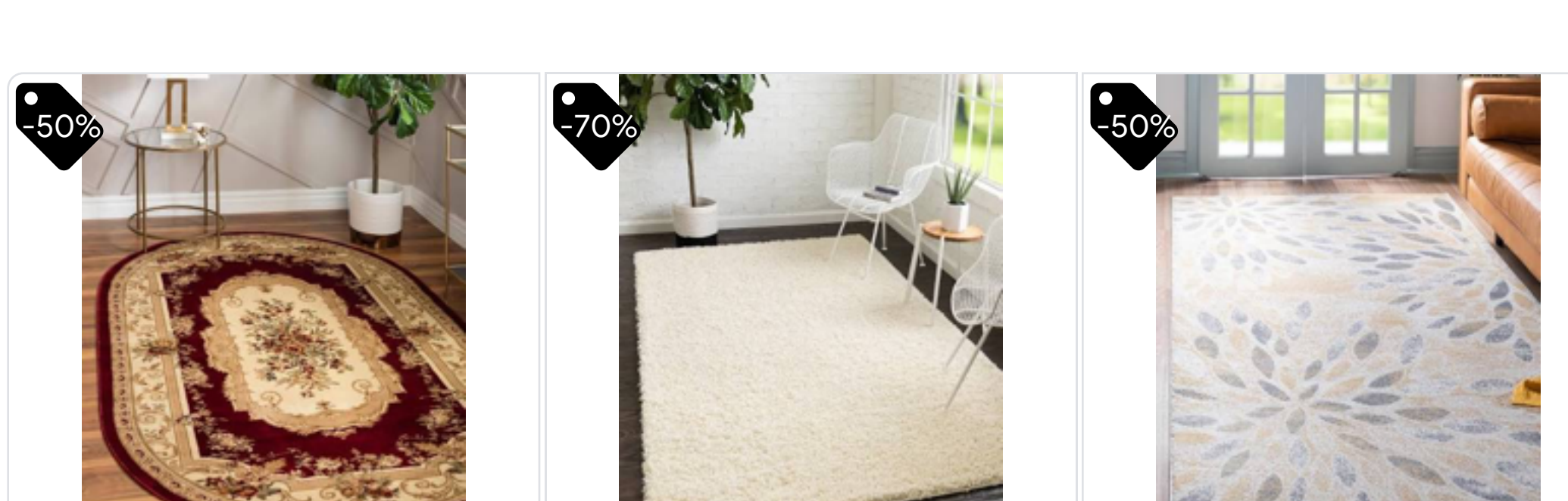
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Also avoid crossing rivers, lakes, and ponds, even if they look frozen. Finally, breathe in deep, look around, and enjoy. Winter 2021. Bring it on!

Diane Bair and Pamela Wright can be reached at bairwright@gmail.com

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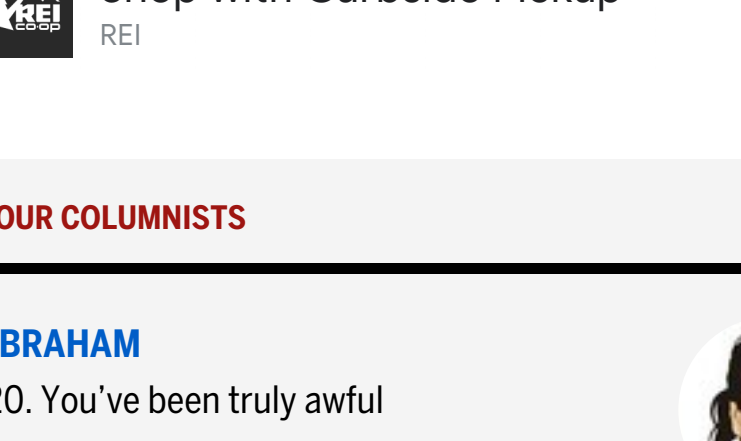


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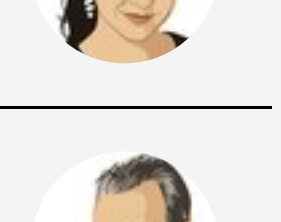
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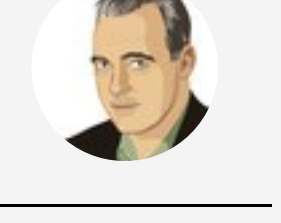
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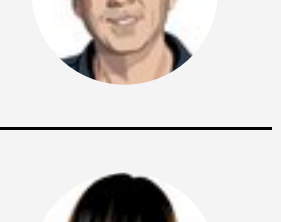
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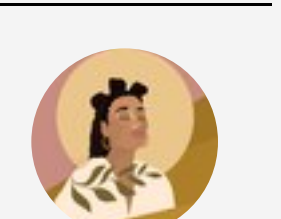
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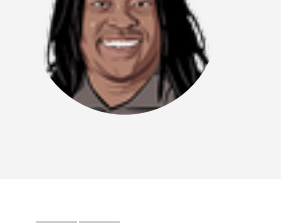
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Trump's conspiracy train reaches the end of the line

Republicans in Congress should be standing up for the results of the election and rejecting the president's conspiracy theories, not fueling them.



LARRY EDELMAN

Sons sue beer baron Jerry Sheehan, claim he tapped company funds for personal use

The lawsuit doesn't specify damages. But it alleges Jerry Sheehan was responsible for more than \$80 million in "fabricated" management fees' unsupported by formalized agreements... as well as millions of dollars in interest on intercompany loans."



RI NEWS

Providence's NBC affiliate faces firestorm after host's comments about incoming female lawmakers of color

Rhode Island's top rated television news station declined to air an episode of its weekly public affairs show on Sunday after the host came under fire on social media this weekend for claiming that three incoming female lawmakers of color were striking a "fierce pose" in a picture taken on the steps of the State House.



Listen to the full phone call President Trump had with Georgia's secretary of state

Over the course of a one-hour phone call, President Trump pressed Georgia's Republican Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger to "find" votes on Saturday.



Here's a month-by-month look at how 2021 might play out

The Globe reviewed more than 15 experts, who detailed their visions for a year of recovery, frustration, and opportunity.



Mass. to require all new cars sold to be electric by 2035 as part of climate-change measures

Among the changes the state plans over the next decade: retrofitting 1 million homes to use electricity for heating instead of gas and oil, cutting commuters' driving miles by 15 percent, and dramatically increasing offshore wind power generation.



NFL Black Monday tracker: Chargers fire Anthony Lynn; Texans, Panthers request to interview Nick Caserio

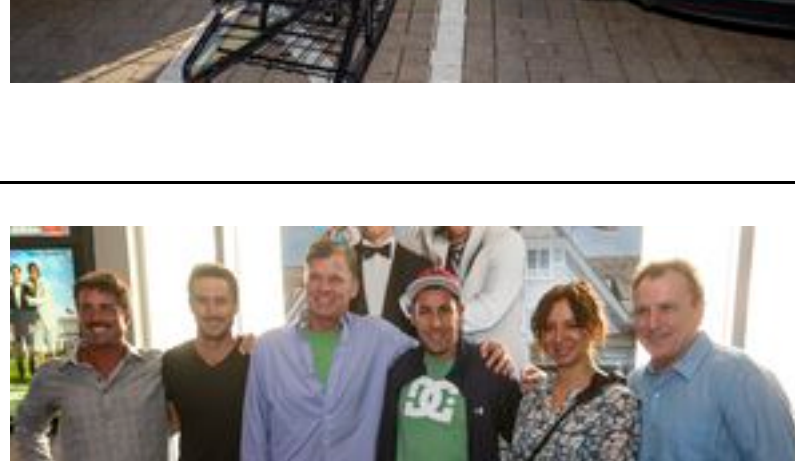
It's time for the annual parade of firings and hirings among coaching staffs.



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The former ESPN sportscaster's smart and good-natured show can serve as an antidote to contrived and boring Argument Radio.



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I thought we were in a relationship



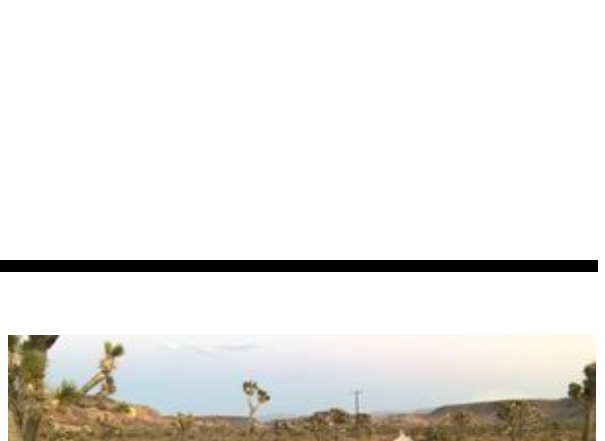
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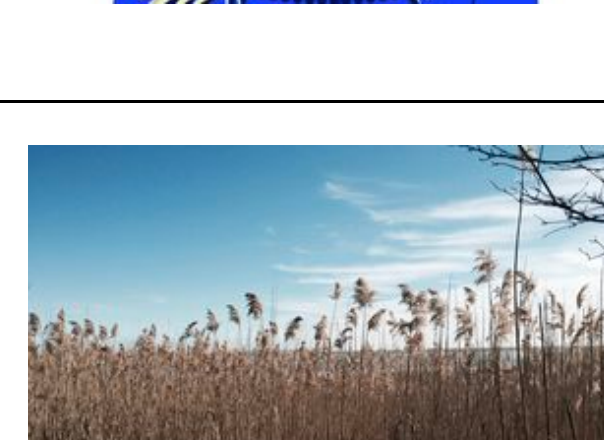
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