

# Entertainment Outlook

## There's still hope for the sub-40 set

It was touching. It really was. Deeply moving, to wake up one morning last week and discover that the newspapers of the world have proclaimed that I am not yet middle-aged.



### Weir's View

By Ian Weir  
Thomson News Service

It was the sort of overwhelming show of support that encourages a guy to believe that he is still in the blossom of youth — and other reassuring little lies of this nature.

Well, perhaps I should qualify this, just a little. The newspapers of the world weren't actually talking about me, specifically.

To be perfectly honest, the newspapers of the world have never — somehow or other — given much indication

that they know I exist. Possibly this is because I am (like most of us) not running for office, running from the police, or running around with a TV starlet.

In actual fact, the newspapers were talking about Prince Charles, who has just turned 40. And in doing so, the newspapers said, "the future king passed into middle age."

There you have it. That's what it says, in the newspaper — having turned 40, Charles can now be considered middle-aged.

By contrast, I am still a lad of 32. Excuse me, while I dash out to buy a skateboard.

The plain fact is that I've been wrestling with a terrible secret suspicion ever since turning 30.

Oh, kind friends have tried to console me. Lots of people assured me that 30 is still officially young. Lots and lots of them. Funnily enough, they were all at least 40.

But in my heart of hearts, I knew differently. Let's face it — simple arithmetic tells us that 30 is (twice, shudder) middle-aged.

You've got 30 years of youth, and 30 years in the middle, and with luck maybe 30 years at the other end — subtracting a few days for each weekend

you spent watching football, urinating beer and eating potato chips.

Naturally, we as a society have become pretty good at denying this sort of arithmetic. In fact, we've managed to stretch youth to some pretty remarkable limits.

When Mikhail Gorbachev took over in the Kremlin, we marvelled that a mere 54-year-old could achieve such prominence. When George Bush named young Dan as his running-mate, we were aghast that such high office could be entrusted to a child of 41.

And when I read the other day that a 120-year-old man had passed away at a nursing home in Kentucky, there was the sudden urge to cry: "Poor fellow — struck down in his prime!"

Quite often, this sort of denial works fairly well. At other times, we can always try the other tack, and pretend that growing older doesn't bother us a bit — like everyone else on this side of 30, we can start calling our friends "the boys," and giggle hysterically at bumper-stickers proclaiming "You're only young once, but you can be immature forever."

But deep inside, I've known that this

was all an elaborate fib. Once you're turned 30, you're into your middle years. Which means — and this is the truly hideous part — you can't keep trying to pass yourself off as a Young Person With Potential. At this point, you've got to try (Lord help us) to Accomplish Something.

And now, out of the blue, the newspapers — wise, respectable newspapers — have proclaimed that you're not middle-aged until you're 40. What's more, the papers have remarked upon the fact that Charles is unlikely to take on his appointed tasks as King for another 30 years.

Just think of it. At 40, he's just barely middle-aged. Best of all, here is an international role-model who is not even expected to find a job — let alone live up to his potential — until he's 70.

Wow. Now, these are parameters a guy can live with.

Dear Prince of Wales: Just a quick note to let you know you've made my day. Happy birthday, kid.

P.S. Wanna play some road-hockey?



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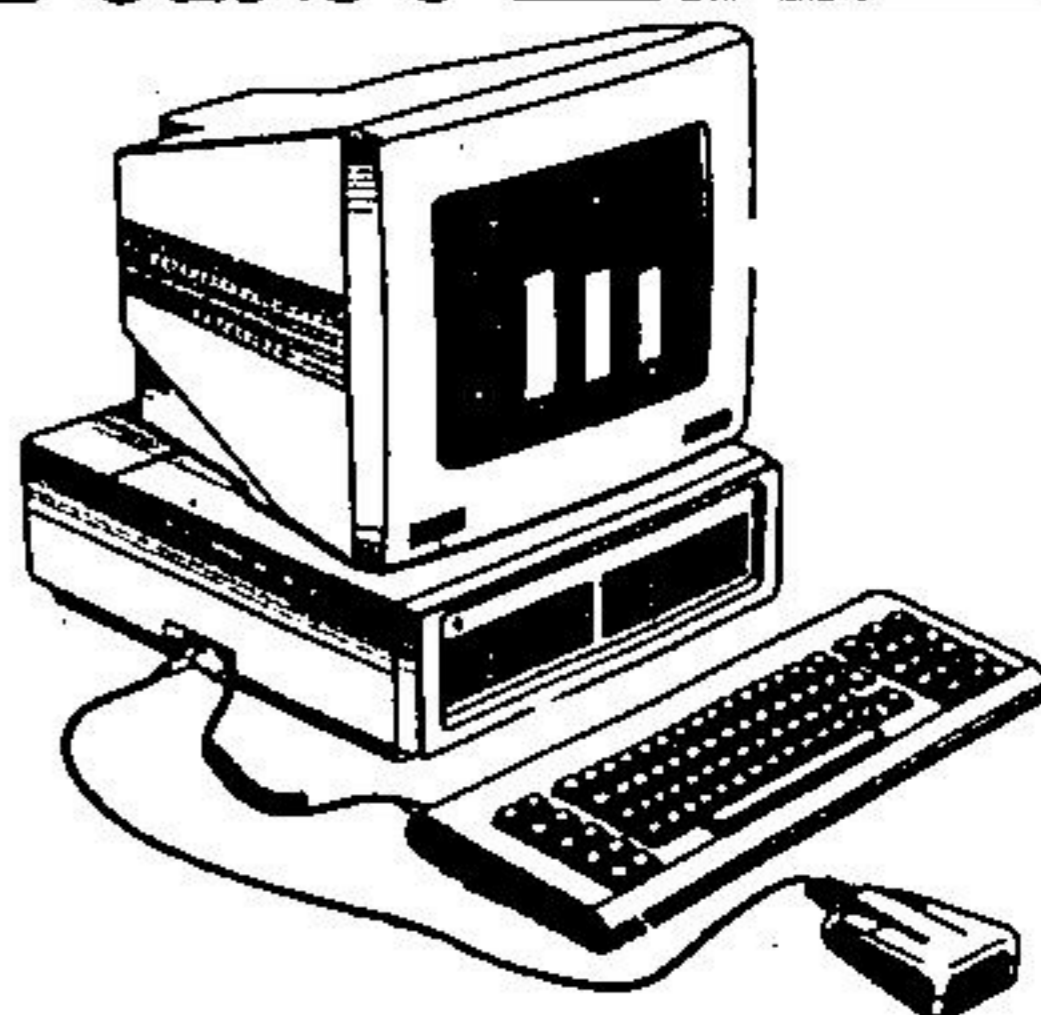


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