

Contact: Neatly Chiseled Features
(262) 248-9460
mrboffo@mrboffo.com

Gary Silbar
Gary Silbar Communications
847.433.5784

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**World's Most Prolific Cartoonist and Renowned Family Psychologist
Unite to Launch 'Boffo' Valentine's Day Smokeout**

LAKE GENEVA, WI – January 29, 2007 – A grassroots effort crafted by internationally syndicated cartoonist Joe Martin and renowned family psychologist Dr. Jon Carlson positions Martin's most notable comic strip and character, "Mr. Boffo," in an unfamiliar position – as a "spokescomic" – for setting a date to stop smoking.

On Valentines Day (February 14), Martin and Carlson's collaborative comic strip, "On the Edge," and Martin's "Mr. Boffo" comic, will focus on getting smokers to kick the habit. "On the Edge," written for newspaper health pages, offers humor and advice to people from all walks of life with challenges and irritations.

The idea behind the Valentine's Day Smokeout was hatched two months ago when Dr. Carlson was talking with Martin at a Lake Geneva, WI coffee shop where Martin normally sketches ideas for "Mr. Boffo" comics. According to Martin, he was sketching a cemetery scene with a gate. Ghosts, including that of Mr. Boffo, rose from their graves to gather on the sidewalk beyond the cemetery to smoke. The punch line is, of course, that smoking was what caused them to be in the cemetery in the first place.

Dr. Carlson asked Martin if they could work the cartoon into their "On the Edge" feature, which includes a comic accompanied by advice from Dr. Carlson.

As Dr. Carlson wrote encouragement to help set a "quit date" for a beloved smoker, he connected the "Mr. Boffo" comic with his "Give Yourself for Valentine's Day" workshop, where partners are encouraged to sacrifice an irritating habit or mannerism (or dedicate quality time to each other) with the ultimate outcome being an increase in happiness of the entire family. Thus, the idea for the First Annual Valentine's Day "Mr. Boffo" Smokeout was born.

"Giving part of ones self makes a greater gift than candy, stuffed animals or Valentine's Day cards," Dr. Carlson emphasized. "Give something your entire family will appreciate. This Valentine's Day, stop smoking."

"Not to mention the savings," added Martin. "You could probably take a Valentine's Day cruise next year with money you'll save by quitting smoking. And that's sure to bring happiness to your family."

Martin and Dr. Carlson's "On the Edge" Smokeout cartoon will appear as a feature in newspapers and on news web sites on February 14. Martin's "Mr. Boffo" Smokeout comic will appear in newspapers nationwide on Valentine's Day as well. Both cartoons, along with an animated version, will be available on the "Mr. Boffo" web site at www.mrboffo.com/boffosmokeout.

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Boffo Valentine's Day Smokeout – Add one

About Dr. Jon Carlson

Dr. Jon Carlson was named one of the “Living Legends in Counseling” by the American Counseling Association. He is a distinguished professor of psychology and counseling and has a private psychotherapy practice in Lake Geneva, WI. He has authored 35 books including the best-selling “The Mummy at the Dining Room Table,” and “Time for a Better Marriage.” He has developed and hosted over 200 video programs for the American Psychological Association and is currently working on a book with the Dalai Lama on marriage.

About Joe Martin

Internationally syndicated veteran cartoonist Joe Martin was born on the south side of Chicago. His talent for drawing caricatures of his teachers gained him fame in grade school. Joe was always drawing. By age 16 he was married; by age 20 he had four sons and a divorce. He met Marie, the love of his life, in a department store elevator. They tied the knot several years later and have been together for 34 years.

Joe's first feature was “Tucker”, published in 1978. That was followed by “Willy 'n Ethel,” “Porterfield,” “Mr. Boffo,” “Cats With Hands” and an unusual co-authorship with renowned psychologist Dr. Jon Carlson called “On the Edge.” Joe is the first cartoonist in 20 years to form his own syndicate, **Neatly Chiseled Features**, which launched on October 31, 2005. He also created cartoon history in late 2006 by animating his features for newspaper web sites. In 2000 the *Guinness Book of World Records* recognized Martin as the World's Most Prolific Cartoonist. Joe lives in a rather large stable-turned-residence on the south shore of Lake Geneva, WI with Marie and two cats, Fluffy and Snuggles.

About “On the Edge”

The idea for this "laughter is the best medicine" cartoon-advice panel blossomed when Dr. Jon Carlson showed one of Joe Martin's features to a desperately troubled "on the edge" patient in his office. The humor touched a chord, opening the door for understanding. When Dr. Carlson told Martin the patient's story, they began planning a new feature to help people by an unusual method of humor linked to good advice. “On the Edge” was launched on February 1, 2006.

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Editor's Note: The “Mr. Boffo” and “On the Edge” Valentine's Day Smokeout cartoon and animated feature are **available to any newspaper or website for free download** at

<http://www.mrboffo.com/boffosmokeout/>.