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# KUP'S COLUMN

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The Weekend PicKup: The question is whether Ald. Tim Evans and Eddie Vrdolyak will engage in a mayoral debate tomorrow or will it be a roast of Rich Daley? Undoubtedly Daley will be the subject of numerous slings and barbs for declining to participate. But his followers maintain Daley will be laughing all the way to the fifth floor in City Hall. THE CONTRETEMPS OVER DALEY'S absence reminds us of a similiar situation in the 1980 presidential debate, in which the League of Women Voters invited President Jimmy Carter to face off against two rivals, Ronald Reagan and John Anderson. But Carter refused to allow the independent candidate, Anderson, to participate "because he wasn't a legitimate contender." Thereupon the league arranged two separate debates, Reagan vs. Anderson and then Reagan vs. Carter, which was made memorable by Reagan 's line, "There you go again, Mr. President." Needless to mention, the debates helped Reagan win a smashing victory.

DICK CHENEY SAILED THROUGH the Senate for confirmation as defense secretary. But he doesn't fare that well with veterans organizations. Our desk has been swamped with letters of protest from veterans who are upset because Cheney never served in the armed forces. One such letter points out, "President Bush had 27 million veterans to chose from. So why did he select somebody who never heard a shot fired?" We're giving space to the veterans to vent their spleen, but we believe the Joint Chiefs of Staff provide all the military input the defense secretary needs.

A REPORT THAT the longtime friendship between U.S. Attorney Tony Valukas and Dan Webb has cooled because they're representing opposing sides in the trial of sports agents **Norby Walters** and **Lloyd Bloom** is an erratum. They just made plans to go fishing together after the trial. Opposing attorneys often are like fighters who slug it out for 10 rounds, then wrap their arms around each other.

ALD. EVANS has accomplished something little noted - he has managed to lower the decibels of his more rancorous supporters, whose spoutings had alienated a large segment of the population. . . . Wally Phillips, long a pillar of WGN radio, will continue to have a major presence on the station with his new schedule, which calls, in part, for a unique role. Wally will tape feature segments to be used on the station's other programs. In a few weeks, his new Sunday schedule will call for four hours on the air in an expanded travel and call-in show.

OPRAH WINFREY isn't the only weight-loss victor. Evangeline Gouletas-Carey shed 20 pounds and now is slimmed down to a Size 4. And she'll soon publish Engie's Slim Gourmet Diet Book, as well as market a perfume, Engie. . . . Two unfriendlies, Eddie Vrdolyak and Appellate Justice Eugene Pincham, were among the VIPs paying tribute to teacher Marva Collins at a fund-raiser for Westside Prep over the weekend.

WITH THE OUSTER of DePaul and Notre Dame, Our Town's NCAA hopes are riding with the U. of Illinois (the team we picked to win it all). The Illini will face toughie Louisville Friday night. . . . Hollywood Pictures, the new studio on the block, is launching its career with a seven-movie deal with Goldie Hawn. She'll also produce some of the seven movies. Hollywood Pictures is a division of Walt Disney Studios.

MEL BROOKS doesn't take lightly the possibility of Iranian terrorism. That's why he asked us to explain that our gag - "If Ayatollah Khomeini is angry now, wait until he sees Mel Brooks' movie version of Satanic Verses" - did not come from him nor does he plan such a movie. "With all the crazies around, you never know what would prompt an act of terrorism," he says. So bug off, Khomeini followers.

FACES AND PLACES: Phyllis Diller renewing old friendships with Mary Sethness and Hope McCormick over lunch at Cricket's. . . . Andy Williams giving the new salad bar at Avanzare a workout. . . . Maestro Larry Novak acting the proud pop while watching son Gary, a drummer with Maynard Ferguson, at the Fairmont Hotel. . . . Verna Sadock, WMAQ-Channel 5's courtroom artist, playing herself in a courtroom scene in "Music Box."

CHICAGO SCHOOLS are widely criticized, but one program, sponsored by philanthropist Irving Harris, is attracting national attention, according to Chicago magazine. It's the Beethoven Project, an early-learning program at the Robert Taylor Homes, in which \$10,000 is spent to prepare each child for school. . . . Publicist Margie Korshak is the latest to join the growing field of producers of special events.

TONIGHT'S TREAT: Channel 11's "The Congress," which recreates the leading figures in the 200-year history of Congress. . . Welcome spring birthdays: Emmett O'Neil, Channel 9's Joel Weisman, William Hurt, Carl Reiner, John Ehrlichman, Bobby Orr and Mona Crackel, 90, who will celebrate in the Pump Room, where she was one of the original employees in 1938. . . . And overheard at Gene Sage's: "He and his wife are inseparable. Last week, six cops couldn't separate them."

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