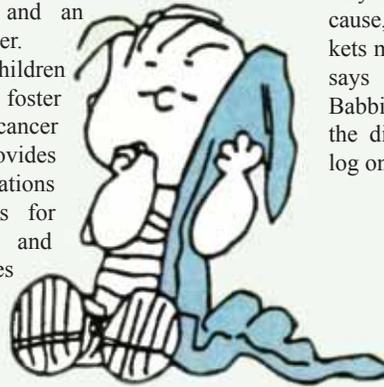


THE GIVING SPIRIT: PROJECT LINUS

Karen Loucks knows just how important security blankets are for kids. That's why she started Project Linus, a nonprofit organization that distributes them to ill or traumatized children. Named for Charlie Brown's best friend, who carried a comforting piece of cloth wherever he went, Linus was founded in 1995 after Loucks read about a girl who'd endured grueling chemotherapy treatments with the reassurance of her own special blanket at hand. Linus is for "all children

in need of a hug," says Loucks, now the group's Denver chapter coordinator and an honorary board member. Project Linus covers children in homeless shelters, foster homes, hospitals and cancer centers. It even provides blankets to police stations and fire departments for victims of accidents and emergencies. Besides its 245 chapters in the U.S., Linus has affiliates in England, Australia and Canada.



Anyone can contribute to this cozy cause, but there is one rule. "Blankets must be handmade and new," says Linus president Carol Babbitt. "The kids always know the difference." For information, log on to www.projectlinus.org

Spa Dentistry



You may not associate scented candles and New Age music with a root canal. But at the Rozenberg Dental Day Spa, in New York City, patients are treated to a hand massage, neck wrap and a cooling eye mask before they even say,

"Ah." These days, a growing number of dentists are coming up with innovative ways to relieve people's anxiety about sitting in their chairs. American Dental Association spokesman Matthew Messina says U.S. dentists are also equipping offices with virtual-reality headsets and TVs. The trend isn't just an exercise in distraction, he explains: "It's the natural evolution of caring for patients."



the new new thing

Silence telemarketing calls—at least computer-dialed ones—with the TeleZapper, which emits a special tone that signals your number is not in service. The device, though, can't fool human callers. (For information, call 888-217-9732.)



The Ultimate Survivor

Mark Burnett, the executive producer of *Survivor*, just published *Dare to Succeed: How to Survive and Thrive in the Game of Life* (Hyperion). We caught up with him just before taping began on *Survivor 3*.



His personal definition of success: "Having the ability to make choices."

His best teacher: "My mistakes."

His sacrifices: "It's hard to keep the balance between work and family. I just have to hope my sons [8 and 4 years old] realize that though I'm absent seven months out of the year, I'm a good dad when I'm

here."

His favorite *Survivor*: "I don't really have a favorite, but it's great hanging out with Richard Hatch."

On the lawsuit alleging Burnett influenced votes on the show: "I'm confident that we'll be vindicated. *Survivor*

is a contrived situation, but

the challenges and voting are completely real."

How he'd do as a player: "If I didn't understand the game, I'd be voted off early, because I tend to lead from the front."

His choice of island companion: "I've been so busy that I wouldn't mind being stranded alone."