

➤ The U.S. Education Department reports that average geography scores of the nation's fourth and eighth graders, while low, have improved from 1994.

➤ Ellula introduces HotAir Speakers, a set of battery-powered, inflatable speakers that are small enough to fit in your pocket when deflated.

Stockbyte



Ellula



LIFESTYLE

➤ Nickelodeon's "SpongeBob Squarepants" ignites imaginations across the nation and appears on store shelves on everything from slippers to suspenders.

Matthew Staver/Bloomberg News/Landov



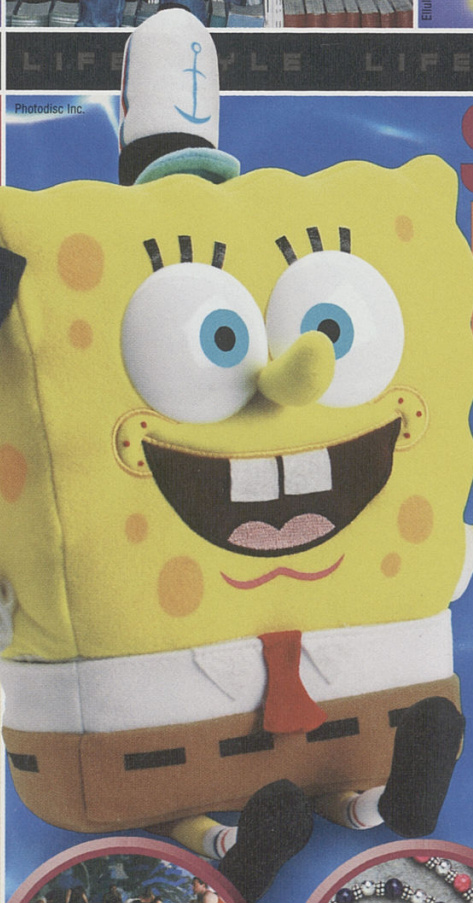
➤ McDonald's unveils new lower-fat french fries due to the new Healthy Eating Pyramid and in response to many former patrons suing for making them overweight.

➤ 1970s peasant shirts are alive and well on runways and in school halls.

David Dyson/Camera Press/Retna



Photodisc Inc.

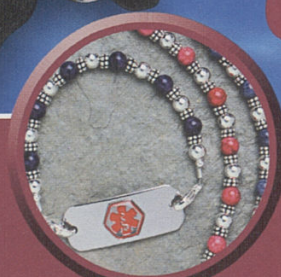


SPONGE BOB SQUANT'S PANTS



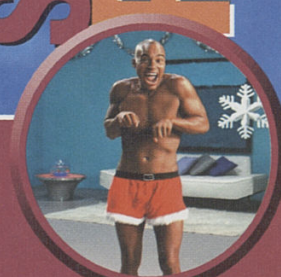
Neal Graham/Omni-Photo Communications

➤ The Institute of Medicine announces that maintaining health now requires one hour of exercise daily, doubling the previous recommendation.



www.laurenshope.com

➤ Jewelry designers Le Ann Carlson and Denise Gaskill add style to safety with Lauren's Hope for a Cure medical ID bracelets.



Kmart Corporation

➤ Kmart rejuvenates the Joe Boxer brand with ads featuring the dancing Joe Boxer guy, Vaughn Lowery.