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An Amur tiger cub nuzzles with mom Sheba at the Detroit Zoo in Royal Oak, Michigan



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You're mayor on Weblo.com

April 29, 2007

BY HEATHER NEWMAN
FREE PRESS COLUMNIST


Forget what you know: Detroit's last mayor was a 31-year-old microbiologist from Montreal.

At least that's true on Weblo (www.weblo.com), the part-game, part-Web site, part-investment curiosity where you can control real-life locations (and earn a percentage of all the ads that are placed there) and the celebrity fan sites and other content that go into them.

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Canadian Andy Jonson bought Detroit last September for about \$45 -- and sold it in December for \$225 to an anonymous purchaser.

"While you own a city, you are the mayor of that particular city, which allows you to collect taxes on all properties bought in the city," he said. "There are also ads placed on the city page by Weblo.com, and as mayor, you get a percentage of the ad revenue.

"Owning a city also gives you control of the content that appears on the city site. So for instance, Ford or Chrysler may want to advertise on the Detroit page or be the official car manufacturer for the City of Detroit. To do so, they would have to deal with the mayor of Detroit and work out some sort of a deal -- which could be pretty lucrative for the mayor as the Weblo world population increases."

So far, almost 6,000 cities have sold worldwide. Jonson bought Detroit on the first day, snapping it up with a number of other high-population U.S. cities.

Got local gaming news or a gaming-related question? Contact HEATHER NEWMAN at 313-223-3336 or hnewman@freepress.com.

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