

\$5 plus oats -- fair fee for Emerson

The platform industry has come along way since Ralph Waldo Emerson received a fee of \$5 plus oats for his horse for lecturing. "Lecturers today represent one of our most inflated commodities," says Dan Moore, director general of the International Platform Association, the professional organization of the speaking circuit.

Today, self-proclaimed experts in almost any field earn tens of thousands of dollars per talk. Speakers — Robert Kennedy Jr., Virginia Gov. Doug Wilder, Playboy ceo Christie Hefner, comedian Pat Paulsen and film star Jayne Meadows — showcased their talks at the annual IPA convention at the Mayflower Hotel.

Charles Keating, the former owner of Lincoln Savings and Loan, told the group "How to Save Three Hundred Billion Dollars," while Art Linkletter talked about "The Most Unpredictable Audiences of My Career."

An executive chain letter is making the rounds among the superstitious in Washington, New York and Los Angeles. This isn't the



CAPITAL CONNECTIONS

By
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old-fashioned kind where you send postcards or booze. This is a good-luck letter with scary threats if you dare break the chain. It arrives complete with a packet of cover letters signed by VIPs who sheepishly feared the worst if they didn't instruct their secretaries to pass it on to five friends.

Washington Post executive editor Ben Bradlee sent it to friends with a note: "A man will do anything out of fear."

Art Buchwald mailed it to female pals including Cosmo editor Helen Gurley Brown with a letter: "The last person to break this chain was seated next to Morton Downey Jr. at the next dinner party."