



Cashing in on 15 minutes

Hire 'celebrities' to send video greetings to your loved ones

Every now and then I'm reminded that I am not as young as I feel. Sometimes it's as simple as being called sir by the youngsters in the gym. Or it may be the realization that an ever increasing portion of conversations with my contemporaries is taken up by talk of medical issues and our latest visits to the doctor.

Perhaps the most surefire way to be reminded of the number of trips I've taken around the sun is to be exposed to the celebrities currently popular with folks younger than me.

Cameo.com is a website that lets you hire celebrities to deliver personalized video messages to friends, family, colleagues or



KEVIN O'NEILL

InSites

anyone you want to honor or embarrass in a unique way.

It sounded like a fun idea, so I checked it out. As it turns out, I have never heard of a large percentage of the people

who are considered celebrities today.

Not only that, many of these modern-day celebrities come from fields that didn't used to exist. A celebrity used to be an actor, athlete or musician. Or it could be someone who distinguished themselves in a high-profile pursuit, such as Neil

Armstrong, Martin Luther King Jr. or Charles Lindbergh.

But many of the celebrities on Cameo have gained their fame via social media, as bloggers, gamers or even something called an Instagram influencer. The most expensive celebrity booking that I saw on the site — at \$1,000 per message — is Caitlyn Jenner, whose profession is listed as "icon."

There are more traditional celebrities on the site as well. The prices to book a video message vary depending on the star's clout. A high-profile athlete, such as NFL legend Brett Favre, will run you \$500 for a message. Past his prime, but still working, comedian Gilbert Gottfried will tape some comical

comments for \$125 a pop. Infamous porn star turned presidential paramour Stormy Daniels will steam up your screen for \$375 a session. Rapper Riff Raff will rhyme for you for \$50.

Booking the talent is easy. You can browse the stable of stars by categories, such as actors, reality TV, musicians, Disney, YouTubers, Broadway, models and many more. Once you select a star, just click on his or her picture to get to the booking page. There are a few sample videos here you can view to see how the star performs. Fill out the form with details on who the message is for, what it should say and your credit card information. Then click on the Book Now button to place your order.

The site claims that cameos will be done within a week, usually faster. Celebrities can refuse messages they don't feel comfortable delivering. The messages are delivered via email or text.

A celebrity video seems like the perfect gift for our fame-obsessed culture where everyone seems to have a carefully curated social media production that can be viewed by anyone, anywhere, at any time. Who knows, with enough views, maybe you can be a celebrity, too.

KEVIN O'NEILL is a staff artist for The Times-Tribune. Share your favorite websites and apps with him at koneill@timeshamrock.com.