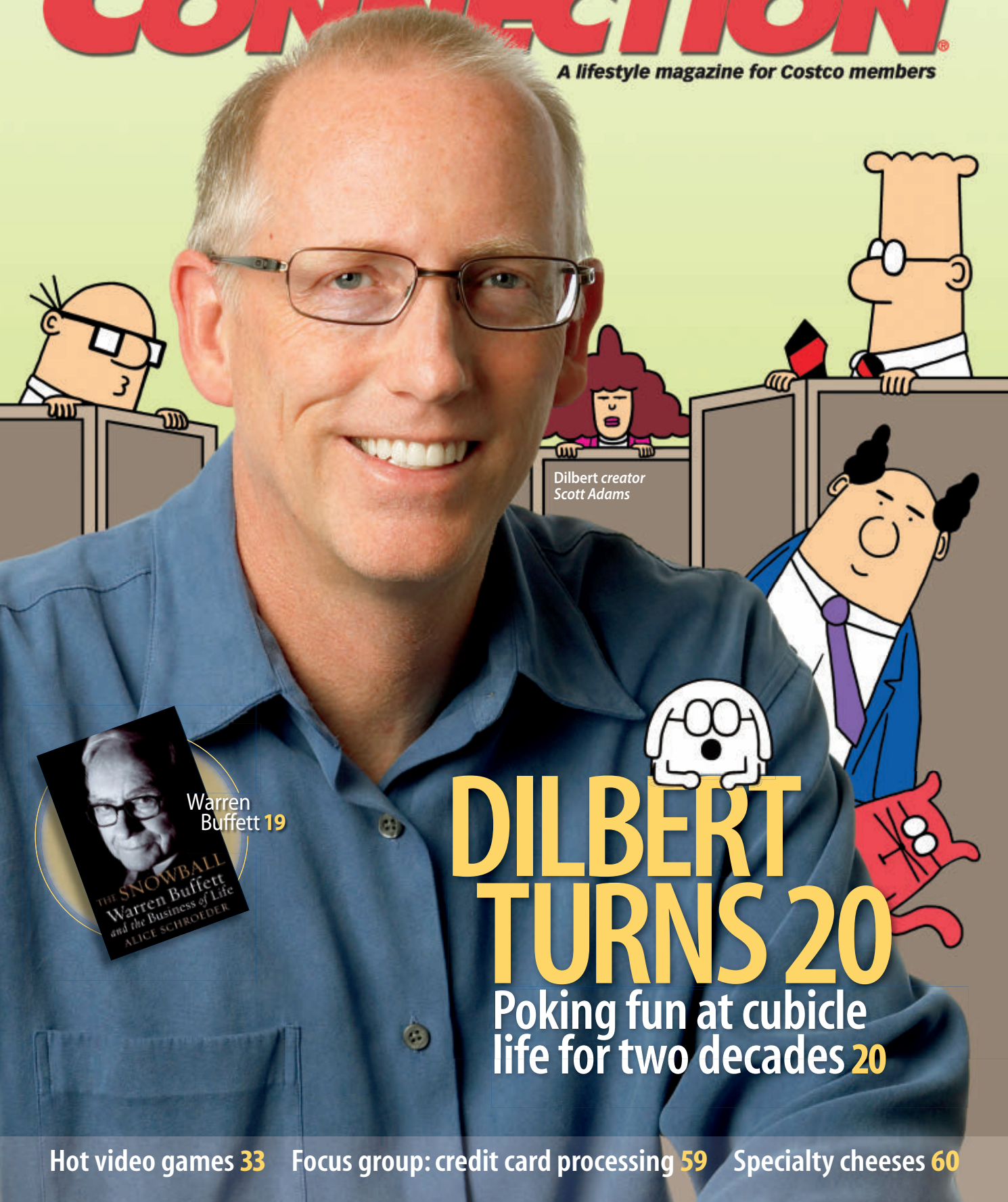


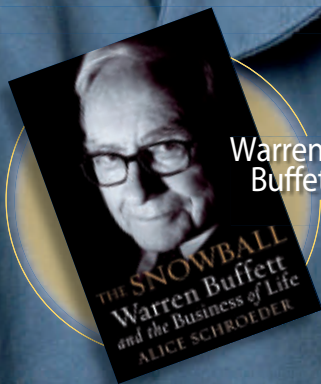
# THE COSTCO CONNECTION

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A lifestyle magazine for Costco members



Dilbert creator  
Scott Adams



Warren  
Buffett 19

## DILBERT TURNS 20

Poking fun at cubicle  
life for two decades 20



CUNARD CRUISE LINES

**Cruising aboard the *Queen Mary 2* is like living on a city at sea.**

decker buses on its decks.

It serves 14,000 meals daily. With food ranging from haute American cuisine (from Boston's famed restaurateur Todd English) to British pub food, passengers are not likely to get tired of the eats over the six-day trip.

In addition to offering gambling and shopping from such stores as Hermès and Harrods, the QM2 is the only ship with its own planetarium. During the day, the auditorium's ceiling is lowered for an educational sky show created by New York's Hayden Planetarium.



CUNARD CRUISE LINES

Everyone quickly finds what attracts them. Lectures from the Royal Academy,

cooking lessons, martini tasting, e-mail and Web access, and a full gym boost the options. To thoroughly make its case, ask Cunard for its "101 Things to Do" cheat sheet.

For my wife and me, daily dips in the exquisite spa pools operated by Arizona's famed Canyon Ranch, then a massage in one of the 24 treatment rooms, were highlights. Next, we did a little reading in the ship's library; with 8,000 volumes, it's the largest library at sea.

The ship's size is impressive. Cunard designed the QM2 with a three-story atrium, wide corridors and soaring ceilings. The QM2's main restaurant, the Britannia, seats 1,351 passengers in an elegant multilevel room dominated by a two-story mural of the ship arriving in New York Harbor.

Four stabilizers reduce rolling by 80 percent, so there's little chance of getting seasick. A force 9 gale (which we experienced on our trip) causes only minor rocking and rolling.

A transatlantic cruise might strike you as a trip suited to the elderly. But it's also for young people who want a relaxed holiday. If you're looking for rock-climbing walls or artificial-wave machines, you won't find them here. What you will find is a wide range of activities in keeping with an era that Cunard once helped to define and now hopes to evoke. ☒

*Eric Taub is a frequent contributor to The Costco Connection. He also writes regularly about travel and business for The New York Times and other publications.*

Crossing the pond in

# Elegance

## Cunard's *Queen Mary 2* evokes the dignified travel of the past

By Eric Taub

WHILE CRUISING is not the biggest sector of the travel industry, one type of cruise has seen dramatic growth over the years: the transatlantic crossing.

This is impressive, because the most popular cruise destinations have been to warmer climes, such as the Mediterranean, the Caribbean and Western Europe. Yet the number of Americans making a transatlantic voyage has tripled in the past six years.

Maybe it's because sailing from the New World to the Old with nothing but the sea at your side evokes memories of the elegant floating palaces of the past, such as the *Queen Mary*. With this mode of travel, it's easy to set aside life's normal give-and-take and enter, if just for a while, a new way of pacing one's day.

If you've ever thought about crossing the Atlantic on an upscale ocean liner, take a look at Cunard's four-year-old *Queen Mary 2* (QM2), the only vessel making scheduled transatlantic voyages. Crossing the Atlantic on the QM2 is not a cruise but a voyage, the QM2's captain, Commodore Bernard Warner, explained to us when my wife and I sailed with him from Southampton, in England, to New York last autumn. We and the other 3,000 people on board were not passengers but guests, staying in staterooms, not cabins.

Semantics? Hardly, the commodore said. The right terminology, along with a three-week training course at Cunard's White Star University, instills the crew with the spirit of the grand era of ocean voyages, when elegantly dressed ladies and gentlemen experienced the finest in service and cuisine.

Everything about the QM2 speaks superlatives: It is the largest passenger ship ever built. It is as tall as New York's Chrysler Building and spans the length of four city blocks. It could hold 600 London double-

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