

tions seen as underpaid, such as treating pneumonia.

■ **Procter & Gamble Co.**, today may report higher fourth-quarter profit, bolstered by sales at its Gillette unit. Net income probably climbed 31 percent to \$1.96 billion, or 53 cents a share, said Prudential Equity Group LLC analyst Constance Maneaty.

■ **Kodak** Chief Executive Officer Antonio Perez today the company may cut as many as 2,000 more jobs than previously planned, or 27,000 in all, at a cost of as much as \$3.4 billion.

■ Investments in safety measures that companies undertook after the Sept. 11 attacks have already paid off, according to a study by the **Manufacturing Institute**. These so-called supply chain security measures have, among other things, improved customer relations, cut inventory excesses and reduced delivery times.

■ **Burger King Holdings Inc.**, which went public in May, posted a fourth-quarter loss and sales that missed some analysts' estimates, sending shares down 13 percent.

■ **Verizon Communications Inc.** reported a decline in profit as cable-television companies stepped up spending to lure customers to their phone services. Second-quarter net income declined 24 percent to \$1.61 billion, or 55 cents a share, from \$2.11 billion, or 76 cents, a year earlier.

— STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

LifeKnot seeks niche in dating market

By **JESSE NOYES**

Matt Muro was tired of the online dating scene.

The Harvard University computer programmer felt most Web-based dating sites weren't connecting with his interests.

"I was doing some online dating myself, and I was on a number of sites myself, and I wanted something that felt more natural," Muro said.

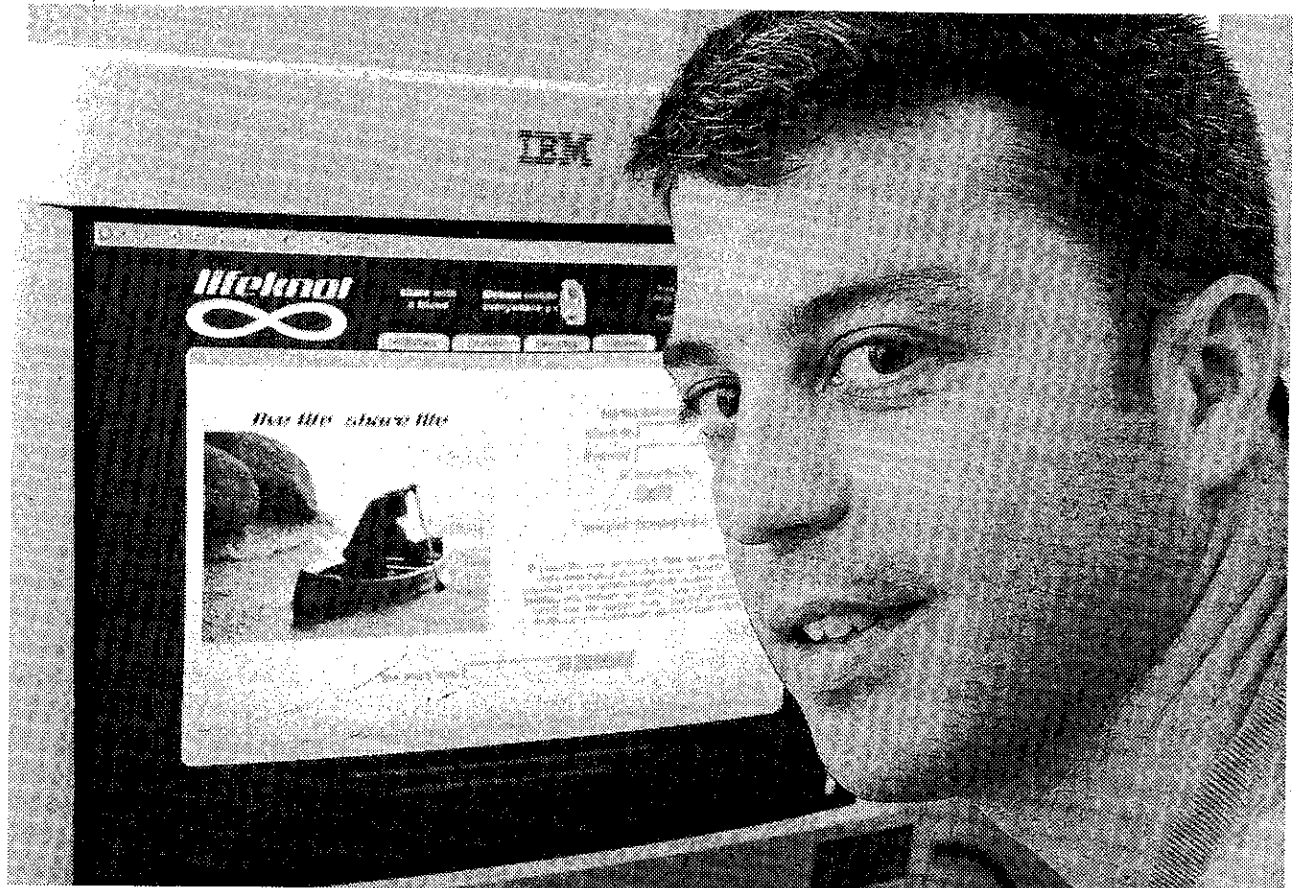
So Muro created LifeKnot.com, an online dating site that's a little bit MySpace and a little bit Match.com. The key difference: LifeKnot.com is a place for people with very similar interests — from parasailing to beer pong — hook up.

Like other dating sites, Cambridge-based LifeKnot lets users create profiles and meet others with similar interests. But those sites often lump too many activities together, Muro said. "Some activities you don't normally find on a social networking or dating site," he said.

But with Match.com and MySpace raking in money, many small start-ups are trying to get in on the action, launching online dating sites dedicated to niche categories. And that heavy push might be creating a glut of Internet dating services.

In the Boston area alone there are Web sites for everything from Red Sox fans to hard rock fans.

LifeKnot goes up against such sites as Rock N' Roll Dat-



HOT DATES: Matt Muro shows off his Web site, LifeKnot.com, which seeks to pair people of similar interests.

STAFF PHOTO BY MATTHEW WEST

ing — www.rnrdating.com — and MatchingSox.com, a Web service that links up fellow Sox fans.

"I think it's already oversaturated," said Rich Savoie, founder of Rock N' Roll dating, which lets users sign up to meet at local rock shows.

For sites like LifeKnot,

making it in a crowded market is tough, and word-of-mouth may no longer be enough.

LifeKnot, which currently offers all of its services for free, already has 12,000 registered users. Even so, Muro recently began advertising on the MBTA's Red Line to

garner more interest.

Breaking in with a new concept is easy because of the technology. But most new dating services will likely be eclipsed by the big players, said Tim Ferriss, a lecturer in high-tech entrepreneurship at Princeton University.

"There are new dating sites that specialize in everything from concert goers to rock climbers, but I expect that we'll see massive consolidation as the top three sites simply add the features that prove popular in smaller start-ups," he said.