

RED EYE

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ONLINE LOVE SCAMS

Dishonest daters, criminal predators trap unsuspecting singles with lies that can leave them broke and brokenhearted
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E-MAIL VS. CELL PHONE
IT'S DOWN TO THE FINAL 2
IN REDEYE'S TECH WARS—
CAST YOUR VOTE ONLINE
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5 YEARS OF LOLLA
Deal would keep fest rocking in Chicago
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What led to fall at the finish line?
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CTA's past could help fix future
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Smudge leaves its mark on Series
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Legend shows off his fresh sounds
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Web of Lies (the following is only an excerpt. The full story is no longer available.)

CHICAGO TRIBUNE's RED EYE -- Oct 24 -- Valerie signed up for [Yahoo! Personals](#) and found Prince Charming. But the promising online suitor who showered her with tender e-mails and bouquets of flowers turned out to be a scammer trying to bilk Benning out of tens of thousands of dollars. Barb Sluppick, co-founder of the 5,000-member Yahoo! Romance Scams group, conducted a survey that revealed a total of \$2.6 million lost in romance scams among the 331 people who responded—about \$7,800 per person. Most online dating scams originate from Africa, Russia and Eastern Europe, though Nigeria is the biggest offender, according to Mark Brooks who runs [onlinepersonalswatch.com](#). Increasingly, Web

administrators are trapping scammers before they strike, but the tricksters are unrelenting, Brooks said. "It's a bad situation because these guys have gotten increasingly sophisticated," said Nelson Rodriguez, head of loveaccess.com, where employees remove 20 to 30 suspicious profiles a day. "It's horrible for business because it's a loss of credibility."