

# The Washington Times

## Inside Politics Weekend

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### Comedic relief

Prepare thyself. The press is going to get lofty indeed as we approach Inauguration Day. So just for old times' sake, let us consider the goof factor which at least made the endless 2008 presidential campaign bearable.



Consider that the candidates made 110 guest appearances on late-night comedy TV -- four times more than they did in 2004, according to the **Center for Media and Public Affairs**.

"Talk show hosts have replaced editorial boards in vetting candidates for voters. **David Letterman** wasn't kidding when he said, "The road to the White House runs through me," notes Robert Lichter, president of the research group.

Sen. **John McCain** was the biggest ham in the entire field, with 17 appearances in the well-upholstered guest chair. In second place was **Mike Huckabee** with 16, and President-elect **Barack Obama** with 15.

Sen. **Hillary Rodham Clinton** was next on the late-night political roster (seven appearances), followed by Sen. **Joe Biden** (six), **John Edwards** (five), Rep. **Dennis Kucinich** (four) and **Fred Thompson** and Sen. **Chris Dodd** with three each.

Among assorted late-night hosts, **Jay Leno** offered the most frequent forum for the candidates (22 appearances), edging out **Jon Stewart** (21), **David Letterman** (19), **Stephen Colbert** (15), **Bill Maher** (12), NBC's **Saturday Night Live** (eight), **Jimmy Kimmel** (five), **Conan O'Brien** (four) and **Craig Ferguson** (three).

The "most notable no-show," the research found, was Alaska Gov. **Sarah Palin**, who didn't appear on any talk show during the campaign, although she made a gutsy appearance on **Saturday Night Live** opposite tiresome Palin imitator **Tiny Fey**.

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