The Briefing

THE UNITED STATES OF STUFF

State with the most...

iPads
New York

Flat-screen TVs
Maryland

Point-and-shoot cameras
Michigan

SOURCE: THE RETREVO GADGET CENSUS

AUCTIONS

WHERE *LOST* GETS FOUND

When you hear "auction house," you might think of an artifact like one of John Locke's long-lost manuscripts. The other John Locke—yes, the pivotal character from ABC's just-concluded hit television show *Lost*—may not come to mind. Until now: On Aug. 21 and 22, the auction house Profiles in History will host the official *Lost* auction in Santa Monica, with hopes of generating more than $1 million. Profiles in History is the world's largest purveyor of Hollywood memorabilia, selling such iconic items as Mr. Spock's Vulcan ear mold. CEO Joe Maddalena has archived 1,035 pieces from all six seasons (ABC owns them); he is most excited about Kate's toy airplane and Locke's Master Bowie hunting knife. If you are outbid on Hurley's Chevrolet Camaro or a piece of Oceanic Flight 815 wreckage, you can always settle for a can of (fake) Dharma Initiative beer. It might help you figure out that plot. *—Betsy Feldman*

FOOD

THE HIGHS—AND LOWS—OF HEMP

Washington and Jefferson grew it. Its illicit cousin, marijuana, is being approved for medicinal use. Yet hemp can't catch a break. In 1970 the fiber was lumped with marijuana in the Controlled Substances Act, despite not having enough THC to give anyone a buzz. Now hemp farming requires a permit from the Drug Enforcement Administration—which grants it only for research-related purposes.

Some hope to legalize it. Rep. Ron Paul introduced the Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2009 to exclude hemp from the definition of marijuana in the Controlled Substances Act. But the legislation is stuck in committee, and U.S. farmers say they're missing a profitable crop. In Canada, home to most hemp used in food in the U.S., industry experts say farmers make some $200 more per acre than they do on soy or corn here. The liberalization of hemp's, er, mellower cousin may help, but some, like health food company Living Harvest, would rather tout its omega-3 and omega-6 benefits. Others play off the confusion: Milk substitute Hemp Dream's packaging features a tie-dye pattern, while the box of Nature's Path's Sunny Hemp granola bars reads "Just the thing for when you've got the munchies." Yum. *—Beth Kowitt*

POLLS

U.S. TO CHINA: NIMBY

Call it a new version of "Not in my backyard." U.S. voters aren't big on Chinese investment here—even though it often comes with jobs. In a study published June 29 by Columbia University's Vale Center on Sustainable International Investment, 45% of respondents said no when asked if Chinese investment was good for the U.S. economy; 35% said yes; 20% said "Don't know." When asked about Japanese investment—which took off here in the 1980s—61% said yes; 18%, no. Say the authors: "The skeptics outnumber the supporters, likely due to the perception of China as our closest foreign competitor." With Chinese investment up 360% in the first half of 2010, the skeptics won't have much pull. *—Sheridan Prasso*

ORIGINAL LOST IMAGE: MARIO PEREZ—ABC VIA GETTY IMAGES

Illustrations by SEAN MCCABE

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