

# NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPHERD

## Saving Iraq

To fund a new Iraqi economy and government after the March 2003 invasion, the U.S. Federal Reserve shipped 484 pallets of shrink-wrapped U.S. currency, weighing 363 tons, totaling more than \$4 billion, and, according to a House of Representatives committee staff report in February, most of the cash was either haphazardly disbursed or distributed to proper channels but with little follow-up tracking. By March 2007, The Times of

London found bank records revealing, for instance, that two unremarkable Baghdad small-business men (appointed to the defense ministry) eventually deposited over \$1 billion in private accounts in Jordan, and that U.S. efforts to buy state-of-the-art equipment for the Iraqi army were seriously undermined because middlemen purchased only cheap, obsolete Polish munitions and pocketed the savings. ■

## Cultural Diversity

On Jan. 31, several hundred Japanese husbands recognized the second annual Beloved Wives Day to upgrade Japanese men's notorious, deeply ingrained indifference to their spouses. Among the husbands' vows: be home from work by the unusually early hour of 8 p.m.; actually

look into the missus's eyes and say "thank you"; and try to remember to call her by her name (instead of, as many apparently do in substitution, grunting at her). (Divorce in Japan remains relatively rare, but marital estrangement has been rapidly increasing in recent years.) ■

## Making everything perfect

Safety First! (1) Britain's Health and Safety agency headquarters reportedly posted signs in various locations in the building warning workers not to attempt to move chairs and tables by themselves, but to call for porters (for which 48 hours' notice was required). (In April, London's Daily Mail reported, not surprisingly, that

the agency's workplace injury record was very low.) (2) The head teacher at Bramhall High School in Stockport, England, decreed recently that students, who wear neckties to class, must use clip-ons and not knotted ties, in part because of the risk of choking. ■

## Creme de la weird

In March, police in Trenton, N.J., arrested four men in separate incidents and learned that they fancy themselves as "diplomats" from the Abannaki Indigenous Nation and claim immunity from the laws of the "so-called planet Earth" (and, by the way, of Mars and Venus, as well). One allegedly possessed an unidentified

"controlled substance," and the others were driving cars with made-up "diplomat" tags. The four showed no ostensible ties to the Abenaki Indigenous Nation, a tribe that first appeared in North America in the 17th century and which is still present in the northeastern U.S. ■

## Least competent criminals

Anthony Perone, 20, pleaded guilty in March in Connecticut in connection with two stalking letters he admitted mailing to a woman he had fallen for in the third grade but who apparently had spurned him. The rambling, incoherent letters explicitly threatened death, and Perone

had intended to send them anonymously, in that he wrote no return address on the envelopes. However, he lived with his mother and had given each envelope to her to mail, and, unknown to him, she had thoughtfully added his name and address before posting them.. ■

## Can't possibly be true

A Web site based in Seattle shamelessly encourages pedophiles to look all they want at kids (and gives tips for where the sightseeing is best), as long as they don't touch, and police admitted to Fox News in March that so far, that's not illegal. Said founder Jack McClellan, 45 (whose preference is for girls ages 3 to 11): "I really think

this pedophilia hysteria is overblown." "There's a kind of code of ethics that these pedophiles have developed." "(Many people) have the attraction, but they're not going to do anything physical because of the laws." (After the Fox report, the Internet service provider closed the Web site.) ■

**Fort Myers Florida Weekly**  
YOUR NEWS AND ENTERTAINMENT SOURCE

**In the Know. In the Now.**

Subscribe now and you'll get comprehensive local news coverage, investigative articles, business happenings as well as the latest in real estate trends, dining, social events and much more.

Visit us online at [www.Florida-Weekly.com](http://www.Florida-Weekly.com)

**ONLY \$29<sup>95</sup> PER YEAR**

**Yes**, I want a one year (52 issue) subscription to Florida Weekly for only \$29.95\*.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

VISA  MC  AMEX  Payment Enclosed  Bill Me

Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**THREE WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE:**

1. Fill out the information below and mail.
2. Go to [www.Florida-Weekly.com](http://www.Florida-Weekly.com) and click on subscribe.
3. Call 239.333.2135.

**Seasonal Residents:** Please provide your alternate address along with the dates you reside there.

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Date From: \_\_\_\_\_ Date To: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to:** Florida Weekly  
Circulation Department  
4300 Ford Street, Suite 106  
Fort Myers, FL 33916



New Subscribers: Please allow 2-4 weeks for delivery of first issue. \*Rates are based on standard rate postage. A one year subscription will cost \$29.95 to cover shipping and handling. Call for additional postage and pricing options.