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## NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPHERD  
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### Compelling explanations

• World's greatest lawyer: Oregon public defender Ethan Levi agreed to represent Eric Kincaid, 29, who had been identified by DNA as the man (in a miniskirt, wig and fishnet stockings) who one night last year had hidden in the closet of a woman he did not know before fleeing. Kincaid denied that he meant the woman any harm, maintaining that he had been invited by a mysterious second woman, whom he also did not know, to have sex but had realized after seeing the

first woman that he was in the wrong apartment, and he left. In April, Levi convinced the jury to accept Kincaid's explanation and acquit him of all charges.

• Well, that explains that: (1) Gene Morrill, 57, hoping for a shorter sentence after his conviction for soliciting sex from teenage boys over the Internet, told a court in Fredericksburg, Va., in March about his rough life as a child, beginning with the time he was sexually molested by Bigfoot. ■

### I want my rights!

• Student Vinicios Robacher, 15, said in March he was preparing to file a lawsuit against school officials in Danbury, Conn., over an ear injury. Robacher said that, while he had his head down, sleeping in class, the teacher slapped his desk so hard with her palm, to wake him, that he still has constant pain.

• Astrid Literski, in prison after pleading

guilty to murdering her 4-year-old daughter in 2003, is due in tax court in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in May to argue that she should not have to give back \$1,296 (Cdn) in tax benefits she was wrongly paid for the child during 2002. Actually, the girl was living with her father at the time, but Literski says she deserved the tax benefits, anyway, because she provided "emotional" support. ■

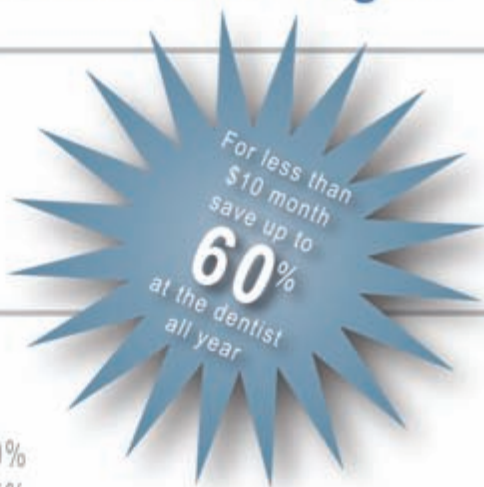
### Least competent criminals

• In March, Christopher Koch, 28, became the latest to wait outside a bank, building up his nerve to rob it, and then finally put on the ski mask and walk up to the front door (of the Citizens & Northern Bank, Liberty, Pa.), only to realize that it was by then 12:01 p.m., and the bank had closed at noon. (Employees got Koch's li-

cense plate number.)

• Angelo Trujillo, 20, became the latest, in March, to attempt to rob someone who was pumping gas (at a Smith's store in Santa Fe, N.M.). The customer, Ms. Bernie Garcia, 83, calmly sprayed Trujillo with gasoline, sending him fleeing (but he was soon arrested). ■

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### That sacred institution:

The Al-Shams newspaper in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, reported in March that Mohammed al-Rashidi, 11, had just married a cousin, who is 10, remarking: "I am ready for this marriage. It will help me study better." And in April, in a courtroom in

Sana'a, Yemen, a courageous 8-year-old girl walked in alone and demanded that the judge grant her a divorce from the 30-year-old man her father had contracted to marry her. The judge, rejecting tradition, granted the divorce. ■

### Armed and clumsy

More people who accidentally shot themselves recently: Mr. Roland Scott, the victim of a street robbery, took away the perp's shotgun and started beating him with it, but jarred the trigger, and it fired, hitting Scott, fatally, in the stomach (Baltimore, March). A 31-year-old man, fleeing police after a "pump and run" at a gas station, lost control of his car, and the collision jarred his gun, firing

a shot into his abdomen (Morgan County, Colo., March). A 20-year-old man shot himself in the groin when he stuffed a shotgun (that he had allegedly just stolen) inside his pants (Seattle, April). A 44-year-old woman recanted her rape and assault claims, admitting that she shot herself in the knee while reaching for a flashlight (Springfield, Mo., December). ■

### News that sounds like a joke

• Bernard Fincher Jr., 25, was arrested in Buffalo, N.Y., in March for possession of cocaine when police found a stash of the drug that Fincher had allegedly tried to hide in a doughnut box.

• Cody Young, 13, complained in Janu-

ary that when he parked his expensive BMX bicycle inside the front door of a Goodwill Industries store in Salem, Ore., so he could browse, an employee mistakenly sold the bike to a customer for \$6.99. ■

### People different from us

Even though 20 states outlaw keeping monkeys as pets, the Humane Society of the U.S. estimates that there are 15,000 privately owned primates, with at least 200 Floridians licensed for pet capuchins, according to an April Orlando Sentinel report. Since experts warn that the animals are biters and scratchers and are very ag-

gressive when agitated, the Sentinel asked what accounts for their popularity. Said the editor of Monkey Matters Magazine, it's their humanlike features and owners' desires to dress them up. "Believe me," said the editor, "if people could get their cats (into) outfits, a lot of those cats would be wearing outfits." ■