

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPHERD
DISTRIBUTED BY UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

You call that art?

► Chilean-Danish artist Marco Evaristi is working with condemned Texas inmate Gene Hathorn (convicted killer of three in 1985) on an anti-capital-punishment exhibit to be staged after Hathorn's execution. The murderer's body would be frozen, then made into flakes that museum visitors could feed to goldfish. Evaristi is most noted for his 2000 exhibit in which he placed live goldfish in several electric blenders and invited museum-goers to turn them on.

► Sculptor Marc Quinn unveiled "Siren" in October at the British Museum, feting the model Kate Moss, who posed for him — though not quite in the position Quinn ultimately created. Life-size and in 18-karat gold (that cost Quinn around \$2 million), "Siren" treats the gaudiness of the so-called supermodel. As such, Moss is posed seated, holding her legs behind her head. (Some, but not all, news outlets chose to show "Siren" modestly, from the side rather than the front.) ■

Government in action

► The municipal transit company in Austin, Texas, unveiled a rider-education campaign with step-by-step instructions in how to stand up on buses without falling over. When the bus is accelerating, "lean forward and put your weight on your front foot." (The introductory frame on the poster features a harried rider exclaiming, "Help! I'll never figure it out!")

► Most workers who have retired in the last few years from New York's Long Island Rail Road have also qualified for disability payments (though most did not claim such disabilities while work-

ing), according to a *New York Times* investigation of state records. Lax union work rules, plus the astonishingly cooperative "Railroad Retirement Board" (which virtually never rejects a disability application), have resulted in nearly every worker drawing about as much money in retirement as he made on the job. In October, the *Times* also discovered that many of the same retirees were apparently so confident that their "disability" status would be approved that they also purchased private disability insurance to make retirement even more lucrative. ■

Police blotter

► Police in Dortmund, Germany, arrested six Romanian men in June and charged them with stealing from trucks on the open highway. Allegedly, the thieves would drive their own truck carefully up behind a tractor-trailer at highway speed, and a man on the hood would reach out and open the back of the rig with a bolt cutter. He would climb in and loot the rig of computers and cell phones by passing them out to a partner sitting on the hood of the trailing truck.

► Motorist Michael Mills Jr., 38, was making a getaway from police in Chesapeake, Va. (who wanted him on identity-theft charges) when he broke through a drawbridge warning arm and tried to jump, "Dukes of Hazzard"-style onto the span that was being lowered (but that wouldn't be completely down for another several minutes). He missed, and the car plunged into the Elizabeth River, where it sank (but Mills was rescued and arrested). ■

Least competent criminals

► A 30-year-old man appears to be the most recent person (according to the account of police in Woodland, Calif.) to attempt to throw burning fireworks at a target while traveling in a car, but having the toss fail to clear the window and thus explode inside the car. He was hospitalized.

► In another familiar scene, two

18-year-old men who spotted police approaching their trailer-park home in Salina, Kan., panicked and tossed illegal drugs out a window. However, police spotted the flying drugs, even though cops had originally intended only to serve warrants on two of their neighbors. The men were arrested. ■

Men whose sex lives are worse than yours

In Anderson Township, Ohio, a frustrated lover, angry that his girlfriend kept falling asleep one night during

sex, retaliated, according to police, by attempting to set fire to her van. ■

Dignified death


From the self-composed obituary in the Casper (Wyo.) *Star Tribune* of James William "Jim" Adams, who died Sept. 9: "Jim, who had tired of reading obituaries noting other's (sic) courageous battles with this or that disease, wanted it known that he had lost his

battle ... primarily as a result of ... not following doctor's orders. ... He was sadly deprived of his final wish, which was to be run over by a beer truck on the way to the liquor store to buy booze for a date." ■

News that sounds like a joke

► Atlanta Pentecostal preacher Thomas Meeks told the Journal-Constitution in October that he was "in talks" to create a "Survivor"-type TV reality show in which the twice-divorced evangelist navigates a field of single women and selects a winner. "Holy Hook Up: Who Will Be the Next Mrs. Weeks?" will, he said, be a "very tasteful, five-

star presentation." ► Britain's Bristol City Council warned residents in government housing in September to always leave their sheds unlocked. Otherwise, thieves would have to break the doors down to get inside, and taxpayers would be stuck with the repair bills. ■




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