

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPHERD

DISTRIBUTED BY UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Anti-terror underwear

The Brazilian designer Lucia Lorio introduced women's lingerie in October containing a global positioning device to enable the wearer to be tracked by satellite. The creator said the password-protected lace bodice would make it easier for women kidnapped by thugs or terrorists to be located and rescued. Critics called it a virtual chastity belt,

primarily of service to insecure males curious to know where their women are. (However, the wearer can manually turn the device off.) Another anti-terror lingerie product may also surface someday, based on a 2007 U.S. patent, issued to a Plainfield, Ill., company for a bra whose cups could also function as air-filtration systems in case of chemical attacks. ■

Government in action

► Facing a state budget crisis in July, California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger fired about 10,000 temporary and part-time workers and ordered the 200,000 permanent employees to be paid only the minimum wage of \$6.55 an hour until the legislature passed a crisis-solving budget. However, a week later State Controller John Chiang pointed out that state payroll records could not be changed to accommodate the cut because they were written in the antiquated COBOL computer language, and virtually the only state employees who knew the code were some of the part-timers Schwarzenegger had just fired.

► London's Daily Mail profiled two 10-children British families in October to illustrate the inconsistencies of government benefit awards. Sean and Anne Tate and their children live on Sean's truck-driver salary of the equivalent of about \$23,000 a year, plus the government's standard per-child benefit. Harry

Crompton has been out of work for 15 years, and his wife, Tracey, has never held a paid job, yet they receive the equivalent of \$48,000 in various government benefits, which The Daily Mail said would require a tax-paying family to earn the equivalent of \$68,000 a year to draw. The Daily Mail reporter also noted that the Tate home is immaculate and the Cromptons' home, messy.

► Two of Oregon's unique public health markers clashed dramatically for resident Barbara Wagner this summer when she was informed that the universal medical care available to everyone in the state (but with certain service restrictions) would not pay for her expensive lung cancer drug (because her five-year survival likelihood was poor). However, she was told, at the same time, that the state would pay for any necessary drugs under its Death With Dignity Law (i.e., suicide). ■

Women under arrest

► The September mug shot of Michelle Allen of Middletown, Ohio, was possibly the Internet's most-circulated news photo of 2008, since she was inexplicably dressed in a full-body cow suit (with rubber teats) as she was allegedly disorderly in chasing children and interfering with traffic. (Alcohol may have been involved.)

► Shopper Amber Dibartolomeo, 23, was arrested in a Wal-Mart in North Bay, Ontario, in July and charged with selling crack cocaine inside the store. Police said they found \$2,217 in cash on her, along with a can of pepper spray, and 27 grams of cocaine (one in her bra and 26 in her vagina). ■

Things you thought didn't happen these days

► A restaurant owner in Rutino, Italy (near Salerno), told police in November that as he was negotiating over the building's lease with his landlords, one hit him in the head with a chair and two others kicked him repeatedly in the stomach. The landlords were not from La Cosa Nostra but were a priest and two nuns from the local Catholic order that owns the building.

► In the village of Pumaorcco, Peru, in September, a bus containing 14 British sightseers on holiday was held hostage for five hours by 50 natives wielding pick-axes and metal bars, who mistook them for personnel from a mining company that they believed were exploiting their land. The Peruvian guide finally negotiated their freedom but had to call for another bus, since the villagers completely destroyed the original. ■

Just couldn't stop himself

Bridgeport, Conn., police arrested Michael Smith, 47, in October for breaking into Holy Ghost Deliverance Church. Smith explained that he was passing the church, spotted a drum set through a

window, and could not restrain himself from trying it out. According to a Boston Globe report, officers found Smith "in a spirited solo after the church's alarm system went off." ■

Recurring themes

► People whose special land-use and zoning requests are turned down by the government or neighborhood associations sometimes retaliate defiantly, as News of the Weird has reported. In July in Bucks County, Pa., two men who were denied the right to tear down a house decided to paint it purple and pink, just to annoy the neighbors. In

October in Olympia, Wash., a developer who was denied a permit for a grocery store decided instead to expand his adult video store next door into an "emporium." In September in Potsdam, N.Y., a man wanting to build a convenience store was turned down and so installed a row of nine used toilets in his front yard, as "artwork." ■



ADVANCE SPA
www.AdvanceSolar.com

Lowest Prices and the Best Quality.

Enjoy More
Quality Time
AT HOME
with Family
and Friends



RELAX and
enjoy the therapeutic effects of
warm, pulsing water

Voted BEST place to
buy 12 years in a row!

Don't Be Fooled...

We have the **BEST PRICES**
in Town!

Call 239.939.7446 Today!

**GO SOLAR
AND SAVE!**

Never Pay for Hot Water!

Install a \$4500 Solar Water Heating System for as little as \$2150* and you'll save up to 30% on your electric bill!



Heat Your Pool!

A solar system is the most efficient and cost effective way to heat your pool. You'll be able to stay home more, enjoy your pool, and great times with your family and friends.

**Or Install a Photovoltaic System
for your Home or Business!**

PV is the most energy productive of all solar products. It's your best insurance against soaring electric rates. In fact, under the recent "Net Metering" law, the extra electricity you produce is "sold" back to the utility company and a dollar-for-dollar amount is credited to your account!



Call 239.939.7446 Today!

www.AdvanceSolar.com

*for information about incentives available and financing options.



ADVANCE SOLAR
Commercial & Residential Solar Energy & Spas
THE investment you CAN'T afford NOT to make!

Lic. #CVC056664