

***This is True's* Weirdest Stories of 2022**

by Randy Cassingham, Founder of *This is True*

The *This is True*[®] Newsletter Publishes “Weird-but-True” Stories from “legitimate, mainstream” news sources worldwide. It has been running weekly since 1994 — the oldest entertainment feature on the Internet. Each brief story identifies its source, and ends with a comment — a tagline which is humorous, ironic, or opinionated (or with luck, some combination of the three). If a subscriber sent this to you to see what the stories are like (which is absolutely OK!), I hope you’ll stop by the site for your own free email subscription: <https://thisistrue.com>

January

Bring Your Own Extension Cord: The DeSoto County (Fla.) Sheriff’s Office received multiple calls about a suspicious man cruising their neighborhood in a side-by-side ATV. What aroused their suspicions? The man was going from house to house asking if he could plug in and recharge ...his home-detention ankle bracelet. When deputies arrived, the man refused to show his hands, and they heard a metallic clicking from his pocket. He was subdued and deputies found a box cutter in that pocket, with the blade out. The ATV, they discovered, was stolen. Joshua Shane Crider, 40, was arrested, charged with grand theft of a motor vehicle, and felony resisting arrest. (RC/WFLA Tampa) ...*Another good piece of evidence: the ankle bracelet showed he was at the scene of the crime.*

Florida is well represented in *This is True*.

February

Eek! A deputy from the Monroe County (Fla.) Sheriff’s Office pulled over a driver after receiving multiple reports of him running red lights, making unsafe passes, and drifting over lane markers. The driver, the deputy noted, had bloodshot and watery eyes, and “behaved erratically, speaking quickly and nonsensically.” But the driver made one thing perfectly clear: he was “high and happy,” he said. Marijuana, a glass pipe, and a vape pen were found in the car, and Theodore John Evans, 51, was arrested, photographed, and jailed on a DUI charge. It’s all pretty much run of the mill ...until you see his booking photo: Evans looks like he had just seen a terrifying poltergeist. (RC/WFLA Tampa) ...*He did: there’s a mirror on the opposite wall.*



Note That When Pictures Are Available, they’re included with the story — usually fairly small, and with the ability to click to see them larger.

March

Very Boring Research Project: England's University of Essex has studied the matter, and its Dept. of Psychology came up with the five most boring jobs in the world: data analysis, accounting, tax/insurance, cleaning, and banking. And the five most boring "hobbies": sleeping, religion, watching TV, observing animals, and mathematics. "This paper shows how persuasive perceptions of boredom are and what an impact this can have on people," asserts Dr Wijnand Van Tilburg, who led the study. Its conclusion: religious data entry workers who like watching TV are "the" most boring people. (RC/Essex Chronicle) *...That's the additive answer. The subtractive answer would likely be that the most boring people are university researchers who study boredom.*

April

Oh That's Just Peachey: Although the scam case affected victims in several states, the trial was held in federal court in Sioux Falls, S.D., since there were so many victims in that state. A Pennsylvania pastor, Nathan Peachey, invited the faithful to invest with him, promising "a 20 to 25 percent returns" [*sic*] as profits. Instead, Peachey and a co-conspirator spent millions in investor money on pallet-loads of silver coins, which were apparently housed in a mansion in Norway, also purchased and redecorated with more millions of investor money. Peachey is a "shining and disturbing example of narcissism" said a federal prosecutor. "He was not righteous or Christian-like in any sense of the word." Peachey, who tried to hide his face from cameras as he entered the courthouse, did not offer any contrition or apology to his victims. He has been found guilty of multiple counts of wire fraud and money laundering, and was sentenced to 25 years in prison, plus ordered to pay \$12 million in restitution. (RC/KELO Sioux Falls) *...Not the first professed Christian who betrayed someone for a few pieces of silver.*

May

Menace to Society, Defined: Jeremy David Hanson, 34, of Orange County, Calif., has been arrested after investigators allegedly traced multiple threats of violence to him. They say Hanson targeted the Springfield, Mass., staff of the Merriam-Webster dictionary publisher because he didn't like the definitions of various words, including "woman" and "girl." In one threat, he said it was "absolutely sickening that Merriam-Webster now tells blatant lies and promotes anti-science propaganda. There is no such thing as 'gender identity.'" He allegedly said the company should be "shot up and bombed," and "It would be poetic justice to have someone storm your offices and shoot up the place, leaving none of you commies alive." Once police got involved, investigators found Hanson had also targeted many others, including the ACLU, Amnesty International, Hasbro, IGN Entertainment, the University of North Texas, professors at Loyola Marymount University, and a New York City rabbi. He has been charged with interstate communication of threats to commit violence. (RC/KTLA Los Angeles) *...Ooh, wait until he sees the definition for 'whackjob'.*

June

When Pigs Fly: In 2019, the California Fish and Game Commission listed bumblebees as endangered under the state's 1970 Endangered Species Act. Agricultural groups sued over the listing; a Sacramento County Superior Court judge ruled that the law was intended only to protect "invertebrates who live in marine habitats," which was appealed. Associate Justice Ronald Robie of the 3rd District California Court of Appeals has issued his decision: California's Fish and Game Code defines "fish" to include any "mollusk, crustacean, invertebrate (or) amphibian." Thus as invertebrates, bumblebees "may be listed as an endangered or threatened species under the Act." That resulted in scores of news outlets announcing with "Only in California" headlines that the court has ruled that bees are fish. The state capital's newspaper of record helped by explaining that "humans in particular depend on bees for pollination." (RC/Sacramento Bee — no, really!) ...*You know, we really should start teaching science in schools again.*

Each Issue Also Has a Headline of the Week. A 2022 example:

Self-Driving Cars Arriving Just in Time
Ben-Gurion University Researchers Teach Goldfish to Drive
Jerusalem Post headline

Sometimes, a Headline or Story really begs for more information. This headline was a good example: it's discussed in my blog at <https://thisistrue.com/goldy/> — which has details and a video of the "driving."

July

Not the Whip! Not the Whip! A Member of Parliament in Britain has resigned his post as Deputy Chief Whip after allegedly groping two men in a private club. In a written apology, Chris Pincher admitted he had "drunk far too much" and "embarrassed myself and other people." The Conservative Party suspended him, but he will stay on as an MP as an independent. The incident brought up several other similar charges by other MPs. Pincher said the recent events "have made me accept that I will benefit from professional medical support." Pincher had resigned as Deputy Whip in 2017 over similar charges, but was reappointed to the Whip position by Prime Minister Boris Johnson in February. At the time, Johnson's chief aide, Dominic Cummings, said the PM cracked that the MP was "Pincher by name, pincher by nature." (RC/BBC) ...*You sure you want to throw that stone, Cummings?*

August

Has to Be Right: The owner of the Kirtan Center, a yoga studio in Holladay, Utah, called police to report someone fired shots at his home, which houses the yoga studio. Police found numerous bullet holes in the house. The homeowner told police he thought he knew who was responsible: Joseph Nrsingha Caitanya Das, 32, a "former friend." The yoga instructor said Das "accused Americans of not teaching yoga correctly, and [his] behavior has become angry, incoherent and has escalated." A witness to the shooting followed Das as he drove away, and told police where to find him. Investigators found enough evidence to charge Das with burglary, nine counts of discharge of a firearm, four counts of possession of a gun by a convicted felon, assault, and drug possession. (RC/KSL Salt Lake City) ...*If only there was some sort of practice Das could adopt to help him relax.*

September

Baby Doll: “This is what it looks like when you take your 3-year-old to the Spirit Halloween store and she absolutely insists on buying the creepiest baby doll you’ve ever set eyes on,” said Brittany Beard of Groveland, Fla. “But I’m it’s mommy and it needs me!” Briar said when her mother objected to the purchase. But Brittany is OK with “Chloe” now: the girl brings the doll with her when the family visits Disney World, and the attention-getting doll gets them “perks,” she says. It helps when she dresses Briar in her Haunted Mansion cast member dress. “There was a 50 minute wait to get on the ride but when they saw Briar, they immediately whisked her away into the secret ‘Servants Quarters’,” she said, and gave them special attention. “It was so magical!” On the other hand, mom says, “I’m pretty sure Creepy Chloe is stealing my soul when I sleep.” (RC/WTVT Tampa) ...*And selling it to Disney.*



October

Things That Go Bang in the Night: The city of Houston, Texas, periodically holds a “no questions asked” gun “buyback” program to try to reduce the number of illegal guns in the city, and thus hopefully reduce gun violence. But city officials have announced that the rules will change a little bit: “ghost guns” — home-made firearms that don’t have a factory serial number — won’t be included in the program. Why not? Because in the last event, people used 3D printers to whip out dozens of “ghost guns” because they cost much less to make than the city would give them to turn them in. The city ended up paying out more than \$100,000. (RC/KTRK Houston) ...*Meanwhile, the District Attorney is still rolling his eyes over the “no questions asked” part.*

November

Measuring Up: The city of Everett, Wash., has lost another round in court over its prohibition of “bikini baristas” — scantily clad women in drive-thru coffee huts who supposedly give a little extra good “service” for tips (see “Busted Baristas” in *True* from 10 November 2013, and “Coffee, Tea or Me?” from 4 March 2018). The women told the U.S. District Court in Seattle that their clothing is speech, deserving of freedom. “Some countries make you wear lots of clothing because of their religious beliefs,” one wrote. “But America is different because you can wear what you want to wear. I wear what I’m comfortable with and others can wear what they are comfortable with. Wearing a bikini sends this message to others.” The court agreed, ruling that Everett’s dress code ordinance violated both the U.S. and state constitutions. The city’s official spokesman did not return a reporter’s call requesting a comment. (RC/Everett Herald) ...*He was on a coffee break.*

December

Wacky Weed: The government agency Food Standards Australia New Zealand has ordered an urgent recall of spinach, along with a number of products made with it, “due to potential contamination with unsafe plant material.” Well, what? “It appears these products, which were grown on a farm in Victoria and shipped to stores in NSW,” says Riviera Farms, “have been contaminated with a weed which can have health consequences if consumed.” Well that doesn’t answer the question! While those made ill “can’t give a good recount of what happened,” says the NSW Poisons Information Centre’s medical director, Dr. Darren Roberts, victims should go to a hospital because “these effects won’t go away on their own.” Well, what kind of effects? Victims are “quite unwell ... to the point of marked hallucinations where they are seeing things that aren’t there.” (RC/Melbourne Age) ...*Maybe this explains Popeye.*

An Extra Headline from December:

<p>Then Ban It for Adults 18 and Over and They’ll Really Have Something Texas Bill Would Ban Social Media for Children under 18 KDFW Dallas headline</p>

So... What’s the *Weirdest* of These 12 Stories? See the next page!

The Weirdest of 2022

From June:

When Pigs Fly: In 2019, the California Fish and Game Commission listed bumblebees as endangered under the state's 1970 Endangered Species Act. Agricultural groups sued over the listing; a Sacramento County Superior Court judge ruled that the law was intended only to protect "invertebrates who live in marine habitats," which was appealed. Associate Justice Ronald Robie of the 3rd District California Court of Appeals has issued his decision: California's Fish and Game Code defines "fish" to include any "mollusk, crustacean, invertebrate (or) amphibian." Thus as invertebrates, bumblebees "may be listed as an endangered or threatened species under the Act." That resulted in scores of news outlets announcing with "Only in California" headlines that the court has ruled that bees are fish. The state capital's newspaper of record helped by explaining that "humans in particular depend on bees for pollination." (RC/Sacramento Bee — no, really!) ... *You know, we really should start teaching science in schools again.*

More on the Story

The Story is Prime "True" Fodder, showing the obliquity of not thinking things through. That's where *This is True* comes in: it's "Thought-Provoking Entertainment" by using stories to not only point out the absurdities of humanity, but to give real-world examples of what the lack of thinking brings. *So many* news outlets jumped on this story to show just how absurd things were in California, but the absurdity was that they didn't take 2 minutes to understand what was really going on before jumping on the bandwagon just to get clicks.

And it really didn't hurt that the story was sourced from the Sacramento Bee! 🤔

So what do we need? More understanding of reality. The ability to read critically. And, yes, some science education so we all can do a bit better at digging for truth.

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