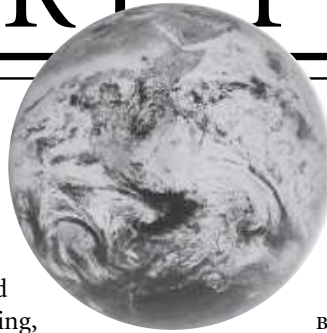


BIZARRE PLANET



EDMONTON, ALBERTA (REUTERS)—On New Year's Day, two eighteen-year-olds learned that all-important lesson: you can't steal a car unless you know how to drive it. Police said two males approached a pizza-delivery man early in the morning, demanding the four pizzas he was carrying, then changing their minds and demanding the car itself. After their getaway was foiled by the car's manual transmission, they returned to their original, modest pizza-stealing plan. "It was a toss-up between pizzas and the car," said a police spokesman, "and they knew how to operate pizzas." You will note that this took place in Canada.

OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS (REUTERS)—In other news from the eternally funny world of grand larceny, a 17-year-old was recently run over by the pickup truck he had just stolen. After police tracked down the teenager, he jumped from the vehicle and tried to run off. Just as he ducked in front of the truck, it began to roll, eventually hitting its driver. He was hospitalized with minor injuries. "I guess that truck didn't want to be stolen," mused a police captain.

STOCKHOLM (REUTERS)—Underage college students aren't the only ones who get creative with their alcohol. Swedish police shot dead a drunken bull elk—let's repeat that: a drunken bull elk—that was intoxicated on fermented apples, reportedly a "favorite winter snack" of the normally shy animals. This unfortunate elk's drunken revelry was cut short when he attacked an 8-year-old boy playing in his front yard (the boy's yard, not the elk's), leaving the boy "badly shaken" but unharmed. Let this be a lesson to you all.

BANGKOK (REUTERS)—Health officials gave free condoms to boy scouts as young as 14 at the group's world jamboree in Thailand earlier this year. Though condoms might seem notably incongruous with all things Boy Scouts, Thailand's health ministry handed out thousands of contraceptives on demand to the 30 000 scouts who attended the 11-day gathering. The jamboree took place a short drive from the seaside town of Pattaya, which is infamous (and famous!) for its thousands of go-go bars, massage parlors, and brothels. "We will offer condoms to scouts who need them," said a ministry spokesman, "but

I think most of them will already be well-prepared." Not to editorialize, but this is the most horrifying piece of news ever.

BERLIN (REUTERS)—A swingers club has been forced to shut down because—damn the man!—a court ruled that members' moans and shrieks of pleasure broke noise regulations. Partner-swapping customers at the ground-floor club (*Zwielicht*, which is German for both "twilight" and "dubious") incessantly bothered those living upstairs. "There are other clubs and brothels in this area and the customers there don't make so much noise," explained a court spokeswoman. "They are more discreet."

HOUSTON (REUTERS)—Parents of children who habitually fail to complete their homework are finally ending up where they belong: in jail. OK, not in jail, but school officials at a Houston middle school *are* summoning them to court. In the program's first week, the school issued 48 misdemeanor citations to parents. The tickets, which could have yielded a fine up to \$185, required parents to appear before a county judge. Instead of fining anyone, the judge used the session to—what else?—give a lecture, explaining the importance of completing homework.

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