

WACKY AND TACKY

STAR TIME'S COMICS LABORATORY | OUR OFF KILTER COLLECTION OF COMICS WE'RE NOT SO SURE ABOUT

Brevity

By Guy & Rodd

Natural Selection

By Russ Wallace

The Quigmans

By Buddy Hickerson

E-mail us: We'll be experimenting with the comics on this page, so let us know if they make you chuckle. Send an e-mail to startime@star-telegram.com.

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

Government says, 'Don't worry, be happy'

An official adviser to the Blair government warned in September that Britain urgently needed 250 special treatment centers, staffed by 10,000 therapists, to deal with what he called the country's "biggest social problem": a national epidemic of "unhappiness."

■ In October, German companies donated the equivalent of about \$35 million for a media campaign to make their countrymen feel better about themselves. (Sample script: "[O]luto yourself. Beat your wings and uproot trees. You are the wings. You are the tree. You are Germany.")

Latest religious messages

Adam Turgeon, 27, and Lisa Wagner, 26, were arrested in October for vandalizing the Annunciation of the Lord Catholic Church in Decatur, Ala., which they both said they were moved to do by Jesus Christ himself. Turgeon explained that the couple, independently, had experienced visions of Jesus, and when they found themselves in services on Oct. 2, they re-enacted the part of their dreams in which they wrecked the church's altar as a protest against "mankind religion" and idolatry. Turgeon said he was especially bothered by people who balance their checkbooks during church services and by religions that believe only parts of the Bible.

People different from us

(1) The Royal Meteorological Society, seeking evidence of global warming for a journal article, happened upon data collected by a fellow named David Grisenthwaite, 77, of Kirkcaldy, Scotland, who has logged detailed information about every single time he mowed his lawn since 1984; he has inadvertently documented that grass-growing season is longer lately. (Grisenthwaite said he also memorizes transit bus timetables.) (2) In England's Lincoln Crown Court, in October, municipal parking employee Julie Wall, 46, was sentenced to three years in prison for embezzling the equivalent of about \$1 million over 10 years (spending nearly the entire amount on Elvis Presley records and memorabilia, most of which were found unopened at her home). (Said her lawyer, "She simply wanted to own [the items].")

Least competent criminals

(1) Barbara King, 35, was arrested in Largo, Fla., in October on a warrant for forgery and prescription fraud; when police knocked on her door, a man

■ told them that she wasn't home, but a 4-year-old girl standing alongside said "Mommy's in the closet!" (2) Police in Memphis, Tenn., reported in October that they had closed down a crack house on Rosamond Street, a task made easier because the resident usually announced the start of business hours by hanging out a sign reading "Crack House." (3) Christina Goodenow, 38, of Medford, Ore., was arrested in October for using a stolen credit card, but a conviction would be especially disastrous for her since she just won \$1 million in the lottery with a \$1 ticket she bought with the credit card (thus voiding the ticket).

Ironies

■ In October, martial arts instructor Andrew Jacobs was arrested for allegedly assaulting two 10-year-old girls in their bedroom in Vienna, Va. (but being fended off by them based on skills they learned as students at Mountain Kim Martial Arts Center, where Jacobs was their teacher). Jacobs told police his plan was to tie the girls up so he could steal things from the home.

■ In a September road-rage incident in Salt Lake City, a woman sped by in a blocked-off lane to get around a 25-year-old motorist on Interstate 15, then rolled down her window and screamed at him. The man, according to a report in the *Deseret Morning News*, made an "obscene hand gesture." The woman then pulled out a .357-caliber revolver, shot off the tip of his middle finger, and sped away, outdistancing the man but later crashing into a barricade.

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