



HUMAN INTEREST

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Judge in banjo assault case says show can go on

ASPEN — A banjo player accused of assaulting another man with his instrument will get to keep pickin' while awaiting his trial. Thirty-three-year-old Joseph Stancato of Denver faces second-degree assault charges after allegedly hitting another man upside the head with his banjo on New Year's Eve. Authorities say Stancato got into an argument with two men at a bus stop. District Judge James Boyd on Monday approved Stancato's request to be allowed on the road to tour with a band while awaiting his next court date Feb. 6. The banjo is considered "a deadly weapon" under Colorado law, so Stancato could face prison time, the Aspen Daily News reported.

Suicidal Chihuahua Jumps Into East River, Saved By NYPD

Brooklyn -- A chihuahua with a death wish ran down a Brooklyn pier and dove into the frigid East River on New Year's Eve, only to be rescued by a vigilant member of the NYPD Harbor Patrol, according to 1010WINS. The brown and tan pooch hurled itself off the 62nd Street Pier on the border of Sunset Park and Bay Ridge on New Year's Eve, but an officer spotted the dog and fished him out. The dog did not have an identification collar, but according to Suzanne Driscoll — who has been caring for the animal since the rescue — it appears to have been pampered by its previous owners. "Whoever this dog belongs to, spoiled this dog," she said. "He didn't want canned food, he wanted people food." The station reports that because the owners have not yet come forward, Driscoll has given the dog to the Forgotten Friends of Long Island, an animal rescue group. Anyone interested in adopting the canine — which a veterinarian has deemed healthy despite a few scrapes around the eye and one under the legs.



Gamer Beats George Costanza's Frogger Score

Pat Laffaye of Westport, Connecticut has beaten the high score for the arcade game Frogger — the real one, and also the fictional one set by George Costanza on a famous episode of Seinfeld, scorekeepers at Twin Galaxies announced on Monday. The fictional record of 860,630 points was set on April 23, 1998 — that's when the episode of Seinfeld titled "The Frogger" originally aired. Laffaye's score of 896,980 is a new world record, at least until the next fictional character comes along and bests it (we're watching you, Sheldon Cooper). "Even though it was imagined by television writers, Pat has broken one of the most famous scores in pop



culture," said a Twin Galaxies representative in a statement. "Pat's amazing score will now forever be attached to not only Twin Galaxies history, but pop culture trivia as well." Pat Laffaye also holds a record score for Paperboy. He and rival gamer Donald Hayes have been embroiled in a King of Kong-style duel for the top Frogger ranking for some time.

Shady Lady Ranch can be stud farm, officials say, but health concerns linger

Nevada -- For the Shady Lady Ranch brothel, this is where the rubber meets the road. The brothel 150 miles northwest of Las Vegas won final approval on Tuesday for its plans to hire men and start servicing women. The Nye County Licensing and Liquor Board signed off on a compliance agreement that will allow for the practice to take place so long as the male sex workers wear condoms and undergo weekly health tests. "Now we have to find a guy and get it going," said Jim Davis, who owns and helps operate the Shady Lady with his wife, Bobbi. Davis said the small bordello could have its first stud on staff in as little as two weeks. But not everyone is satisfied with the arrangement. Two licensing board members, Nye County Sheriff Tony DeMeo and County Commissioner Butch Borasky, voted against the Shady Lady's plans. "I have issues with it," DeMeo said after Tuesday's meeting. "I don't feel all the health issues have been addressed." DeMeo is worried that female customers won't -- and maybe can't -- be subjected to the same sort of pre-sex examinations that men undergo in most of Nevada's legal brothels. As a practice, DeMeo said, prostitutes wash their customers and check them for signs of disease before getting down to business. Without some similar procedure for female customers, he said it could increase the chances of someone contracting a venereal disease, even with the use of a condom. "I don't want to see that happen. I don't think anybody else does either," he said.



On the 12th Day of Christmas, My True Love Gave Me Packing Boxes

PITTSBURGH -- Taking down holiday decorations can be a pain for many people, but for the Rev. Randy Sweet and his wife, Jayne, the chore is a little more complicated. The Sweets have 63 Christmas trees throughout their home. The trees, ranging in size from 1 to 7 feet tall, all fake, occupy most flat surfaces in their split-level brick house, including bookshelves, the kitchen counter and windowsills. Each tree has a theme, ranging from cowboys to pink flamingos. The biggest one is covered with about 500 ornaments and the smallest with a dozen, which means several thousand ornaments. "It takes at least a month to put them away," says Mrs. Sweet, an art teacher who carves many of their ornaments. "I have to pack up the tree and then unpack everything that I put away to make space for the trees."



Pretty in pink: Fargo woman gives her snow a new look

It looks like Stevie Famulari of Fargo lives in Candy Land – her front yard, Queen Frostine's frothy pink ice cream sea. But it's not ice cream or cotton candy that billows over her boulevard at 620 10th Ave. N. Famulari's front yard is piled with the same stuff that fills every other yard in town. Only her snow is pink. Famulari is an environmental artist and a landscape architecture professor at North Dakota State

University. She changes the color of her snow with each new layer that falls. She plans to paint the next snowfall a purplish blue and the one after that will be black. She chose her colors to become darker as the season progresses. When the snow melts, she expects the older layers to be revealed. "It'll be a beautiful rainbow when it comes back," she said. "Happily, I don't expect it to melt at the same rate so the front of the yard may reveal the pinks or the purples sooner, the back of the yard will still be the blacks and the blues." Famulari is avoiding yellow, "for obvious reasons," she said, and she's avoiding green because lawns are green every other time of the year. Well, at least other peoples' lawns are green every other time of the year.

Central Talent Booking