



HUMAN INTEREST

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Long Island Dog Needs Viagra For Heart Condition



HUNTINGTON, NY- Ingrid, a six-year-old Pit Bull Terrier from Long Island, is close to running out of her supply of little blue libido pills, which are currently keeping her life-threatening heart condition stable. After being diagnosed with a heart condition a Vet told the shelter that Viagra, which was originally created to treat hypertension, could help blood flow to Ingrid's heart. It worked, and now the shelter is looking for more donations. Ingrid initially got her supply when the Little Shelter Animal Rescue and Adoption Center in Huntington held a Viagra drive on her behalf, convincing men across the country to donate some of their precious pills to save Ingrid's life. One woman even sent in her husband's pills, believing he was using them to have an affair! Ingrid, nicknamed "The Love Bug!" was diagnosed with the heart condition and with heartworm when the shelter found her about two years ago. She had been neglected by her owners, and used as a "bait" dog in dog fights. The shelter is hoping to get a new supply from kind donors. Spokeswoman Jodi Record told WNBC, "If every man in America that has Viagra sends one pill to Ingrid that will be

keeping her alive for several years." Since her medication is not covered by most animal insurance, pills can end up costing \$10 a piece for the shelter. However, she is currently up for adoption, and whoever takes her home will receive a lifetime supply of the pills—for Ingrid!

Blowgun woman: "I like to hear people say 'ouch'"



STEVENS POINT, WI- A woman admitted that she "liked to hear people say 'ouch'" and that was why she'd been driving around Stevens Point, WI with a blowgun, a slingshot, and a bucket of rocks, zezing random people with various missiles: One of the victims reported she saw the dart shot from a pipe sticking out the window of a black minivan. Police pulled the vehicle over at 9:30 p.m. and found a blow gun, a slingshot and a bucket of rocks inside. Police arrested the van's driver, Paula Wolf, and said she eventually admitted to shooting the pedestrians. She allegedly told an officer that she "liked to hear people say ouch."

Redesigning the \$100 bill: Vote for your favorite from Cleveland schoolchildren



CLEVELAND, OHIO- Last month, the government unveiled the new \$100 bill — a colorful, high-tech Benjamin that features a 3-D security ribbon, color-shifting ink and a bunch of other bells and whistles that should frustrate counterfeiters. (With 6.5 billion C-notes out there, two-thirds outside the country, the bill is the most widely

circulated — and counterfeited — outside the United States.) The new hundred, which will enter circulation on Feb. 10, was greeted with mixed reviews. Some loved the color and “magical” features. Others mocked them. Vanity Fair called the bill too “European” and said that it suggested socialism. Gawker.com went further: “Are we some Third World Banana Republic unable to keep gaudy hues off the face of our worthless currency? Mortifying. ... Why not just turn over a sheet of blank currency paper to a kindergarten class and come back in an hour?” So that’s what The Cleveland Plain Dealer did, sort of. Instead of a kindergarten class, they asked the creative kids at the Cleveland School of the Arts to come up with their own designs for the new hundred. ([Slide Show](#))

Are Airline Barf Bags an Endangered Species?



MASSACHUSETTS- Airlines are cutting all sorts of perks these days, everything from free carry-on luggage to any food option other than pretzels or peanuts. Does that mean barf bags are the next to go? That prospect makes one Massachusetts man very queasy. He's Steve Silberberg, a software developer who also has one of the largest collections of barf bags in the world, nearly 2,500 in all. He also is the guy savvy enough to register the domain names www.airsicknessbags.com and www.barfbags.com. Silberberg estimates his collection is the 10th largest in the world. Still, he worries about a future where barf bags cease to be a part of the flying experience. "There aren't as many barf bags as there used to be," Silberberg said. Some airlines only put one per every three seats and others don't stock them in the bathrooms like they used to. I think Spirit Airlines doesn't have them at all, but I'm not sure. I do know that Northwest made theirs dark blue so people wouldn't use them as scratch paper." But while Silberberg frets over the reduced number of barf bags, he admits it's unlikely they will be sacked entirely. "It's probably cheaper to keep a plane stocked with a bunch of unused barf bags for a

month than to actually clean it up after someone barfs." The modern plastic-lined airsickness bag was created by inventor Gilmore Schjeldahl for Northwest Orient Airlines in 1949, but Silberberg first started his collection back in 1982. The reasoning was simple. "Nobody else was doing it so I figured I could be the best at it," Silberberg said. He was surprised to discover that barf bag collectors are a competitive lot. The man with the largest collection is a Dutch citizen named Niek Vermeulen, who reportedly has nearly 6,000. "There are two guys in Germany who lived near each other who pooled their collection to make it bigger," Silberberg said. "In fact, Germany is a hot spot for barf bag collecting because they get so many vacation days that it's considered a way to show off where you've been." Silberberg's favorite barf bag is a Finnaviation one from 1996. "It shows a reindeer barfing out (cube-shaped) chunks," he said. "I also like barf bags that were never intended for the transportation medium.

([Full Story](#))

New York City Cowboy Cracks Whipping Record



NEW YORK, NY- If Buffalo Bill were alive today, the biggest star of his Wild West show would be an East Coast cowboy named Chris McDaniel. No one cracks a whip faster -- and now he's got a world record to prove it. Decked out in traditional Western garb and clutching a 6-foot bullwhip in each hand, the 54-year-old McDaniel recently lashed out 112 cracks in just 15 seconds. "Nobody's ever done it before with two whips, so I set the record, basically," he told AOL News. The lightning-fast whipping

took place last month in Long Island at the home of The Great Throwdini, who happens to be the world's fastest and most accurate knife thrower, not to mention a proud owner of 24 world records. "McDaniel's record is astonishing as it combines both speed and skill with both hands simultaneously," Throwdini said. "It will stand as the gold standard for simultaneous whip cracking." The record is set to appear in an upcoming book called "Believe the Unbelievable" by Record Holders Republic. The organization also recognizes such unusual feats as the most stamps licked and affixed in five minutes (238 by Germany's Thomas Schuster in 2004) and the fastest light bulb ever eaten (50.06 seconds by Todd Robbins in New York in 2006). McDaniel has also been honored by Record Holders Republic for cracking 61 targets out of Throwdini's hand in one minute. "The most impressive thing is probably Throwdini putting targets out there that quickly," he said. When not cracking whips at a knife thrower's home, McDaniel performs throughout New York City, bringing a touch of the Old West everywhere from Coney Island to the "Late Show with David Letterman." Strange as it may sound, the Western arts have traditionally been very popular in New York, dating back to Buffalo Bill's traveling show. "It's such a novelty in New York," McDaniel explained. "Out West, cowboys are a dime a dozen. The New York audiences are my best audiences because they enjoy the difference." A performer his whole life, McDaniel spent his earlier years in the Nashville country music scene, singing and acting at Opryland theme park shows. But auditioning for roles didn't appeal to him, so he looked to develop his own unique act. He finally found his niche 20 years ago while working as a sound engineer for Larry Gatlin. The country star had just been cast in Broadway's "The Will Rogers Follies" and had to go through rope trick training. "I went with him to his lessons and got hooked," McDaniel said. "I looked around and discovered there weren't too many people doing this sort of thing anymore." Having mastered the rope, he moved onto whips. "I got the first crack out of it and it was very addictive," he said. "I haven't put it down since." And he has no plans to, especially not with a new record in hand. "I'm definitely gonna try and break it," he said. "I don't know if it's possible to get too many more cracks out of them, though."

Verizon forgives balance on \$18,000 phone bill



BOSTON, MA- Bob St. Germain said he was not sure at first whether to believe the Verizon official who called to tell him that the balance of his \$18,000 cellphone bill had been forgiven. The Dover resident's dispute with the company over the mind-boggling bill dates to 2006 when, according to St. Germain, his son mistakenly racked up the staggering charges in just six weeks. In a statement, the company confirmed it is no longer insisting St. Germain pay the bill. He said it is "nice to see" Verizon erase the charges, but that the yearslong wrangling has been frustrating and

time-consuming. "It's very unfortunate it's been going on this long," St. Germain said. Last month, the

Globe reported that his son, Bryan, now 26, incurred the charges by tethering his cellphone to a laptop computer to connect to the Internet. Bryan St. Germain said he did not know that a two-year promotional period — which included the free Web access — expired when his father renewed the family's cellphone plan. As a result, Bob St. Germain received a bill more than 100 times higher than his normal statement. Verizon said that after St. Germain complained, it eventually agreed to cut the \$18,000 bill by half, to about \$9,000. St. Germain disputes that, saying he never agreed to even a partial payment. Verizon then sent the nearly \$9,000 bill to a collection agency. On Friday night, the company issued a statement saying it has concluded the remaining balance is "uncollectible" and that it considers the matter "closed." "Bills of this nature are exceptionally rare given our policy of clear disclosure of price plan details at the point of sale and through confirmation letters, the customer's ability to change price plans at any time without fees or extensions, and the many customer tools available for monitoring and managing voice data usage," Verizon Wireless spokesman Michael Murphy wrote. "This combination of transparency, flexibility, and technology serves our customers very well." ([Full story and video](#))