



Thursday, November 19, 2009

## Local dad spoke only Klingon to child for three years



MINNESOTA- d'Armond Speers says that he spent the first few years of his son's life speaking to him in the invented language of the alien race featured in the series "Star Trek" in order to better understand how children learn languages. Meanwhile, Speers' wife continued to address the child in English. He told the Minnesota Daily, "I was interested in the question of whether my son, going through his first language acquisition process, would acquire it like any human language. [...] He was definitely starting to learn it." Speers reports he "still gets nostalgic when he recalls singing the Klingon lullaby 'May the Empire Endure'" with his son. Listen to Speers' son singing the Klingon Imperial Anthem here. Wired reported on Speers' language experiment in a 1999 article in which Speers described the challenge of speaking to his infant son given that the Klingon alphabet lacked words such as "diaper" and "bottle." The article notes, So Speers found himself using "thing which is flat" for table.

"Alec very rarely spoke back to me in Klingon, although when he did, his pronunciation was excellent and he never confused English words with Klingon words," Speers says. Eventually, Speers gave up on Klingon communication, saying that his son "stopped listening to me when I spoke in Klingon" and "it was clear that he didn't enjoy it, and I didn't want to make it into a problem." His son, now in high school, doesn't speak a word of Klingon, according to the Minnesota Daily. Despite his interest in Klingon, Speers says he's not a Star Trek fanatic. I don't go to 'Star Trek' conventions, I don't wear the fake forehead. [...] I'm a linguist. [\(Audio Clips\)](#)

## New company creates fragrances from dead celebrities' hair



MyDNAfragrance.com- Offers scents based on hair samples of deceased personalities. According to the New York Daily News, the Los Angeles-based

company uses clippings provided by celebrity hair collector John Reznikoff for its "very scientific" procedure, even though it remains a "secret" how the famous DNA finds its way into the bottle. I

can't go into our secret process, but we base the fragrance on the genetic code," Dr. Diva Verdun of MyDNAFragrance.com told the paper. A visit to the website confirms that Verdun has developed scents for everyone from cinema freaks to history fans. 'Obvious' choices include the actress Marilyn Monroe, and singers Elvis Presley and Michael Jackson - but how about enemy of the US state John Dillinger, absolutist French Queen Marie Antoinette, or Tarzan impersonator Johnny Weismuller? Or, even more bizarrely, who really wants to smell like baseball player Joe di Maggio? However, Verdun says that personalities' original bad body odour won't feature in the actual fragrances. "I did a little research on Elvis, and he actually had really bad body odor. So we don't want to clone him in any way or create a fragrance that actually smelled like him," she is quoted in the article. But what do these perfumes actually smell like? Descriptions on the website leave you clueless, as does this one about the 'Michael Jackson' scent: "M is an exclusive one-of-a-kind fragrance that explodes into an indescribable fragrance, which seemly draws the attention of every person in the room," it reads. "It is composed of the lightest, but most volatile essences. Much like the performer himself, this cologne is unique and like no other cologne in the world." At least about that last one, Verdun should be right. ([website](#))

### **Forget the leftovers, if you are flying**

WASHINGTON - Are you flying to grandma's for Thanksgiving? Think twice before trying to take leftovers home with you on the plane. Mashed potatoes are usually thick and gooey, and cranberry sauce wiggles and jiggles. The Transportation Security Administration considers both to be liquids. It may sound strange, but you can't pack those in your carry-on bag. More obvious no-nos include gravy, salad dressing and soup. Also, grandma's homemade jam has to go in your checked luggage. Here's one way to think about it: If it's something spreadable, get it out of your carry on and in to your checked bag.

Here's TSA's list of prohibited liquids:

- Cranberry sauce
- Creamy dips and spreads (cheeses, peanut butter, etc.)
- Gift baskets with food items (salsa, jams, and salad dressings)
- Gravy
- Jams
- Jellies
- Lotions
- Maple syrup
- Oils and vinegars
- Salad dressing
- Salsa
- Sauces
- Soups
- Wine, liquor and beer
- Cologne and perfume
- Snowglobes

### **Japanese beauty pageant for bunnies**



YOKOHAMA, Japan - Lovers of rabbits enjoyed a two-

day festival dedicated to these furry creatures during which they chose the best dressed bunny. Every major city in the world has at least one fashion week and about 101 Beauty Pageants. However, Japanese took extra step and are no longer looking for the most beautiful among themselves, but among their furry pets - rabbits. In Yokohama, suburb of Tokyo, the fashion competition for the rabbits was held this Saturday. This is a traditional event that attracts thousands of fans and visitors each year. The competition lasts for two days, which is probably insufficient to notice every detail on a plethora of Bunny outfits and chose the favorite.

### Facebook Alibi Frees Brooklyn Man Rodney Bradford from Jail



NEW YORK - Rodney Bradford, a 19-year-old New Yorker, has Facebook and a desire for pancakes to thank for his freedom. Police had pegged Bradford as the man responsible for robbing two men at gunpoint Oct. 17 in the Brooklyn housing project where he lives. Bradford spent 12 days in jail on Riker's Island pleading his innocence, but it wasn't until his family produced a Facebook update message Bradford wrote on his father's computer in Harlem - eight miles from the holdup - that police were willing to listen. Authorities dropped robbery charges against Bradford after a timestamp on the Facebook update convinced them

that he could not have been in both places at once. What were the magic words that set Bradford free? "WHERE MY IHOP?" It was a jocular message, the apparently hungry Bradford sent to his girlfriend at 11:49 a.m., just one minute before the robbery. The next day, when Bradford heard police sought him in connection with the hold-up, he turned himself in. He thought he would be cleared. Instead, a witness picked Bradford out of a lineup, and police charged him with first-degree robbery. His earlier indictment in a 2008 robbery meant Bradford faced up to 25 years if convicted. Bradford's father and stepmother told authorities he had been in their Harlem apartment that morning, but only when Rodney Bradford Sr. discovered the Facebook message did the alibi hold water. Bradford's lawyer Robert Reuland brought the post to the attention of Brooklyn Assistant District Attorney Lindsay Gerdes. Her office subpoenaed Facebook to verify the time and origin of the status update. When Facebook confirmed that the update had been posted from the Harlem computer, charges were dropped. Computers have for several years been "witnesses" to infidelities in divorce cases and fake injuries in insurance cases. In 2008, pictures posted to Facebook of 20-year-old Joshua Lipton dressed as a prisoner at a Halloween party two weeks after a drunk driving crash helped land the college junior two years behind bars.

"It was just a matter of time," said Phillip R. Malone, director of the Cyberlaw Clinic at Harvard University's Berkman Center for Internet and Society. "It's not at all surprising that defendants would start to use social networks to show innocence. A personal network not really any different than other trails that you would leave behind." ([Full Article](#))

### Hospital Sign in Queens Says it All



QUEENS, NY- From the New York Times' photo desk we were given one of the best broken-sign pictures we've seen in a long time. The Gray Lady points out that the marquee at Elmhurst Hospital on Broadway in Queens, where the letter's E and S have fizzed out. The resulting effect is the sign seems to say "Im hurt" -- perfect for an emergency and trauma center. Benjamin Scherler, signaled the Times about the fateful lettering. The 41-year-old Jackson Heights resident said he was walking home Sunday night when he saw the signage and was so

taken that he took a snapshot. "I think I'm going to start referring to it as the 'Wheel of Fortune' hospital," he told the paper. When shown the photo, hospital spokesman Dario Centorcelli told/asked the Times, "Oh, God, are we going to get this fixed?" NYT reporter Jennifer 8. Lee posited that the change could have been a "result of karmic energy emanating from the emergency room, or the purposeful sabotage of a emergency room patient who was tired of waiting." But Centorcelli said he didn't believe it was anything more than a couple of bulbs going out. We tend to think along Lee's lines.

**Central Talent Booking**