

## Network sticks by untrue broadcast

NEW YORK (AP) — Is a TV show excused from sticking to the truth if it isn't branded "news"?

In at least one instance, CBS says yes. In February, the network broadcast a two-hour special that, among other things, seemed to clinch the existence of Noah's ark. In particular, "The Incredible Discovery of Noah's Ark" included an account by a man named George Jammal, who claimed to have seen the ark with his own eyes — and brought back what he said was a chunk of it as proof.

But the story was a fabrication, according to the man who said he helped Jammal concoct it. The "relic" on view was just a piece of wood.

Many scholars cried foul after the special was telecast.

CBS "acted irresponsibly in airing a so-called documentary that was actually a propaganda vehicle for 'creationists' opposed to the theory of evolution," charged the Committee for the Scientific Examination of Religion, an organization of scientists, biblical scholars and other specialists. The organization called the special "riddled with biased statements and errors of fact."

But in a brief statement Monday after a *Time* magazine article labeled the network a "victim to a hoaxer," CBS spokeswoman Beth Comstock said only that the program "was an entertainment special, not a news documentary. We certainly were not aware of any alleged hoax."

Gerald Larue, a professor emeritus of biblical history and archaeology at the University of Southern California, said he helped Jammal, a sometimes actor and an acquaintance, cook up the tale he presented on camera.

"For a guy who had never been to the site (believed to be on Mount Ararat in Turkey), Jammal was a little bit confused: 'What do I say? I don't know anything about Mount Ararat,'" Larue said. "So we talked a little about that."

Larue had been interviewed for an earlier special, which like "Noah's Ark" was produced by Utah-based Sun International Pictures. He called that program "unfair pseudo-science," and said his prank was designed to expose Sun's research practices.

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— Committee for the Scientific Examination of Religion

## Lincoln papers found in court

PEKIN, Ill. (AP) — The clerk in the Tazewell County Courthouse pulled a long-hidden folder marked "Re: Lincoln" from a basement vault Monday and found 20 brittle papers handwritten or signed by the 16th U.S. president.

The find added to historians' discovery in the courthouse last week of 14 of Abraham Lincoln's legal papers. That already was the

single largest cache ever found.

"And we've only scratched the tip of the iceberg here. We've only gone through 10 percent of the materials in Pekin. Who knows how much material we'll find?" said William Beard, assistant editor of the Lincoln Legal Papers — a project of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency.

The court clerk, Pam Gardner, said she always knew her files

contained some Lincoln documents, but she never had time to investigate.

"I showed the researchers the documents ... and they about had a heart attack," Ms. Gardner said after pulling out the "Re: Lincoln" folder. "It's really exciting."

The documents include jury instructions, bills of indictments, affidavits and pleas.

## Man admits to killing 17 women

MINEOLA, N.Y. (AP) — Troopers who chased down a pickup truck for a routine traffic violation said Monday they found a woman's decomposing body in the back and a driver who confessed to killing 17 women.

Joel Rifkin, 34, a landscaper from the Long Island community of East Meadow, was charged with second-degree murder, police said.

State Police Capt. Walter Heesch said Rifkin also was linked to the slaying of a woman whose body was found May 9 along a road in the resort community of Southampton. Rifkin was not charged Monday in that slaying.

Troopers tried to stop Rifkin

around 4 a.m. for driving a truck without a rear license plate and running a stop sign, Trooper Tom Collins said. He refused to stop and troopers followed him for nearly four miles until his truck collided with a light pole, police said. The chase did not reach high speeds and it was not clear what caused him to run into the pole.

The troopers smelled a rank odor coming from the back of the truck and found the badly decomposed body of a woman wrapped in a tarpaulin, Heesch said. She had been dead three to four days, he said.

He said Rifkin had no reaction to his arrest and soon told investigators that he had been on his

way to dump the body. He also admitted killing 17 women over the past two to three years, Heesch said.

Rifkin told police he dumped the bodies in Long Island, Connecticut and New Jersey, Heesch said.

He said investigators believe the women were prostitutes that Rifkin initially picked up in New York City.

Neither victim was identified immediately, and the cause of death had not been determined in either case, authorities said.

Heesch had few details about Rifkin, except to say that he lived with his mother and sister. Heesch said police were searching Rifkin's house for evidence.

## Couple has a 'dog-gone' wedding

PORTLAND (AP) — The flower girl was a dog and so was the ring bearer.

After the wedding, Ruthye and George Dennis rode off in a balloon-bedecked cart pulled by a pair of Rottweilers.

The weekend wedding was the first at the Oregon Humane Society.

Ruthye, 66, recently retired from the Humane Society, where she interviewed people

who wanted to adopt pets.

"Animals have been most of my life," she said.

Ruthye and George have known each other for at least 40 years. Ruthye was married to George's brother, but her husband died four years ago. George's wife died last year.

Their friendship blossomed when Ruthye traveled to George's house in Las Vegas to

help him sort his wife's belongings.

"At our ages, people shouldn't have to be alone," the 72-year-old groom said as he stood under white paper bells hanging from leashes.

Below the bells was a three-tier wedding cake topped with bride and groom figurines surrounded by several miniature ceramic dogs.

## Disabled veterans on patrol for handicapped parking violators

SALEM (AP) — Veterans will begin patrolling this fall for motorists who park in handicapped parking spaces without a permit and will slap violators with \$100 citations.

Police usually don't have time to patrol the parking lots, says Dave Parker of the Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America, so most violators are never caught.

The veterans group lobbied the 1991 Legislature to authorize police to train volunteers for the task.

Volunteers must be screened and take an eight-hour class from the Oregon State Police before they are allowed to write tickets.

"The main thing is, we want them to be able to keep any conflict to a minimum," state police Lt. Jack Rogers said. "We don't want a situation where an argument ensues or blows are exchanged."

Volunteers have been working in Portland, Eugene and southern Oregon for the past 18

months, and there have been only two minor incidents, Parker said. So far, 75 percent of the volunteers are disabled.

Once a few tickets are issued in an area, the number of violators drops quickly because of the sizeable fine, which ranges from \$100 to \$250, Parker said.

The program also adds to city revenues. In Beaverton, two volunteers working a total of 30 hours a week generated about \$6,000 in fines a month.

## Third attempt to recall Gov. Roberts expected

SALEM (AP) — A third attempt to recall Gov. Barbara Roberts from office will be launched soon, says a Washington County man who was involved in one of the earlier efforts.

P.J. Mulcahy, an Aloha contractor, said Roberts and members of the Legislature are too busy pursuing tax increases to do anything about wasteful government

spending.

"It's time for new leadership," Mulcahy said at a news conference Monday.

Roberts said she wouldn't let the prospect of another recall attempt deter her from her efforts to streamline government.

"What people do outside of this process is obviously their right as citizens," she said.

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