

Real or Falsies Competition Sample

Taken from the Web Archive 2000 10 09

WIN BEER FOR A YEAR

PLAY Real or Falsies on MegaStar - it's the weird and wonderful news quiz the whole of cyberspace is talking about. If you crack it you could WIN BEER FOR A YEAR

For your chance to win simply choose which of our wacky stories are Real and which are Falsies. Easy!

When you've got 10/10, submit your entry.

Story 1 of 10

Bangers for the boys

Image Caption: PORKYS: Stringing them along

BRITISH servicemen on duty in the Middle East will be deprived of traditional pork bangers this Christmas - to keep the locals happy.

Defence Ministry chiefs fear the sight of squaddies scoffing chipolatas with their festive lunch will offend local Muslims.

Followers of Islam believe it is a sin to eat pig meat, which is regarded as "unclean".

The ban has caused outrage in mess halls as sausages are the armed forces' favourite grub, with 1.2 million being eaten each year.

Soldiers, sailors and airmen will have to make do with alternative chipolatas to accompany their traditional Christmas dinner.

These are likely to be made out of chicken - or they might even be vegetarian.

Defence personnel in Gulf states Kuwait and Bahrain will have to stomach the replacement.

WHADDYA RECKON?

Story 2 of 10

Santa hats your lot

Image Caption: MAD HATTER: Only here for the beard

A BATTY boss has told workers he'll dock their £1,000 Christmas bonuses unless they wear silly Santa hats.

Brian Campbell warned all 29 staff at his engineering firm: "Be jolly or yule be sorry."

He brought in the Santa clause because he thinks happy workers are harder workers.

And he reckons he'll save on heating bills because the red and white hats will keep their heads warm.

Yesterday, he gazed at the shop floor and said proudly: "It looks like Santa's workshop down there."

Staff at W. Campbell and Son's factory in Hull, East Yorks, thought Christmas had come early when Brian turned up and doled out the hats.

But they soon realised it was snow joke when he followed it up with his festive threat.

Brian said: "I did it to make the whole thing jovial, festive and fun. In the run-up to Christmas, work tends to drop off a little.

"This has brightened up the atmosphere and put nearly everyone in good spirits all except for one person, who moaned the hat tickled his head."

He added: "I let the welders take their hats off when they're welding, in case they set their heads on fire."

Worker Steve Marshall said his boss's idea was a cracker.

"Most of us are entering into the spirit of it," he said.

But grumpy machine operator Tom Creaser is not a happy Santa's little helper. He said: "I just don't like wearing hats. If I miss out on my bonus then so be it. I'm not wearing the bloomin' thing."

WHADDYA RECKON?

Story 3 of 10

Not a dog's life

Image Caption: DOGGED OFF: Mutt ado about nothing

JET the pet dog had a cold, miserable Christmas after thieves stole the family car with him inside!

The devoted labrador was guarding presents when Michael and Julie Baxter's Subaru estate was stolen on Christmas Eve.

The couple and their two children Tim, five, and three-year-old Isobel had a miserable time fearing Jet was lost forever.

But luckily cops found the car parked in Guildford, Surrey four days later with the 18-month-old mutt cold and hungry but still guarding the gifts.

Yesterday Mr Baxter, 35, manager of the Albury Estate near Guildford, said: "I thought a friend was playing a prank."

Then he realised it was being stolen and feared the worst for Jet.

He said: "I didn't care about the car or the presents. After all, they could always be replaced but I was worried about Jet."

Mr Baxter added: "It is a great relief to get her back and the kids are really happy. It has made the New Year for them. The thieves must have been frightened of the dog but she's the friendliest in the world."

WHADDYA RECKON?

Story 4 of 10

Snow joke for Chaz

Image Caption: SANTA'S GROTTY: Teletubby not shown

CHRISTMAS is snow joke for crazy Charlie Hutcherson - he has spent an amazing two months and £3,000 on the ultimate Yuletide decorations.

Charlie, 64, has stunned neighbours every festive season for the last five years with his ever-grander Xmas displays outside his modest terraced house.

This year gobsmacked passers-by have gazed in wonder at his Santa's grotto, medieval castle and furious-looking dragon.

And Charlie has not even finished - he plans to add a tellytubby's head poking out of one of the castle turrets.

This year the annual festive furniture has added poignancy since it is a tribute to his late wife Joan, 60, who died of cancer this year.

"This was the last thing we discussed before she died," said the ex-greengrocer from Ilford, Essex.

"And my 13 grandchildren and three step-grandchildren absolutely love it.

"They've been at school today telling all their friends because you know what kids are like - they love showing off."

Charlie's sons helped him make the decorations over the last two months and put it all up at the weekend.

He encourages onlookers to make a contribution to a new children's hospice after seeing his amazing house.

"This all started five years ago when me and my brother-in-law had a challenge to see who could do the best.

"He still does one but I think love beaten him this year. The trouble is now I can't think what I'm going to do to top it next year.

"I think I'll have to start on it in January!"

WHADDYA RECKON?

Story 5 of 10

Christmas stag do

Image Caption: OH DEER: Here comes the Hurricane

A FAMILY Christmas Day was left in tatters when a wild deer went CRACKERS around the house.

Farmer Tim Clarkson, his wife Brenda, and their three children Jack, Joshua and Ellie were looking forward to a traditional family celebration at their posh 17th century farmhouse in Boughton Monkchelsea, Kent.

But they really got the needle when a daffy deer burst through the back door and crashed straight into the family's 12-foot Christmas tree.

The Clarkson kids had just put the finishing touches on decorating the prized Norwegian pine and were distraught when the batty beast sent baubles crashing to the floor

"We just couldn't believe what was happening," explained Tim, 42. "We were all shellshocked and really scared.

"Brenda was pottering about in the scullery putting the finishing touches on the roast, the kids were adding the contents of their Christmas stockings to the tree and I was out the back chopping logs for the fire.

"Looking back, I suppose I was silly to leave the door open. But you just don't think

things like that are going to happen, do you?"

"Out of the corner of my eye I saw something dart out of the hedge making a wailing noise.

"Next thing I heard this almighty crash and my wife and kids screaming.

"I legged it inside in time to see the Christmas tree take a tumble, with this huge animal wreaking havoc and smashing anything in its path in the front room.

"It was utter mayhem. Lucky we're insured."

Tim locked the bewildered beast in the lounge and called the Canterbury branch of the RSPCA.

But the animal welfare officer took more than an hour to arrive at the house, during which time the deer destroyed the Clarkson's TV, stereo, 3-piece suite, family heirlooms and Christmas gifts valued at more than £10,000.

RSPCA officer Alan Pardew sedated the deer - nicknamed Hurricane - and later released it back into the wild.

"I felt so sorry for both the deer and the family," said Mr Pardew.

"The deer was scared stiff and the kids were screaming. I think the youngest boy's cyber-dog was smashed to smithereens, which he was really upset about.

"We've had a whip round back at the office and bought him a new one."

The Clarksons have since recovered from their ordeal and made a successful insurance claim.

Tim joked: "It was horrible at the time, but now we can all see the funny side.

"I think we'll have venison next Christmas."

WHADDYA RECKON?

Story 6 of 10

Superfly Santa

Image Caption: AIR RAID: Sky's the limit for Santa

RESOURCEFUL revellers have come up with a novel idea to deliver their Christmas presents – skydiving Santas.

Yes Santa is taking to the air with the greatest of ease with his beautiful beard and his flying machine.

The red-suited stuntmen will be descending over Birmingham in the run up to the festive season to give out gifts to youngsters all over the city.

The high-jinx idea was the brainchild of Richard Jones, from Sparkbrook.

"I thought we needed something special for this year, what with it being the Millennium and all that," he said.

"We were in the pub one night and one of my mates who is a stuntman suggested a sky dive as something special and we thought why not!"

Now 20 kitted out ho, ho, ho-ers will be boarding their reindeer planes on December 23rd to dish out their sacks of goodies to kids all over the city.

WHADDYA RECKON?

Story 7 of 10

Lag's xmas nosh

Image Caption: SCROOGE: What a catering calamity

WARDERS at a Scrooge jail are creating a merry ding-dong after being told: "Bring your own sandwiches on Christmas Day".

More than 460 lags will sit down to three festive meals on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

But the staff canteen will stay firmly CLOSED.

So warders, working up to 13 and a half hours at Hollesley open jail, Woodbridge, Suffolk, will have to make do with their own sandwiches.

One said: "It is disgraceful. The Prison Service is splashing out a small fortune on inmates but not a penny on us."

A Prison Service spokes-man said: "Catering managers save through the year to provide a bit more over Christmas. Most officers' messes are in private hands so it is down to local negotiations."

WHADDYA RECKON?

Story 8 of 10

Manger mayhem

Image Caption: MANGER DANGER: Look at our Mary

A SCHOOL nativity play ended in chaos after Joseph was wrestled to the floor by one of the three kings.

The play at St Paul's Primary School in Shoreditch was coming to an end when six-year-old Johnny Power whacked his classmate Chris Price in a fit of jealousy.

The incident was sparked after young Johnny got upset at his classmate playing Mary's husband.

Bemused parents in the packed school hall could hardly contain themselves as the boys wrestled in the makeshift manger.

The level five pupils had gathered around the crib for the final scene when Johnny ran from the back of the stage to jump on Joseph.

Shocked Drama Teacher Dawn Byfield had to intervene as the stable started to come apart at the seams.

"One minute I was making sure all the kids were in the right place for the crib scene, the next minute Johnny's jumping on top of Chris, trying to punch him.

"I've never seen anything like it in all my time as a teacher."

The girl at the centre of the drama, nine-year-old Susie Reed was left holding the baby Jesus, while the two boys scrapped.

Calm was only restored when Johnny left the hall in tears followed by his parents John and Heather.

Embarrassed mum Heather said: "Johnny was really looking forward to playing Joseph and was upset that he had to play one of the kind.

He's normally such a quiet boy. It could have been his crowning glory; I think the occasion must have got to him. "

WHADDYA RECKON?

Story 9 of 10

It mutt never happen

Image Caption: CHORAL GRIEF: Dog and moan

BATTERSEA choral society has been left reeling after its annual carol service was banned by the RSPCA.

The festive sing-song was given the heave-ho-ho-ho after residents complained the singers distressed animals at the famous dogs home.

Club secretary Geoff Hopwood first heard the news when he received a letter from the local RSPCA office last week.

"I couldn't believe it," said Geoff. "I got this letter saying the carols set the dogs on edge. They even had the nerve to single out O Come All Ye Faithful as a particular problem.

"They said that one part is so high it winds the dogs up, making them bark and howl all night. Apparently, this qualifies as abuse. But that's just rubbish.

"We've been holding the service on the park's bandstand for over a decade," explained Geoff. "It's not our fault it's right next door to the home, that was there long before they arrived.

"This is political correctness gone mad. Next, they'll be trying to ban Christmas."

But RSPCA spokeswoman Judith Reid has hit back at Geoff's complaints.

"The most important issue here is the dogs' welfare. We haven't banned the service, we've just asked them to not upset the dogs.

"It's a big park. I'm sure they can find another place to perform."

WHADDYA RECKON?

Story 10 of 10

The santa clause

Image Caption: CRAZEE: Whacky DJ jokers yesterday

RADIO jokers caused chaos by telling workers about a Euro Santa Clause giving them NINE days off for working FOUR at Christmas.

Potty presenters Umberto and Dave Ward made up their own Euro Yule rule for a giggle.

They told their Radio Piccadilly 1152 listeners in Manchester that if they work this year's four Christmas weekend days, they'll get an extra five off in lieu.

Gleeful workers at firms like British Rail, Marks & Spencer and BAA bombarded puzzled

bosses with requests.

They all wanted to take advantage of the Santa Clause - supposed to bring Britain in line with Europe.

The radio jokers even said if firms didn't accept the Euro law workers should contact the Department of Employment and their unions.

And that set the cat among the pigeons! Panicking bosses and unions phoned Brussels and Euro MPs to find out about the rule.

Umberto laughed: "We took thousands of calls from bosses and workers. Everybody's going barmy. The unions want to disembowel us."

TUC rep Alec McFadden fumed: "It was irresponsible. We even had Euro MPs trying to find the directive."

WHADDYA RECKON?