

This crazy world
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At a time when all the news seems very bleak, from the dreadful shooting in Tucson, to unemployment, the national debt, and fights in Washington, sometimes its good to step back and find something that's at least good for a chuckle, if not a belly laugh.

I often fall back on crazy headlines. Here are two recent favorites: "Vultures in yarmulkes?" courtesy of the New York Post and the Israeli newspaper Haaretz, and, "Passports to be gender-neutral." I've forgotten the source of this one.

Back to the birds. The sub-head for The Post article is, "A vulture tagged by Tel Aviv University for a migration study flew into Saudi Arabia last week and was promptly arrested as an Israeli spy."

The newspaper noted that "Anthropomorphic paranoia flourishes" in the Middle East. It offered some examples. Last month, Egypt charged that the Mossad had planted a man-eating shark in the Red Sea to cripple Egyptian tourists. It was unclear how the shark could distinguish between Egyptian tourists and non-Egyptians.

Then there was Iran's incarceration of 14 squirrels back in 2007 for "carrying spy gear of foreign agencies." Now I know the Israelis are very advanced in their use of technology, but this doesn't seem possible.

Yesterday, I brought my car to a screeching halt because a dumb squirrel ran in front of me. He stopped in the middle of the road, staring at my car. He went to the left, he went to the right and back to the left. I finally blasted my horn and he ran away.

The Iranians followed up by busting two pigeons near a nuclear reactor in Natanz in 2008. The Post opined that these are examples of a syndrome they term Mideast Derangement Disorder and they call it a "regional plague."

Bloggers on the al Haaretz web site took a humorous view. One asked if the bird was singing Hava Nagila. Personally, I want to know if he has been waterboarded and, if so, is he singing? Our U.S. State Department seems to have time on its hands, despite Iran, North Korea, Venezuela and a host of other trouble spots. They want to issue gender-neutral passport applications for children.

As I understand it, they intend that the applications which used to have a line for "Father's name" and "Mother's name" will now say parent one and parent two.

A State Department spokeswoman said this was not a bow to political correctness but rather, a recognition of different types of families that have come into existence today.

Gay right groups cheered the move. Christian groups viewed the move as another way of undermining conventional marriage. I'm wondering how do you decide WHO is parent one and who is parent two?

I've always been mystified with regard to who is the bride and who is the groom in a same-sex marriage. So, those terms will go by the boards also.

Next up, we will not identify men as men and women as women. What will we do with reruns of movies such as "Mommy Dearest" and old TV series such as "Father Knows Best"?

I imagine the latter will simply be outlawed since we are well into the process of demeaning the male role in our society.

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