

# Cookie Chronicles

## NATIONAL NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

### Christmas Tree Gang Strikes Again

**C**hristmas is just around the corner—or so you would think, looking at the decor in several large department stores across the nation. The infamous Christmas Tree Gang has struck again, raiding several major department stores across the country on the night of August 2 and decorating them for Christmas.

Amanda Wilson, spokeswoman for Sears, explained what happened in several Sears department stores. "They broke in at night, drugging our security guards and raiding the stock rooms where we keep our decorations for Christmas. By morning, they had redecorated entire stores. Everyone was shocked to find Christmas lights and ornaments on display when they arrived at work, and our customers were bewildered." In order to avoid having to hire extra workers to clean up, many of the nation's stores have decided to leave the decorations up for the rest of the year. Wilson said, "After all, we'd only have to put them up again in late September."

This is not the first time the gang has made the news this year, pulling their unusual stunts to proclaim the superiority of their gang over any rivals. Instead of engaging in turf battles or gangland drug running, the Christmas Tree Gang has expanded the scope of its mischief to gain national attention. In February, gang members painted road signs across the nation, not with graffiti, but with Christmas 'art', causing massive confusion for travelers. April brought massive burglaries of chain toy stores. The gang left stolen toys piled high on the doorsteps of orphanages in several major cities. In June, pirate radio stations sprang up overnight across the nation, playing Christmas music for twenty four hours before vanishing. For each incident, the gang had identified its work through anonymous phone calls to the police.

Despite the nature of the massive pranks, police say they have few leads. Gang colors are rumored to be red and green, and gang members reportedly call themselves Santa's Elves. If you have any information on the activities of the Christmas Tree gang, you are urged to call (800)555-XMAS.

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## PATHFINDER DISCOVERS DESERTED BBC SET ON MARS

### Mystery of Martian Face Solved

At last, scientists have solved the mystery that has been puzzling the world since one of the Viking Orbiters first returned the strange photos from Mars in the summer of 1976. The "Face" is a rock formation on the surface of Mars resembling an enormous humanoid face staring straight up into space. It is about 2.5km long x 2.0 km wide x 0.4 km tall and is located on a flat plain known as Cydonia Mensae in Mars' northern hemisphere (41 deg. N latitude 9.5 deg. longitude). The original image (Viking orbiter frame 35A72) was rediscovered by Vincent DiPietro and Gregory Molenaar, two engineers at the Goddard Spaceflight Center, several years after it was taken.

Many had speculated about its origin. Some had said that it was actually built by an ancient race on Mars. Others claimed that it was left by space travelers as a memorial. The scientific community had typically responded by dismissing it as merely an unusual geological feature combined with the play of light and shadow.

They were all wrong. Ground photographs from the Pathfinder mission have revealed a deserted BBC set. Pathfinder discovered filming equipment, pieces of a set, and other evidence of a human visit. Some of the filming equipment was clearly marked "Property of the BBC."

NASA scientists contacted the BBC, which at first denied knowledge of any Martian filming. Finally, the BBC referred scientists to Philip Hinchcliffe, former producer of sci-fi hit, Doctor Who. Hinchcliffe said, "Yes, we were there. It was an episode of 'Revenge of the Cybermen' with Tom Baker which aired in (Continued, see NASA)

### Man Claims to be Knight, Thwarting Car-jacker

**O**utside of New Orleans last Thursday, August 21, Miguel Cervesos was arrested for attempted car jacking. he was thwarted by the bizarre antics of Donald White. Cervesos was attempting to drive Anna may Smith off the road and steal her Camero when he was interrupted by White, who was driving behind them on County Route 32.

Cervesos forced Smith into a field, but as he was ordering Smith to get out of her car, White pulled up behind them. White jumped out of his pickup truck and announced, "Stop! Release the damsel, coward!" White, who wore a metal breastplate and brandished a rusty sword, apparently startled Cervesos so much that Cervesos dropped his gun. White ran towards him, and Cervesos tripped in the tick grass. White then stood over him, pointing the sword at his throat until the authorities arrived. The police nearly arrested White, but Smith explained the situation to them. Smith exclaimed, "I don't know what all you alls think, but Sir White saved me, so if he wants to be called a knight, that's fine by me—he saved my life!

(NASA, continued)

1975. We modified the shape of the hill slightly to give it shadows in the right places to make it look like a Cyberman head. It was supposed to be the home of the Cybermen, an evil race of space conquerors. We built our set at its base. It was a tremendous effort, but sadly, we weren't able to use the episode because it didn't fit in well with the story line." Hinchcliffe and other representatives of the BBC claimed that the episode was accidentally destroyed during a BBC reorganization in 1980. When asked how the BBC could have been on Mars at that time, Hinchcliffe said, "Ask the Doctor." He then refused to answer further questions. In an elusive quest for answers, frustrated researchers interviewed former Doctor Who star, Tom Baker. Baker only grinned mischievously and said, "Well..." He would not provide an explanation. Scientists may have solved one mystery, but others remain.