

This Week In Doubtful News

Written by Sharon Hill

Tuesday, 25 December 2012 09:00

It was a VERY busy week. There were several big stories not the least of which was the biggest HOAX of the year, the unapocalypse. Luckily, no one engaged in any self-fulfilling prophecies and we all made it through OK. Here is a rundown of the top stories in pseudoscience, hoaxes, and the paranormal and associated skeptical commentary from the past week courtesy of [Doubtful News](#).

The most high-flying hoax of the week went to the film school students who produced a video of a [large bird abducting a toddler](#) in Canada. It forced us all look a little bit closer at lift and gravity.

On to tales of giant serpents. We're pretty sure that was definitely not the correct explanation for this [strange beach trail](#) in Thailand.

We also got the somewhat disappointing answer to why the Indiana Jones journal [showed up at a university](#). It fell out of its packaging by accident.

In medical-related news, Jehovah's Witness followers are [changing their views](#), at least tacitly, about blood transfusions.

In other good news, a judge [rules against a mother](#) who was refusing to allow conventional cancer treatment for her child.

In REALLY disheartening news, though, an [attack on polio vaccination workers](#) in anti-science Pakistan leaves many killed and injured and prompts suspension of the vital program.

A man in Pennsylvania was caught [plotting to kill psychics](#) including James Van Praagh. That is NOT endorsable skeptical activism.

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In another example of how NOT to act in an acceptable manner, parapsychologist Barry Taff [tells nasty stories](#) about people with mental illness but he also is unforgiving to TV ghost hunters.

The media flubbed up royally on two stories. First, this story about mysterious "rods" in Malaysia ignores very basic and well-known information about camera artifacts that explain these so called "sky fish" very well. Second, several outlets reported a story about a find of [ancient cranial deformed skulls as "alien"](#). This practice was widespread and common and there is no reason to push a ridiculous idea that they were in any way "alien".

New Orleans school district took a stand against the position of the Louisiana governor and the state of Texas by specifically [wiping Creationism out of the schools](#).

Finally, [people really do see Santa, for real](#).

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