

Rekognition facial analysis prone to failure

Among the gazillion other products and services available from Amazon is the behemoth's facial recognition software, Rekognition, marketed as providing extremely accurate facial analysis. But when the American Civil Liberties Union gave it a go, the results were startling.

Using Rekognition, the ACLU scanned photos of every current member of the U.S. House and Senate and came up with 28 matches to a mug shot database of people who had been arrested for crimes. The ACLU announced its findings July 26 and admitted it used Amazon's default settings, to which Amazon responded, "While 80 percent confidence is an acceptable threshold for photos of hot dogs, chairs, animals or other social media use

cases," Amazon would advise customers to set the threshold at 95 percent or higher for law enforcement. The ACLU told NPR the legislators who were falsely matched were men, women, Republicans and Democrats of all ages. However, the software did misidentify people of color at a higher rate.

WEIRD SCIENCE

You thought you were old? You're just a twinkle in a nematode's eye. Russian scientists have revived two ancient, frozen roundworms, or nematodes, from samples collected in Siberian permafrost, *The Siberian Times* reported on July 26. The worms, which were found in cores taken from 30 meters and 3.5 meters deep, are believed to be female and 41,700 and 32,000 years

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

old, respectively. After collecting the samples, scientists slowly thawed out the worms, which eventually started eating and moving. Scientists from the Institute of Physico-Chemical and Biological Problems of Soil Science in Moscow believe the nematodes have some adaptive mechanisms that may be of scientific importance.

FLORIDA. NEED WE SAY MORE?

During a July 23 debate among mayoral candidates in Key West, Fla., Sloan Bashinsky, a perennial contender, took a minute to answer a call from God. "Hello? What? God?" Bashinsky said, speaking into his cell-phone. According to FLKeys News, it wasn't

the first time he's heard from a higher power: "I have said every time I ran, I ran because God told me to run," Bashinsky explained. "I think anyone who wants this job is insane." Bashinsky has a law degree from Vanderbilt University and was once among the island's homeless. He joins six other candidates on the ticket.

SIGN OF THE TIMES

Just after midnight on July 22, a couple in Palo Alto, Calif., was awakened in their bedroom by a 17-year-old burglar with a garment obscuring his face. Instead of demanding money or jewelry, though, the intruder asked for their Wi-Fi password.

According to the *Sacramento Bee*, the homeowner forced the teen out of the home and called police, who tracked him down a block away and arrested him for felony residential burglary.

Police later determined it wasn't the teen's first attempt at connectivity. Less than an hour earlier that night, a prowler had summoned a woman from her home to ask for access to her Wi-Fi network also. She told him to go away, and he rode off on a bicycle -- which she realized the next day he had stolen from her backyard. She called police, who recovered the bike near where they had arrested the teen.

BRIGHT IDEAS

Diamonds are SO 20th century. In Japan, Warp Space is offering newly-

weds the chance to make their union universal with wedding plaques launched into space. According to United Press International, the startup company, founded by faculty members from the University of Tsukuba, will print a titanium plate with the names of the betrothed and put it, along with a few hundred other plaques, in one of a series of small cubes to be released into space from the International Space Station. Astronauts will memorialize the launching by taking photographs, which will then be sent to the newly-weds. The service costs \$270.

Send your weird news items with subject line WEIRD NEWS to WeirdNewsTips@amuniversal.com.

NPT turns cameras on Depot Bottom

Store to appear on 'Tennessee Crossroads'

BY **LACY GARRISON**
Reporter for the Southern Standard (McMinnville, Tennessee)

Depot Bottom buzzed with excitement Monday morning as a small crew from "Tennessee Crossroads" set up at 9:30 a.m. to begin shooting a segment about the country store and its history.

On air since 1987, "Tennessee Crossroads" travels the highways and byways of Tennessee, highlighting the personalities, crafts, places, foods and events that make

Tennessee special and its character unique. It is a production of Nashville Public Television, which typically airs on channel NPT2 or can be viewed from its website.

According to Olivia Young, it all started with a message via Facebook.

"I sent them a message and asked if they would be interested in filming at the store," explained Olivia. "They said yes, they would love to. They are staying through the lunch rush and plan on talking to as many people

as possible so it will be a crazy fun day!"

Owner Travis Young was the first person interviewed. Sandy Young stood nearby watching and listening intently to her son's every word while he answered questions regarding the food, building and small-town life.

"It's very exciting and Travis has done a good job taking over and keeping it the same while also drawing in more business," said Sandy with a huge smile. "I'm a proud mom."

County historian Jimmy Haley elaborated on the history of the building, which was actually a blacksmith shop back in the 1920s before World War II transformed the face of McMinnville with people turning toward machinery instead of mules and horses.

"In 1956, Hubert Hillis decided to put a little grocery store in here and sold colas, drinks, sandwiches, a few canned items, soups and it had memorabilia around the room to inspire a little bit of conversation and it became a meeting place for all the people who worked in this area," explained Haley. "It was a great place to eat and talk politics for really a cross-section of people from work hands to business people."

Hubert kept the store running for more than 40 years until his death in 2003. After sitting vacant for a spell, Mike Crowe purchased the store and ran it for over a year. After his departure, Sandy Young entered the picture and has kept the tradition alive, serving breakfast and lunch. Now, she's passed it on to her son, Travis, who officially took over the store last November.

After interviews, the crew gathered B-roll of Riverside Cemetery along



Lacy Garrison photo

The Young family proudly dons their Depot Bottom shirts after spending the day with a "Nashville Crossroads" film crew. They are eager to see their segment, which should be featured sometime in a September episode. Pictured from left, are Owen, Olivia, Sandy, Emma and Travis Young.



Lacy Garrison photo

Owen Young, 3, hangs around in the background watching his dad, Travis, answer questions on camera for "Tennessee Crossroads."

with customers enjoying their lunch of popular food items, including spicy grilled pimento cheese sandwiches, loaded baked potatoes and cheeseburger salads. Once they were finished, the "Tennessee Crossroads" crew was treated to lunch and said everything was delicious.

According to NPT production manager Jim DeMarco, the episode featuring Depot Bottom Country Store should air sometime in September with updates available through local cable providers like Charter, Ben Lomand and Direct.

You can learn more about "Tennessee Crossroads" at tennesseecrossroads.org or check out its Facebook page for more information.

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A SPECIAL THANK YOU!

To my friends, relatives, colleagues, former students, and all others who voted for me in the recent election. Even though unsuccessful in my bid for the office of Register of Deeds, I fulfilled a lifelong ambition. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience of being part of a historic local election. Congratulations to Mr. Wes Williams and all the newly elected office holders.

Sincerely,
Tim Grandey

POLITICAL AD PAID FOR BY CANDIDATE, TIM GRANDEY

1993 Ford F350 pickup truck, 4WD, automatic, crew cab, 7.5 liter gas. May be seen at State Farm Insurance, 219 N Chancery St, McMinnville. The estate of Roy A Davis, Lauren Zechman-Denney, executrix, will accept sealed bids (minimum \$3,250) until 5:00 pm Friday, August 10. Vehicle is sold as-is with no warranty, expressed or implied. Sale will be considered final. Terms: cash, bank check, certified check or postal money order. Mail bids to P.O. Box 824, McMinnville, TN 37111.