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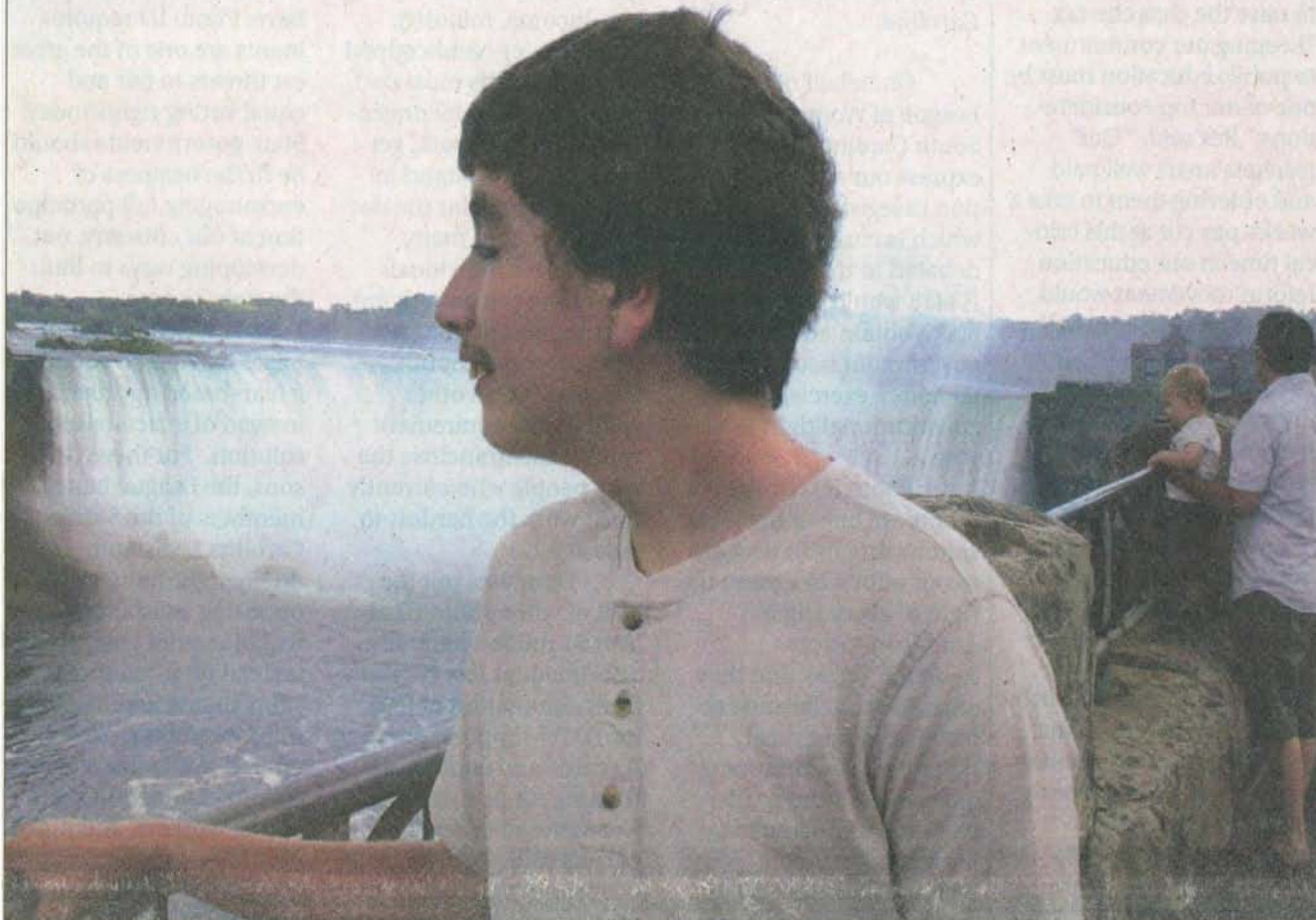
Vol. 47 No. 16

South Carolina

February 5, 2010

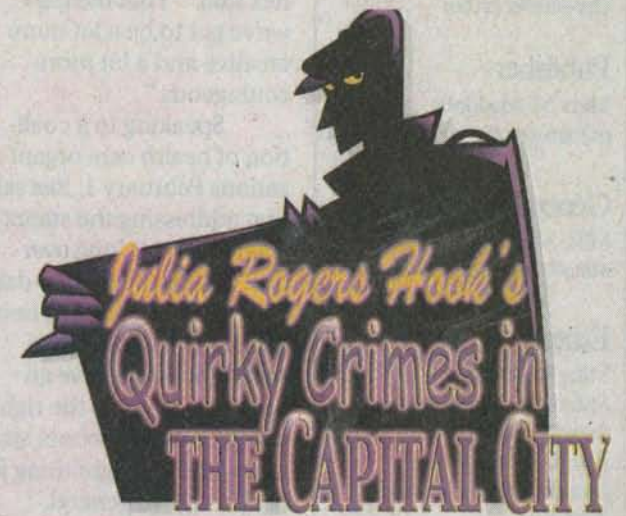
Necessity—the father of invention

Father develops software for those with autism after his son's diagnosis



Karl Garay was “blown away” when he saw Niagara Falls.

Introducing



Richland County

Mallard Street, 100 block: A man and woman were arrested and charged with possession of marijuana after they were pulled over due to a window tinting violation and a cracked windshield. When officers approached the car, the duo tried to pass a bag of the drug between them as they were being searched. Officers caught the attempted dupe and both people went to jail.

Percival Road and Long Shadow Lane: A woman was arrested at 4 pm Sunday after police saw her doubled over in the street. While officers watched, the report said that they saw her walk a few steps, grab her stomach, and go into a crouching position. When they approached her to see if she needed help, she told them she was having horrible stomach pains and asked them if it could be the result of some crack cocaine she had just smoked. They

By Pam Edwards

Karl Smith's son, Karl Garay, began to talk when he was about a year old and was learning the things a typical one-year-old learns. A few months later young Karl had stopped talking and was not learning.

Karl Jr. was diagnosed with autism, a disorder that has seen an "epidemic explosion" in recent years. Researchers blame this increase on many and varied factors including genetics, increased use of chemicals, vaccinations, and the environment. The research is still inconclusive on why, but the fact remains, autism cases are on the rise worldwide.

"When you have a child with autism, it basically changes your life," says Karl Smith.

After observing his son responding to an intensive ABA program for autism, Smith began to seek computer-based learning programs for his child to learn at least some of what he needed to know on his own time.

The products he found proved to be ineffec-

tive in helping with his son's behavioral and educational development, so Smith put his engineering and artificial intelligence background to work, developing the DT Trainer and the Activity Trainer, two special needs software programs for children with autism and other special needs.

"When I decided to develop a software program for my son and other children like him, I met with various researchers and educators to guide my efforts and also make sure I wasn't reinventing the wheel," says Smith, founder of Columbia, South Carolina-based Accelerations Educational Software (AES).

Smith moved from Chicago to West Columbia with his family over 15 years ago to do contract work for AT&T. His desire to help his son learn and become higher functioning took Smith in another direction.

Smith says he is the hub of a wheel that includes many researchers and educators, and extensive research in developing AES, which is geared to a

two to nine year old age development.

"A great product doesn't do a person any good if he cannot afford it," Smith says. "We deliver at least ten times the content for the cost of typical special education software, which enables us to put our products in the hands of a lot more schools and families. The pricing also makes these tools cost-effective for a much wider range of students, allowing us to impact many other individuals with conditions besides autism."

According to Smith, many children ask to "play the games" on the computer even after their standard therapy has ended. And while the software is educational in concept, the feeling of accomplishment the students receive while using it greatly impacts their behavior as well.

AES is now used in almost 1,000 school systems nationwide and countless private homes.

John M. Williams, an expert in the area of assistive technology, praises the software because it directly addresses the "practicality



Karl Smith

issue." Williams said, "Students with autism are visual learners. They replay these videos in their head, therefore helping them to accomplish tasks."

Karl Jr. is now a young teenager, enjoying life and learning more and more every day. He likes riding his bike, and his favorite thing is water. He was "blown away" by a recent trip to Niagara Falls.

To learn more about this software visit www.dttrainer.com or call 803-233-0541. For information about autism, visit www.actforautism.com.

transported her to the hospital but when they ran her name through the computer, they found she was wanted on a parole violation. The hospital security was notified to release the woman to police after treatment.

Two Notch and Cushman Roads: A woman was arrested at 12:30 am Thursday after police noticed her driving erratically and pulled her over. As officers approached the car, they smelled a strong odor of alcohol and noticed an empty 24-ounce beer bottle on the floorboard. The woman immediately confessed that she had polished off the beer after smoking some crack cocaine. She additionally told them she had no valid driver's license and that the license tag on her car was stolen. The cooperative driver was charged and taken to jail.

Forest Acres

Trenholm Road, 5200 block: A man was arrested at the Forest Acres Police Department Thursday after he tried to apply for a job. When he filled out the application, it was discovered that he had a warrant for his arrest on a petit larceny charge. A judge was contacted and the man agreed to pay his \$1,092.50 fine in lieu of serving the 30-day sentence. He was not hired by the department.

Forest Drive, 3000 block: A man was arrested Tuesday after he tried to cash a forged \$3,640 check. A bank employee became suspicious and contacted the account holder who said the check was stolen. Police were called, and the man was arrested. During the arrest he gave officers two \$50 bills that he said were from another forged check he cashed earlier in the day.

Academy Way, 100 block: Police were called to a home at noon Tuesday after a 78-year-old female resident received a call from a man who said he was her grandson and had been in a car accident and needed her to wire him \$950 in Canada. He would call her back with the details and to get her debit card number so he could pay her back, the caller said. An officer was there at the appointed time of the next call and when he spoke to the man, the man said the woman had won 2.5 million dollars in an international lotto and only needed to wire \$375 to a Jamaican address. When the officer identified himself, the caller abruptly hung up, a report said.

Clemson Road, 5000 block: A female student was sent home from school at 2:30 Wednesday after she allegedly struck another 14-year-old student in the head. A report said the female stated she was going to "set it off," and the male told her to go ahead and do it. At that point witness-

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