

Vilnius Mayor Solves Parking Woes With Tank

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Zuokas giving an acceptance speech for his Ig Nobel Prize on Thursday. **Michael Dwyer**

Drivers think twice before illegally parking in Lithuania's capital.

Vilnius Mayor Arturas Zuokas found a heavy-handed way of dealing with parking scofflaws: He crushes their cars with a military armored personnel carrier.

The solution earned him the 2011 Ig Nobel Prize.

"I just decided that it was time to teach bullies who had no respect for the rights of others a lesson that left an impression," Zuokas said by e-mail.

This year's winners of the dubious distinction handed out at Harvard University for head-scratching scientific discoveries included Japanese scientists who invented a fire alarm that smells like wasabi; a Norwegian researcher who explored the science behind sighing; a team of U.S. professors who found that having a bladder at its bursting point reduced attention span and the ability to make decisions to the same degree expected with low levels of alcohol

intoxication or 24 hours of sleep deprivation; and numerous people throughout history whose mathematical calculations to predict the end of the world have fallen flat.

The 21st annual awards, sponsored by the Annals of Improbable Research, were handed out by real Nobel laureates on Thursday.

In a video [posted](#) on YouTube, Zuokas crushes a Mercedes blocking not just a bicycle lane but also a pedestrian crossing in Vilnius' picturesque Old Town.

Zuokas was coy when asked whether the car-crushing was a stunt — the well-dressed owner did not appear to be too angry — but said the plan appears to have worked. The city has returned to what the mayor calls "more standard and boring" means of controlling parking scofflaws: issuing tickets and towing vehicles.

But he warns he has the tank on standby.

(AP, MT)

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