

News From Around the Bend



Issue 99
26th Anniversary Issue



NEWS FROM AROUND THE BEND

ERRATA, EPHEMERA, ET CETERA.

ISSUE #99
APRIL 2017

26TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

A periodical brought to you periodically

The Northcraft Entertainment Organization

Cover: It seems like you're trying to convince me not to exit here.

Publisher/Editor for Life
ACOUSTIC ROSS

Known & Suspected Contributors To Your Delinquency This Month

SHAWN BRETT
EMORY BRYAN
KEVIN DAUGHERTY
BERT FURIOLI
The **GREENAWALT** Family
GLEN HETHERINGTON
The **JOHNSON** Family

The **KNARR** Family
The **MASON** Family
MIKE MUIZNIEKS
GLORIA SHADE
LORI STONE
The **YUNGKURTH** Family
JOHN ZACCARDELLI

NOTES FROM THE SKEPTIC TANK

We learn from history that we do not learn from history.

– George Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel

Told you it would be less than 10 years this time.

Unlikely as it seemed, NFATB returned from a decade's hibernation in January 2017. Now we return with a mildly belated anniversary ish – a year late for our 25th, a few months late for our exact 26th. But close enough.

The biggest news since last time is the official web relaunch: **newsfromaroundthebend.com** and **acousticross.com**, each newly rebuilt and about 1000% improved over their predecessors.

You can read new posted content and new issues directly on the site, and eventually the entire archive of the first 97 issues will be downloadable there too. (Some assembly has been required in getting the oldest issues back into scannable shape.)

In other news, there isn't much other news around here: quite frankly, we've been busy making all this stuff, along with new music, which hopefully will begin peeking out into the world very shortly.

Standing in a recording studio just before the end of 2016, about to work on some new demos and recordings, I vowed to make 2017 less about *planning to create things* and more about *actually creating things*.

So far, so good.



– RmG3, NFATB CEO, March 24, 2017 –

I am a grandmother to four young people with addition problems. One has been sober for a year, two are in recovery and one is on the street.

“Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable.”

John F. Kennedy, Jr. (1917–1963)



NEATEST TRICK OF THE WEEK

Headline in the Philadelphia Daily News.

VICTIM TESTIFIES AT MURDER TRIAL

It is only an auctioneer who can equally and impartially admire all schools of art.

--Oscar Wilde
Irish writer

Note to self...

FORGOTTEN ENGLISH



Among fishermen, "to catch a blind eel" is to bring to the surface a piece of seaweed or some other worthless object in place of the fish supposed to have been hooked; and metaphorically, the expression signifies obtaining a result of little worth compared with that sought; fruitless endeavour.

—John Farmer's *Americanisms Old and New*, 1889

Outsmarting the Opposition

In 1932 the inmate football team at Sing Sing Prison challenged a team from San Quentin Prison to a showdown game. But a San Quentin player accused Sing Sing of trying to stack their team with ringers.

"They are scouting the reform schools for football recruits," he said, "and sending out form letters asking that judges show no leniency to offenders who look like football material."

Local cow finds its business dropping

What to do in cases of emergency

The National Weather Service Web site and other sources offer the following weather safety tips.

Lightning

- Stay away from windows, avoid using the telephone and electric appliances and don't take showers or baths.

- If caught outdoors, go inside immediately or inside a car.

- If caught in the woods, seek shelter under a thick growth of relatively small trees.

- Avoid isolated trees or other tall objects, water, sheds, fences, convertible automobiles, tractors and motorcycles.

Flooding

- Evacuate for higher ground if rising water threatens.

- Avoid small rivers or streams, low spots and dry

riverbeds.

- Don't attempt to walk through any flowing water more than ankle deep.

- Keep children away from streams, drainage ditches, viaducts, storm drains and other flooded areas.

- Don't try to drive through flooded areas.

Tornadoes

- Go to the basement or to an interior room on the lowest floor, such as a closet or bathroom. Get under a sturdy piece of furniture or wrap yourself in blankets or towels to protect yourself from flying debris.

- If caught in a car or mobile home, get out immediately and go to a structure such as a designated storm shelter, or lie flat in a ditch if no shelter is available.

- Stay away from windows.



Related Articles



Rush in Rio Tom Sawyer HQ

Dear

...

youtube.com

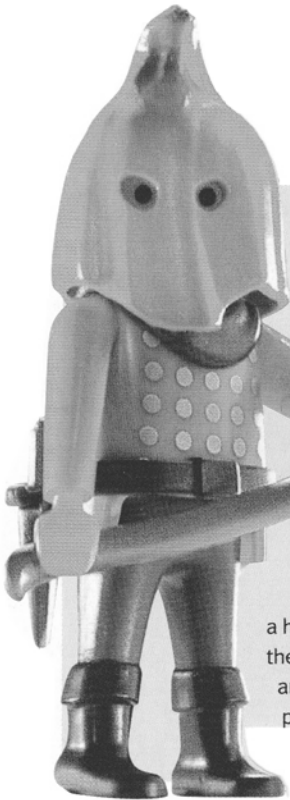
youtu

Nicely played, Related Articles aggregator.

* The Japanese Space Agency has suspended rocket development on Hokkaido Island after an explosion scared 500 chickens to death on a nearby farm.

Girl Scout cookies can fit into your diet

Don't eat entire box.



Off with their heads

IT WASN'T like this when we were kids. Action Man may have had gripping hands, eagle eyes and a scar, but he never had a great big chopper like the Playmobil executioner, aimed at kids of four and up. This cheery chap in the 'Conquerors of the Castle' range comes with a detachable hood (he has a happy smile underneath) and a big axe for 'off with their heads' action. You can also buy a 'street robber' and a 'ghost' to complete your miscarriage-of-justice play-set.

• Ohio State University researchers, led by Gerald A. Winer of the psychology department, conducted tests of more than 700 people "from elementary students to high school teachers," asking nonsense questions such as "Why isn't a horse a bicycle?" Most people tried to answer the question as though it made sense. Few pointed out that horses and bicycles are simply different things.

One question asked of nine adults was: "When do you weigh more, with your eyes open or shut?" All nine picked either open or shut. None pointed out the inanity of the question.

What does the research mean? "To tell you the truth," said Winer, "we don't know what to make of it."

—The Louisville (Ky.) Times

Educating Through Beef Promotion



Rochester, N.Y., Assemblywoman Susan John, who is the chairwoman of the City Assembly's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Committee, upon her guilty plea for driving while impaired:

"This will give me additional insights into the problem of drinking and driving, and I believe, will allow me to do my job even more effectively."

-- Nudity in the news in February: Richmond, Texas, police charged two teen-agers with aggravated robbery; as a ruse to keep from being identified, they had removed their clothes and walked around the neighborhood pretending to be carjacking victims who had been robbed and stripped. And Virginia legislator Robert E. Nelms was arrested for indecent exposure in a Richmond park; he explained only that "the rushing river had its effect on my bladder."

The U.S. Table Tennis Association wanted to call its sport Ping-Pong, but Parker Brothers already owned the rights to the name.

FACT When the USTTA was officially organizing the game in 1933, it wanted to use the more popular name, Ping-Pong, but Parker Brothers, the company famous for Monopoly, wanted too much money for the rights. As a cost-saving measure, the organizers chose the name "table tennis." The 1996 Olympic Committee boasted that table tennis was the most popular racquet sport in the world. In the United States alone, there are 18 million players.

BIZARRO

by Dan Piraro



Personals ad in the Troy, N.Y., *Record*: "Thank you to the two men and a woman who carried me into the Outlet Barn after breaking my ankle."

From a Westchester County, N.Y., *Pennysaver* ad for a gymnastics class for infants and toddlers: "Come to our open house and shake your booties."

From the Wheeling, W.Va., *News-Register*: "Garfield home-starter kits. Adorable orange kittens need good home. Lasagna not included."

Item in *Uncle Henry's Weekly Swap or Sell It Guide*, Augusta, Maine: "Three pairs of skis, two pairs of ski boots, three pairs of crutches and walker, real cheap."

In Motorola's employee ad publication, *Tradewinds*: "Freshwater piranha fish—\$4.50 each. Free to good home—one-legged duck named Betsy."



PERSON OF THE YEAR: Jane Bond, the former judge and new commissioner of what used to be called "Metro Parks, Serving Summit County," issued a death sentence to the worst name in the history of public parks, replacing it with "Summit Metro Parks." While righting the two-decade injustice, she couldn't resist a few shots, saying the old name was "a little unfortunate" and "a little lengthy" and "grammatically challenged." Hallelujah!

SAY IT AIN'T SO: No sooner had we managed to drag "Metro Parks, Serving Summit County" onto the junk heap than someone turns around and does this. The agency on East Tallmadge Avenue formerly known as "The Job Center" — short, sweet, descriptive — is now "Ohio Means Jobs Summit County." Seriously?

HEAVEN ONLY KNOWS: An October food festival sponsored by the Canton Community Hospice was named "Taste of Heaven" — apparently enabling the hospice patients to get a sneak preview. 'Twas the best juxtaposition since February, when the Sugartown Express sponsored a fundraiser for the American Diabetes Association.

In August, a jury in Sarasota, Fla., awarded a 59-year-old woman \$2.1 million from surgeon Holly Barbour for a faulty face-lift and neck-lift. According to testimony, Barbour had offered the patient a discount operation (at \$7,500) because Barbour had previously worked only on eyes and wanted to expand her practice to faces. Barbour's surgery took 10 hours, twice the norm, and left the patient with a lump on her face that made a popping sound when she blinked.

Man asked for kicks in the groin

News of the Weird cited a police report in May that an unidentified man in Guelph, Ontario, Canada, had committed at least three incidents of approaching women and asking to be kicked in the groin. After seven such incidents, Jarrett Loft, 28, pleaded guilty in March to one count and was sentenced to 60 days in jail. Loft offered no explanation for his behavior, other than that he was "curious." One victim, saying that she feared what Loft might do if she refused, repeatedly kicked him between the legs, after which he thanked her and rode off on his bicycle.

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CADILLAC SERVICE FAMILY

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HOW SATISFIED WERE YOU THAT YOU WERE KEPT INFORMED ABOUT THE STATUS OF YOUR SERVICE REQUEST?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
WAS YOUR VEHICLE READY BY THE ORIGINAL TIME PROMISED?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

A note from a Pontiac/Buick/GMC/Cadillac dealer in North Carolina says that "we are happy to have you as a customer." Judging by the options that are available in its customer-service survey, the dealer expects all customers to be happy, too.

"These handcuffs are kind of tight. Can you loosen them up?"

Kenneth Paul Putnam, convicted armed robber known as the "jailhouse Houdini" for his repeated escapes from jail, to detective John Westphalen after his recapture in Decatur, Texas

"Nice try."

Detective John Westphalen, to Kenneth Paul Putnam

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) -- A woman upset over having to drive her drunken roommate home sprayed her friend with gasoline from a convenience store pump Sunday, then killed her by lighting the gas stream on fire, police said.

Nicole Dickens, 22, died after suffering third-degree burns over 98 percent of her body, said Joe DiLaura, a spokesman for Wishard Memorial Hospital.

Her roommate, Sherrell Russell, 26, was arrested and held on suspicion of murder, Marion County Sheriff's Col. Scott Minier said.

Ms. Russell was angry because her roommate was intoxicated and had refused to drive her own car, Minier said.

"The suspect is generally the passenger and she was upset that she was asked to drive," he said. "Her roommate apparently had had too much to drink."

About 4 a.m., Ms. Russell asked a store clerk to call a cab for Ms. Dickens because she didn't want to drive her back to their apartment, Minier said.

But minutes later, as Ms. Russell filled up the car's gas tank, she aimed the pump at her roommate and ignited the stream of gas with a lighter, Minier said.

"It was basically like a flame-thrower, just a stream of fire," he said.

Ms. Russell was treated for burns on her hands.



SPOTLIGHT ON

O/A TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: LEONARDO 1/6-SCALE COLLECTIBLE FIGURE

Leonardo, the stoic leader of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, for the first time in 1/6-scale! Based on the original Eastman and Laird comic book, Leonardo stands approximately 11" tall and features over 25 points of articulation, interchangeable heads and hands, and weapons and accessories taken right from the pages of the comic book! Accessories include 1 classic comic red mask head; 1 cartoon blue mask head; a dual katana and scabbards; and much more. (STK691269)
Available Now! (3294/MT-106)
(C: 0-1-2)
Figure\$149.99

**It's probably a tail.
It has to be a tail.
It really doesn't look like a tail.
Please tell me it's a tail.**

**Right now, I have
the three C's:
comfortable, confident,
and seeing the ball well.**

Seattle Mariners outfielder Jay Buhner

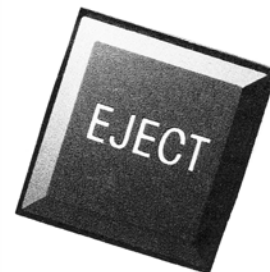
MUSTACHIOED beer drinkers take note: You're wasting barrels of money. New scientific research commissioned by the Guinness brewery showed that an estimated 92,370 mustachioed Guinness drinkers lose up to 162,719 pints of the brew each year — worth some \$675,900. "A genuine mustache has been proven to contribute to a 'significant Guinness wastage, as a result of inter-fiber retention at every sip," the company said in a statement. A hairy dilemma for beer drinkers, indeed.

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All profoundly original work looks ugly
at first.

--Clement Greenberg
American art critic

Note to self...

• Eugene Harris, a homeless man, denied he was stealing from people when he charged patrons of the Philadelphia Museum of Art \$3 to \$5 to park in the museum's free lot. Said Harris: "Look, nothing's free in Philadelphia. This isn't like theft or anything. I can make \$300 on a good day."

Police have been frustrated in their attempts to arrest the 27-year-old man because no one will press charges. Officers explained that people seem to expect to be charged to park their car.

—Montreal Daily News

We Can See What You Are Up To

A United Kingdom eyeglass chain purposely used 1mm high type to hide the "disclaimers" in their ads for eyeglasses, knowing that it would be unreadable by those who might be interested. They were fined \$6,500.

BALTIMORE -- Where, oh where have all the kids gone? The principal of Northern High School suspended 1,200 of her 1,800 students Wednesday in a test of wills that stemmed from their refusal to pick up report cards. "'She can't suspend all of us.' That's the kind of attitude that was there, so I suspended them," said principal Alice Morgan-Brown. Morgan-Brown said she simply is demanding students follow the rules and show more respect for administrators. Some parents complained the principal overreacted. "I'm tired of this at this school. She runs this school like a dictatorship, I'm sorry," said parent Larry Neal. The students were told to report to homeroom to pick up their report cards. Those who didn't were suspended. Brown said the students will be allowed to return to school after parent-teacher meetings. Parent Charlene Little said she was surprised at the action. "Twelve hundred kids were suspended at 3 o'clock. They're going to see 1,200 parents. That's crazy," Little said.

• The *Washington Times* reported that four ventriloquist's dummies were stolen from the vehicle of Sam Lamerson, a Baptist pastor and entertainer in West Palm Beach, Fl. "Gone," said the paper, "were hand-carved wooden Studley; Ebenezer the Geezer; Al, the Faithful Hunting Dog; and Roscoe the Rabbit."

"Mr. Lamerson, who performs as a juggler, magician, and ventriloquist at nightclubs, trade shows, and birthday parties about 30 times a month as one of the Zucchini Brothers, said he's heartbroken. 'It's almost like having your child kidnapped,' he said."

"Police speculated that the thief or thieves could be children or a vagrant hoping to pawn the dummies."

"One of them, Ebenezer, hates children," Mr. Lamerson said. "He's probably really mad right now."



During the years of apartheid, Louis Nel, deputy minister of information for South Africa, explained that the government was not preventing freedom of the press.

"We do not have censorship," Nel insisted. "What we have is a limitation on what newspapers can report."



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3

Believe it or not! The rummage Sale is here again for the 10th year. It's time to let go of those old "treasurers."

Recycle them! Shop the Rummage Sale and buy some new old treasurers!

The Skoptzies

THE SKOPTZIES CALLED themselves White Doves. The less charitable referred to them as madmen. The cult, which emerged in the mid-1700s, believed that the only way to enter the kingdom of heaven was to lop off their genitals, or, if female, mutilate their breasts and perform self-circumcision. They based this on New Testament passages from Matthew (19:12): And there are eunuchs which have made themselves for the kingdom of heaven's sake, and from Luke (23:29): Blessed are the barren. In spite of this, the cult survived from the days of Catherine the Great until the 1930s, when 500 Skoptzies were found to be still practising in Romania.

Russia in the 1700s was full of religious mystics, and even the royal court wasn't immune. The Skoptzies founder, Kondrati Sseliwanow, formerly a flagellant, was shipped off by the authorities to a Siberian salt mine. But not before he had infected some notable converts. Peter III, the future Czar of Russia was one. He was also bumbling, insane and shortly to be offed by his formidable wife Catherine the Great, who had him strangled in 1762. However, the Skoptzies believed that Peter III was not really assassinated; that a guard took his place, and that Peter escaped to fulfil his

true destiny — preaching the Skoptzy faith and demanding that converts go through the trial by fire of castration.

The nature of the Skoptzy rituals was a very well-kept secret. The anthropologist Eugene Pittard claimed that the Skoptzy men would emasculate themselves at the age of 14, by placing their genitals on a tree trunk and lopping them off with an axe.

But, noting the neatness of the scars, other anthropologists suspected a trained priest would perform the operation. Those considered the purest amongst the Skoptzies were known as bearers of the Imperial Seal. These righteous men had their penis, testicles and scrotums removed, leaving only a crinkly scar and a pouty urethra hole, usually done by the age of five. Emasculated men developed over-long arms and a feminine pubic region.

Skoptzy women suffered varying degrees of mutilation. Most common was having the clitoris, labia and nipples cut off, and the breasts deeply scarred.

What no one can explain is how the cult survived for so long. Perhaps the Skoptzies won converts who had children, perhaps they staved off castration until after fatherhood. Whatever, they certainly make modern body-modifiers look a little tame.



SuperHost and Barnaby

An unidentified man in Paw Paw, Mich., got his car stuck in the mud — but found no need to wait for a tow truck.

"After several attempts to free the car," a spokesman for the Calhoun County sheriff tells the Battle Creek Enquirer, "the man placed his toolbox on the vehicle accelerator, exited the vehicle and attempted to push the vehicle free. The man was successful."

Success, of course, is relative: He got it out of the mud, but then watched it roar away, reaching speeds of 100 mph.

A half-mile from the mud pit, it wrapped itself around a tree.

Christmas Signs

- On a Toy Store: "Ho, Ho, Ho spoken here."
- At a bridal boutique: "Marry Christmas"
- Outside a church: "The Original Christmas Club"
- At a department store: "Big pre-Christmas sale. Come in and mangle with the crowd."
- At a Texas jewelry store: "Diamond tiaras — \$70,000. Three for \$200,000"
- Sign inside at a reducing salon: "24 Shaping Days until Christmas"
- In a stationery store: "For the man who has everything...a calendar to remind him when payments are due"

(Belleville, Illinois) -- They thought it might be hazardous waste, but they found out it's only hazardous to your waist.

It was chocolate -- 64-hundred pounds of it, leaking from a truck in Belleville, Illinois, yesterday.

The truck was carrying some 40-thousand pounds of chocolate to a cookie factory in Pennsylvania when it began to leak.

Emergency crews were called, and the fire chief says he felt relieved when he discovered the stuff was only chocolate.

The cleanup was a bit messy, but no one was hurt.



In March an 18-year-old dockworker at Roadway Express in Dallas was arrested at a local Western Union and charged with forgery after improperly trying to cash a check made out to his employer. The man produced a photo ID that gave his name as Mr. "Roadway V. Express." After questioning him, the Western Union manager said, "OK, Mr. Express, I'll be right back [with the money]," but went into another room and called police.

FATHER OF THE YEAR AWARD:

What does a good father do when he's caught with a photo of a naked woman on his laptop? Well, if you're former state Rep. Matthew Barrett, you throw your son under the bus. Barrett was making a presentation to a Norwalk High School government class when his laptop projected the racy image onto the screen. He claimed he didn't know anything about it, and told investigators it was probably the work of his 12-year-old son. Months later, Barrett resigned, finally admitting that the babe was someone he knew who had e-mailed him the photo -- at his request. He mistakenly had left it on his, um, *flash drive*. Thanks a lot, Pop.



Everything I've ever done was out of fear of being mediocre.

--Chet Atkins
American musician



Fox terrier, says Radio Corp. of America files. He lived from about 1884 to 1895 in England. His master, a relatively unknown London artist, Francis Barraud, caught him listening, and sketched and painted in oils the pose he titled "His Master's Voice." Later he sold the painting to the Gramophone Co. Victor Talking Machine, Camden, N.J., acquired trademark rights for the art and adopted it as the symbol of Victrola phonographs and records. Nipper followed Victor to RCA.



Save the Date:
Beer Tasting & Knife Sharpening
Event: Friday March 9th

Trouble is brewing

"Maybe next month," a reader writes, "they could host a liquor-sippin' and gun-loading event!"

(San Francisco) -- Wells Fargo officials confirm an 81-year-old customer spent 40 hours over Christmas locked in a bank vault.

Wells Fargo spokeswoman Kim Kellogg says "He wasn't happy." And she says, "We've apologized many, many times."

Daniel Goldberg was looking through his safe deposit box at a downtown San Francisco branch on Christmas Eve, apparently unaware that the bank closed early. Forty hours later, the vault opened automatically and Goldberg emerged.

Goldberg is a well-known San Francisco lawyer.



Hunting guide sentenced

KENAI, Alaska (MCT) — Dozens of hoodwinked hunters bagged a measure of justice Friday in the case of the wilderness guide who set himself on fire because he couldn't work a camp stove.

Wally Dean Jackson Jr. of Nikiski was sentenced to two years in prison for misrepresenting himself as a hunting and fishing guide, defrauding sportsmen out of \$100,000 or more. Kenai Superior Court Judge Harold Brown suspended another 9.5 years of prison time that Jackson could face if he violates terms of his 10-year probation.

In what troopers with the Alaska Bureau of Wildlife Enforcement called the most stupefying case of guiding fraud the state

has seen, Jackson pleaded no contest to numerous counts including guiding without a license and scheming to defraud victims.

Those who did meet Jackson soon regretted it, investigators said.

Consider the time that Jackson took clients into the woods and they reported that he couldn't figure out the stove — ultimately breaking the outdoorsman's first rule of safety by dumping fuel on a flame, troopers said.

"Mr. Jackson had no idea how to use the cook stove, and when he tried to he set himself on fire," prosecutor Andrew Peterson told the judge during Friday's hearing. That anecdote drew derisive laughter from the 17 victims.

ATHENS, Ohio (AP) -- A pooch's fanny pack produced more than Milk Bones -- police say it contained about three-quarters of a pound of pot.

A resident found the marijuana and money Tuesday in a fanny pack looped around the neck of the dog, which was tied to a downtown parking meter in this southeast Ohio city. The resident, concerned that the dog had been tied up for a long time, looked in the pack for identification.

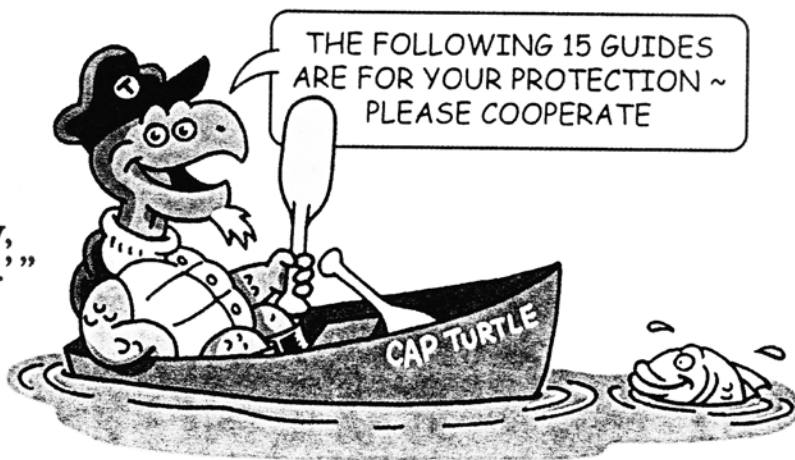
The resident took the dog to the Athens Police Department, where the the drugs and \$720 was confiscated.

The dog's owner, Shawn R. Slotter, 24, was arrested when he went to the police station to report that his 17-month-old mixed breed dog, Samson, was missing, authorities said.

From *The Sun* of London, England:

"A man pumped three bullets into a fortune teller because he did not like his predictions. Felice Gullaci, 38, told police that clairvoyant Raffaele Montebruno was 'depressing about my future.' Raffaele was badly wounded. A policeman in Genoa, Italy, said: 'Unfortunately, he did not see it coming.'"

An unapologetic traffic cop wrote 15 \$150 tickets to bicyclists who rode through a stop sign, even though they were merely part of 2,000 bikers participating in a multiple sclerosis bike-a-thon (Antioch, Calif.).



Tanya Denby, convicted in Newport News, Va., in August of beating her 3-year-old daughter to death by excessive punishment: "I can't see my baby anymore, but she's in a much better place. I'm glad God took her." And Patricia Wells, indicted in April in Camden, N.J., for aggravated manslaughter after six kids (including one of hers) died as the van she was driving (at 70 m.p.h. in a 25 m.p.h. zone with no license and a .151 blood-alcohol level) crashed: "It was the children's time to go, and God wanted those children."

"If you really want to hurt your parents, and you don't have the nerve to be homosexual, the least you can do is go into the arts."
Kurt Vonnegut, quoted in the London Sunday Telegraph

CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- * Cold or cool water recommended
- * Use mild shampoo
- * Gently comb hair
- * Rinse thoroughly
- * Apply conditioner, if desired, & rinse thoroughly
- * Pat dry & intermittently comb with wide tooth comb
- * Set & let dry naturally
- * Brush into desired style when hair is dry

• A west-side woman told police that someone left a message on her cellphone that said, "You haven't killed that woman in the tank top showing her boobs off yet, so I'm going to kill you first."

No Specials

March 13 - 18

With coupon - in stock only



MEDICAL FAKES, QUACKS AND IMPOSTERS

Roll up, roll up! Just one downpayment and we'll cure impotence, hair loss, whatever...

The term 'snake-oil salesman' has become a general cover-all term for commercial con-artists, and pays a backhanded tribute to those masters of medical nonsense who drove their wagons through the Wild West peddling coloured water and foul-smelling potions in the guise of cure-all remedies.

The most outrageous purveyor of make-it-up-as-you-go-along quackery was Dr John Brinkley, who worked in Kansas in the 1930s. On the suggestion of an impotent and elderly patient he carried out an operation to implant the glands of a goat into the man's scrotum. The operation seemed to be a success, and the man declared himself "as horny as a mountain goat".

This set Brinkley on a ridiculously

profitable career path. Despite the fear of having a quack doctor hack at their family jewels, hundreds of men travelled to his surgery for the \$750 operation, which was, of course, utter nonsense.

After being discredited in Kansas he moved on to the Mid West and dropped the goat glands in favour of fiddling around with prostates to cure impotence and injecting patients with useless potions. These operations cost \$1,500 for the deluxe package, though a version for the poor was available for just \$250. It's not clear what the difference was, though perhaps he used a blunt knife for the cheaper ops. Male readers may uncross their legs now.

The Museum of Questionable Medical Devices in Minnesota is a veritable oasis of quackery, and includes

some prize gems of gadgetry, such as a 1970s footpump-driven machine for breast enlargement. Looking suspiciously similar to a milking machine, the \$995 mail-order torture device may have increased breast size temporarily due to the bruising it caused, but then who wants to show off a black and blue cleavage at the beach?

Those going into hospital may not want reminding of the escapee from an Indiana lunatic asylum who, after going over the wall, talked his way into the post of senior medical advisor at the local prison. The prison authorities only noticed their mistake when a 'wanted' picture of their Dr Hales appeared in the local press. You may at least check that your doc isn't wearing a straitjacket.

IAIN AITCH

-- Thieves broke into a commercial meat freezer in Spring Valley, Calif., in March and are still at large -- but are not being pursued as a high priority. The freezer is located equidistant behind two buildings. The thieves undoubtedly thought the freezer belonged to a restaurant and that they were stealing frozen steaks for resale; in reality, it belongs to the restaurant's next-door neighbor, the Paradise Valley Road Pet Hospital, which reported nine euthanized dogs missing.

-- Wesley Steny, 16, and Jeanis Caty, 18, were arrested for robbing a Food Spot store in Miami in February after they reported to a hospital with gunshot wounds. According to police, Caty had reached over the store's counter for the money and accidentally discharged his gun, hitting Steny, who then fell against a third robber, causing his gun to discharge and hit Caty. The three then fled. Said the Food Spot clerk, "I knew there was a mistake. They were the only ones bleeding."



Worst Directions

From *The Sacramento Bee*

Britain's hiking magazine, *Trail*, apologized after its February issue contained a route that would lead climbers off the edge of the 4409-foot peak on the north face of Ben Nevis, a Scottish mountain.

The editor of *Trail* acknowledged that the magazine had inadvertently deleted the first of two crucial bearings that are needed to get off the summit if caught in bad weather. *If their readership declines, we'll know why.*

Anti-aircraft moose

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Two young bull moose trying to shed their antlers have caused \$20,000 worth of damage to small planes parked at Anchorage International Airport by banging their heads against the aircraft. Owners of small planes parked at the airport's float-plane center have found their aircraft dented, punctured and scratched. State biologists are planning to shoot the bulls with a tranquilizer and remove their antlers, either by shaking or sawing them off.

KRAMER SEEKING GEORGE - Attractive, muscular GWM, 25, 5'10", 180#, brown/green w/funky style seeks stocky, cute guy w/sense of humor for laughs & adventure. No Newmans.

"Yes, the operator should have seen the deer, and yes, it should have been removed."

WALTER BORTREE of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, on a road repair crew that paved over a dead deer

HOW'S THAT AGAIN? DEPARTMENT

From the *Blue Earth* (Minn.) Faribault County Register.

About 18,000 deer in the state will take part in a postcard survey asking them to report information about wild turkey sightings while hunting.



Students seeing red over charge for ketchup

DOUG CARROLL

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

Kirk Alvers has done the math: He's being charged \$3 for a gallon of gas but \$9 for one-third of a gallon of ketchup.

Alvers and other students at Basha High School in Chandler, Ariz., are upset over a school policy to charge 25 cents for two half-ounce packets of ketchup at lunch. The policy was enacted recently to limit waste and messiness in the school's lunch area.

Three free ketchup packets come with the purchase of a burger and fries, but students are charged for any extras.

"If you have unrestricted access to things that explode, things will happen," said Kristine Marchiando, the principal. She said students were twisting packets and stomping on them, requiring an outdoor lunch area to be steam-cleaned regularly.

Students bringing their own ketchup bottles to school have had them confiscated by security. They have been told the bottles are considered open food containers and represent a health-code violation.

Students have been threatened with suspension if they persist.

Alvers, a senior, said some students wore "Free Heinz" T-shirts to school a few weeks ago and put up posters with a similar message. He said most of the initial ketchup-abuse problems were with freshmen and he thinks it's unfair to punish all students for the actions of a few.

The episode is the latest in a stressful year at Basha, a relatively new school that graduates its first senior class May 31.

Overcrowded conditions at the school and massive road construction nearby have been persistent headaches.

The school also has dealt with an infestation of black widow spiders. □

Good merchandise, even hidden, soon finds buyers.

- Titus Maccius Plautus



"The gluten's back. And it's pissed."

Cartoon: **BENJAMIN SCHWARTZ** for the New Yorker

• Two items on one page of the *Montana Standard* turned out to be related. The first was an item from the "Police Court" column that read: "Michael Belli, 24, 14 N. Clark, was sentenced to 180 days in the Butte-Silver Bow Jail, fined \$500, and ordered to attend the Batterers Program for misdemeanor domestic abuse. Belli pointed a gun at Cindy Nelson's head and held a knife to her throat early Sunday morning at 14 N. Clark."

The second item was a paid advertisement that announced in bold letters. "The wedding between Cindy Nelson & Mike Belli Jr. has been canceled."

If only we'd stop trying to be happy,
we could have a pretty good time.

--Edith Wharton
American novelist

Note to self...



FIFTH BULLET'S A CHARM

MARSEILLE, France (10-07) - He shot himself five times before he finally succeeded in killing himself. One 9mm bullet was found in Andre Isoardo's belly, another in his wrist, groin and throat. The lethal shot was through his mouth and into his brain. The lack of signs of violence on the body and a letter of farewell to Isoardo's brother point to suicide. Still, some questions remain unanswered. The bullet from the shot to the right wrist has not been recovered and Isoardo was right handed.

BEER IN BOOKS

"There is an ancient Celtic axiom that says, 'Good people drink good beer.' Which is true, then as now. Just look around you in any public barroom and you will quickly see: Bad people drink bad beer. Think about it."

—HUNTER S. THOMPSON,
FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS

Comic Victor Borge: "My great grandfather invented the burglar alarm. Unfortunately, it was stolen from him."



Oklahoma Land Rush

On this date in 1889 large tracts of confiscated Indian land in what is now Oklahoma were offered to white settlers virtually free of charge. The government decided that the fairest way of determining who got what was to assemble the tens of thousands of prospective landowners on horseback and in wagons and allow them to charge into the vast acreage to stake their claims. As might be expected, some homesteaders sneaked into the territory before the starting gun, found themselves choice real estate, and even lathered the mouths of their horses to make them appear exhausted. These claimjumpers were bitterly dubbed "Sooners," though the term not only lost its stigma but became nostalgically associated with the history of the Sooner State.

JEANNE E. HUM

Whistling champion

Los Angeles Times

Jeanne E. Hum, a championship whistler who performed everything from Beethoven to the Beatles and joked that she was the world's only whistling Hum, died May 15 in Youngstown, Ohio, from complications of leukemia. She was 73.

A resident of Rolling Hills Estates, Calif., for 33 years, she moved two months ago to the Ohio city she considered her hometown. It was there at age 5 that Ms. Hum discovered her unique talent, recalling in a 1994 interview with the Los Angeles Times that nuns at her elementary school had tried to blow the whistle on her music, saying it was unladylike.

But the whistler's mother happily chauffeured the girl around town for performances. It was at one of those shows at age 15 that she met Robert Hum, the man she later married.

Ms. Hum won seven international awards for her whistling and performed for television and movies. She provided whistling music for one airline's in-flight music service and recorded two albums, titling her first one "Hum Whistles."

In Rolling Hills Estates, Ms. Hum was known for her St. Patrick's Day parties, which would draw other whistlers and fans from around the world. She said party-goers knew better than to indulge in too much alcohol, however. "Three drinks and it's over. It makes your mouth too dry," she said.

"Rock music is mostly about moving big black boxes from one side of town to the other in the back of your car."

— David Thomas, Pere Ubu

— Robert and Roberta Masters of Prior Lake, Minn., were arrested in October and charged in connection with a series of mailbox explosions over the summer, which police say were carried out by seven teenagers who had been supplied by the couple. Police said Robert Masters bought black powder for the kids and had said it "would be a good educational tool for the kids to build pipe bombs." Roberta Masters allegedly encouraged the teens to learn on the Internet how to make pipe bombs because it would be "constructive" (but she said she had told them to be careful).



(1) A burglary suspect, running from police on San Francisco's Telegraph Hill in September, jumped over a 3-foot wall, apparently not realizing that on the other side was a 200-foot drop. He died at the scene. (2) A 22-year-old woman was fatally hit by a car in Dallas in June when she stopped on the busy LBJ Freeway to take pictures of an accident scene. She was apparently just an overly curious rubbernecker. (3) A 54-year-old road-raging woman burned up in her car in London in September after ramming the back of another car, bringing both to a stop, and then failing to realize that a fluid from her car had ignited the underside.



Election

Find Elections at Great Prices.
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Suspicion confirmed

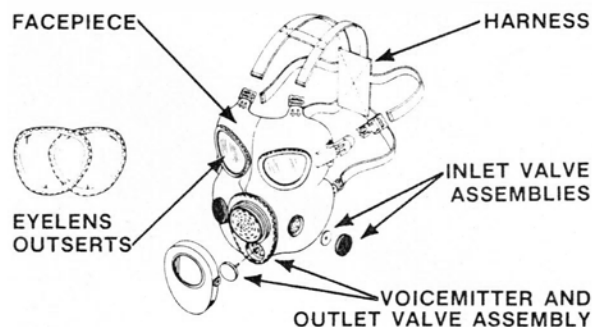
Sportscaster Bill Weir, after reporting on a dog show in which an animal defecated on the floor:

"You almost never see this type of thing in the Miss America competition."

□ A SOUTH AFRICAN policeman has been arrested for burgling the homes of government ministers he was supposed to be guarding. *The Star* newspaper reported that the officer was wearing a gold watch belonging to Finance Minister Trevor Manuel when police came to his home to investigate. They also found a clock radio belonging to Defence Minister Joe Modise, cooking pots from the home of Welfare Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moloketi and a leather jacket belonging to another, unnamed, member of the government.

A New Home With No Money Down

He wanted a house, and all he had was a paperclip. So 26-year-old Kyle MacDonald of Montreal started trading—online. It took him 14 swaps over a 12-month period, where he kept trading up, eventually getting to a snowmobile, a recording contract and an afternoon with rocker Alice Cooper. Finally, he traded a movie role for a three-bedroom house.



Check Outside of Mask

FACEPIECE--Tears, cracks, holes, distortion, dirt. Temple pins split, broken, lost; lugs torn. Clip and buckle assemblies damaged, corroded, missing; tabs torn.

EYELENS and OUTSERTS--Lens broken, scratched, discolored (interfering with vision), dirty. Eyering damaged, corroded, pulled loose from facepiece. Outsert apron torn, loose; rims cracked.

HARNESS--Canvas pad ripped, mildewed, dirty. Straps frayed, not elastic, dirty, metal tips missing. Harness installed upside down (short crosspiece goes on top of head).

INLET VALVE ASSEMBLIES--Covers loose, dirty, damaged (worn flocking is no problem).

NEW YORK (AP) -- Sculptures in a contest to benefit the homeless were made from materials that could feed them.

Thursday night's fourth annual "Canstruction" competition asked leading design firms to sculpt from cans, boxes and bottles of food, which will be donated to the Food For Survival -- an umbrella group that will get 50,000 meals from the friendly competition.

Among the entries: a boat made of tuna cans on a sea of Jell-O boxes; a five-car train -- made of canned milk, boxes of animal crackers and cartons of orange juice -- climbing a mountain of canned green beans; and a 7-foot replica of an Absolut vodka bottle made of tuna cans.

The winner was a 7-foot beggar's cup built from various cans of beans and vegetables that housed a taped message that most New Yorkers hear daily: "Can you spare some change?" It was created by HLW International LLP., an international architecture firm.



Irked passer-by gives suicidal man push

ASSOCIATED PRESS

4 Beijing

Chen Fuchao, a man heavily in debt, had been contemplating suicide on a bridge in southern China for hours when a passer-by came up, shook his hand -- and pushed him off the ledge.

Chen fell 26 feet onto a partially inflated emergency air cushion laid out by authorities and survived, suffering spine and elbow injuries, the official Xinhua News Agency said Saturday.

The passer-by, 66-year-old Lai Jiansheng, had been fed up with what he called

Chen's "selfish activity," Xinhua said. Traffic around the Haizhu bridge in the city of Guangzhou had been backed up for five hours and police had cordoned off the area.

"I pushed him off because jumpers like Chen are very selfish. Their action violates a lot of public interest," Lai was quoted as saying by Xinhua. "They do not really dare to kill themselves. Instead, they just want to raise the relevant government authorities' attention to their appeals."

Xinhua said Lai was "taken

away by police" but did not elaborate.

A police officer who answered the telephone Saturday at a station near the bridge confirmed the incident but refused to give details.

According to Xinhua, Chen wanted to kill himself because he had accrued \$290,000 in debt from a failed construction project.

Lai volunteered to talk Chen down but was turned away by police, Xinhua said. Lai then broke through the cordon, climbed to where Chen sat, greeted him with a handshake, then pushed.



Lai Jiansheng salutes the crowd after pushing Chen Fuchao, a man contemplating suicide, off a bridge in Guangzhou, China, on Thursday. Chen survived. AP PHOTO

Now we know why advice columns are so popular. In its question and answer section, the *Tulsa World* daily ran the following headline: WOMAN NEEDS PEST CONTROL SERVICE FOR BEAVER.

Next time you think your job stinks, consider the career of Dr. Paul S. Martin, a University of Arizona professor who has spent 41 years studying ancient sloth dung.



DISCHARGE LINKED TO FRUIT

A Kentucky woman was admitted to her local ER complaining of a purple discharge from her vagina. The woman thought it might have something to do with the diaphragm she had been given by her doctor, as her first use of the device coincided with the start of the discharge. However, when asked if she had been taking due care to insert the device properly, she was indignant. "I followed the doctor's instructions to the letter," said the patient. "I used the diaphragm with the jelly." The doctor then asked her what kind of jelly she was using. "Grape," she replied.

(Ogden, Utah) -- It's an emergency procedure you won't find in the flight manual. John Strahan was flying a couple of golfing buddies to a tournament near Ogden, Utah, when their single-engine plane lost all of its hydraulic fluid and they couldn't get the landing gear down. The tower suggested they use whatever liquids they had on hand. They tried some left over coffee and can of Coke but that didn't do the trick. The guys then resorted to their internal reservoirs -- relieving themselves into a cup and pouring that into the hydraulic system. Their desperate measure worked and Strahan managed to land the plane safely. When they rolled to a stop, the three guys jumped out and kissed the ground.



"We must root out corruption at the highest levels of government and make it look like it's happening at the lowest levels of government."

Cartoon: PAUL NOTH for the New Yorker

● Akron Canal Park is breaking new ground in the "thing stuffed in another thing" culinary trend. The Nice 2 Meat You Burger consists of over a pound and a half of ground beef stuffed with a hot dog, bacon, cheese, and onions. Three Dog Night stuffs that hot dog inside a bratwurst, which is then stuffed inside a kielbasa.



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wormed. Very cute!
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leave message

An Allentown, Pennsylvania, robber had once been convicted because he was identified by his clothing. So as not to have this happen again, he committed his next robbery in the nude, which of course only made it easier for police to find him.

You can tell whether a man is clever by his answers. You can tell whether a man is wise by his questions.

— Naguid Mahfouz



"In case of fire, evacuate the building.

"Do not use stairways.

"Do not use elevators."

— Sign by the elevator in Boston's Federal Reserve Bank building.

Comic Emo Philips: "When I was a kid I used to pray every night for a new bicycle. Then I realized that the Lord doesn't work that way. So I stole one and asked Him to forgive me."

(Weiser, Idaho) -- Crime can pay -- if you're the one being paid to fight it. A young Idaho volunteer fireman is in jail tonight awaiting a hearing on charges of setting eleven fires. Volunteers get paid five dollars an hour when fighting fires, and the young man was trying to earn money for college. Authorities say the 19-year-old man admitted setting the fires in a signed confession.



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