

Jokes, Riddles and Stories - Oh My!



HAVE A
GREAT DAY!

3-24

THE LOCAL

How's Your Communication Skills?

What if you couldn't talk? Or write? In the service I was taught the semaphore code, that is communication with signal flags. Then of course there is morse code the dit dah dit for short wave radio and the telegrapher's language. We also have signal mirrors and electric light blinkers used on ships also using the morse code technology. Earlier yet were drums but the earliest means of communicating was through pictures or drawings. In fact most of the earliest forms of writings were in the form of pictures. Think of the drawings on cave walls. We still use drawings today in our modern signage. Symbols that can be interpreted by all nationalities not speaking or writing the same language. I'll bet you know what these mean:



Crude drawings were also used in the branding of cattle. The brand is often a rough drawing of objects that when put together to call out the name of the owner's ranch. Today they are most likely initials with a twist. I thought it was interesting how just the addition of a few strokes changed the name of the letter denoting the ranch.



Flying A, Draggin A, Lazy A and Rocking A

Reading a brand is designed to be easy for everyone to read and recognize and of course should be designed to make it difficult for a rustler to modify it to match his own brand. Each brand is registered with the state containing the ranch.

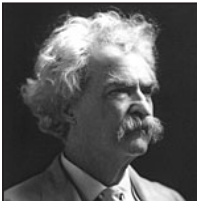
Perhaps the most popular ranch brand known today is The King Ranch established in 1853 whose brand is the running W.

So now we see where we get the "branding" marketing folks talk so much about. They want to burn their logos into our hides.



**If you tell the truth
you don't have to
remember anything!**

Mark Twain - 1835-1910



The Other Side of the Tracks

It seems no matter where we lived it was always near train tracks. As a kid in Cleveland Ohio our gang used to climb the coal piles that fueled the tenders. You got that coal dust all over you. When you washed up the water painted your skin white again in rivulets down your black dusty arms. Not only did the train yards provide a place to play, they also housed the locomotives



Coal Yards a fun place to play

and their accompanying sounds. You can probably remember the sound of train whistles or the clunk clunk of cars being brought together to extend the length of the train. If you haven't traveled on a train, you'll find it a fun experience. We have traveled several times from Ann Arbor's station on Depot Street to Chicago and also a few times to Toronto to see a stage show at the Pantages theatre. If you've ever been stopped at a rail road crossing and are close to the tracks you've probably seen the engineer give a wave. Most trains don't go 200 mph and because the routes are sometimes carved through mountains and go over valleys they are slower. This gives you time to take in the fantastic views afforded by nature.

So if you get a chance to take a trip on a train give it a try. It's one of the few ways to travel where half the fun is getting there. It's still nice to hear the trains as they trundle by cutting through Brighton and Howell.

Limerick of the Month

**There once was a laddy named Shawn
Who danced on everyone's lawn
His feet did a flick
As his legs gave a kick
In spite of his stature and brawn.**



The Laughing Place

When I was a proofreader, I shared with my coworkers this example to illustrate how writing can skew based on gender: A professor wrote on the blackboard, “Woman without her man is nothing.” The students were then instructed to insert the proper punctuation. The men wrote, “Woman, without her man, is nothing.” The women wrote, “Woman! Without her, man is nothing.”

I was admiring my aunt’s necklace when she surprised me by announcing, “I’m leaving it to you in my will.” I was overjoyed, perhaps too much. “Oh!” I shouted. “I’m looking forward to that!”



Teaching is not for sensitive souls. While reviewing future, past, and present tenses with my English class, I posed this question: “‘I am beautiful’ is what tense?” One student raised her hand. “Past tense.”



When the box with my Halloween costume arrived, it was empty. I called the company and asked where my Maid Marian costume was. “We’re sorry, ma’am. We’ll send your costume tomorrow,” the representative said. “In the meantime, feel free to keep the Lady Godiva costume you got by mistake.”



I was waiting at a small train station when a man put up a sign regarding my train: “30-Minute Delay.” “What happened?” I asked. “The train went off the rails,” he said. “How long will that take to fix?” “Quite a few hours.” “So why put up a sign saying it would take 30 minutes?” “It’s the only sign we have.”

In his late 80s, my father-in-law went to the DMV to renew his driver’s license. At one point during the road test, he approached a four-way stop, looked to his left, and cruised straight through the stop sign. “Sir! You didn’t look to your right,” yelled the frightened inspector. My father-in-law calmly shook his head. “That’s Mum’s side.”



Our son was upset that his baseball coach yelled whenever he or a teammate made a mistake. “It’s just something coaches do,” I said. “It’s not personal.” His response was hard to argue with: “If it’s not personal, then why do they use your name?”



ENTYMOLOGY - THE HISTORY OF WORDS

Fashion Plate

Meaning: a person who dresses in the current fashions : a fashionable person.

Origin: Created by the French, fashion plates are images depicting women, and sometimes men, dressed in the latest styles and trends. Even after the advent of photography in the 1830s, fashion plates disseminated the most current fashion trends and provided a reference that instructed their dressmaker how to construct or alter a garment in the latest style. Those who made these illustrations used copper and steel engravings for the printing plate, hence the name “fashion plate.”



Buying the Farm

Meaning: This is synonymous with dying. Usually referred to pilots when they were shot down in combat.

Origin: During WWI soldiers were given life insurance policies worth \$5,000. This was about the price of an average farm so if you died you “bought the farm” for your survivors. *Submitted by Cliff R..*



Egg on Your face

Meaning: to have made an embarrassing error or blunder. It implies making an error in public, since making an error in private isn’t embarrassing.

Origin: Folks were often humiliated when caught with some egg on their face. Sporting a bit of egg left over from breakfast is also blush-inducing and in the early 20th century, it might’ve even earned you a shoutout in the local paper.



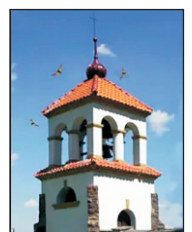
“A well-known professional man of Emporia always has some dried egg on his face. He evidently eats eggs for breakfast every morning, and there are people who believe that he must eat them out of a trough,” *The Kansas City Star* reported in 1909. Others think it might come from the theater, when angry audience members threw rotten food, such as eggs, at bad performers. *Submitted by Ralph LR III*

Bats in your Belfry

Meaning - to be crazy or eccentric. The comparison is between the head and the upper part of a church: the belfry is the brain; the bats flutter around when disturbed by the bell, like confused thoughts in a disordered mind.

Origin - the earliest instance I have found is from 1897. The following is from The Paducah Daily Sun of November 9th of that year: “CHARGED WITH LUNACY.

Jane Jones Seems to Have Bats in Her Belfry.”



What's a Rebus?

It seems that this issue keeps skimming the health area. First we keep our brains active with riddles and queries, then we hopefully get a few laughs. Everyone knows that helps your health and then as you read on you'll learn about bathing to be healthy. But back to the REBUS. The actual definition is: a combination of pictures and letters which represent a word or phrase whose meaning has to be guessed. Here is a simple REBUS.



You may remember these from Concentration or the Pictionary Game. The version above is using known objects to represent words. In addition to the classic pictogram type of rebus puzzle, there is also a more modern version that treats words themselves as a sort of image or object. In these types of rebus puzzles, words are arranged, jumbled, multiplied and redirected in order to convey a new meaning. Try this one -

mil1lion or this one

**STAND
TRY2**

I personally like the picture ones. The word and number ones can be very difficult for me. but, that's what it's all about isn't it, giving your brain a little work out.

Here's some tips for solving REBUS puzzles.

1. Know a large collection of common words and phrases.
2. Think about the words in the puzzle as objects, not just words. Consider how the words (objects) have been manipulated. Are they written in very small or very large letters? Are they written vertically going up or down? Is one word over or under another word? Is one word inside the other? Is a word repeated a specific number of times?
3. Consider if the color of the objects may be significant.

These clues should help you with the above two puzzles. here's a last one for the road.

PAWALKRK

Answers on back page

LABORATORY NOTES

ENGINEERING/SALES

JOERG R. MGR

Caught my son chewing on electrical wires. So I grounded him. He's doing better currently and conducting himself properly. - Submitted by Rich M.

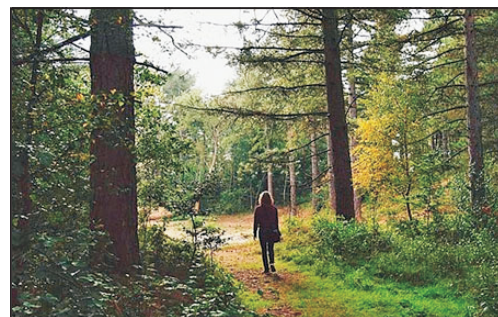
A young lady was asked why she would not marry either of her engineer or lawyer boyfriends. She replied, "the engineers make advances and add no detail, the lawyers argue details and make no advances".

Can a Bath Make You Healthier?

You can take a bath just about anywhere in Michigan. We are the state with 10,000 lakes aren't we? or is that Minnesota? You know we actually do have 11,000+ lakes, but wait, Minnesota has actually 14,000+ - check it out!- but I digress. I really wanted to chat about Forest Bathing not Lake Bathing. Forest Bathing or Shinrin-Yoku has swept right by me kind of like TV streaming, Venmo, 5G networks having 20 apps on your smart phone, a no cash society and many more things of the world today. Aha, but Shinrin - Yoku is just another name for enjoying the peace and quiet of our woods, climax forests, outdoor greenery and the sweet smell of nature. Think of the scent of wet cedar trees on a cool fall morning. These things have not passed me by I just didn't know their new name. We just called it loving to take a walk in the woods.

Thanks to our go-go society and the universe strapped to our wrists, Doctors globally are prescribing "Green prescriptions" for patients, encouraging more time in nature. Since 1982

Japanese clinicians have recommended Shinrin-Yoku utilizing their countries extended woodland walks. You don't need a remote



wilderness for nature's benefits. Just 15 minutes a day in a local park can boost energy and vitality. Experts recommend a minimum of 5 hours a month in nature to reap health benefits. Spending time in nature improves sleep, reduces stress, enhances happiness, boosts attention, memory, and creativity. Studies have linked Green Spaces to improved health for the elderly, reducing hospital admissions for Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases.

Shinrin -Yoku or Forest Bathing is a simple relaxation activity for people of all ages to de-stress and uplift their health and well being.

How to take a Forest Bath

Before you begin. Find a place near trees or where you will feel surrounded by nature. Commit to giving yourself 15-60 minutes to this activity. Avoid distractions such as talking, using your phone or other devices. When your attention wanders gently bring it back using one of the steps below. Consider practicing regularly on your own or with others.

1. **Be slow be still.** Walk slowly or sit somewhere comfortable. This will help you notice as much as possible.
2. **Wake Up the senses.** What do you see, hear, taste, smell and feel? Can you become aware of one sense at a time?
3. **Breathe and Savor.** Every time you find something that interests or pleases you hold your attention to it for a few moments.

4. **Engage with a tree.** Feel its bark, observe its sway and savor its scent. Practicing intentional time around trees can promote health and happiness. Repeat these steps as your quiet time ensues.

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Peter Paul Rubens 1577- 1640



“The prince of painters and the painter of princes”. Rubens was a prolific seventeenth-century Flemish Baroque painter with a style that emphasized movement, color, and sensuality.

“My talent is such that no undertaking, however vast in size or diversified in subject, has ever surpassed my courage.” Such was Rubens' measure of his ability, and many times over he proved himself. He is well-known for his altarpieces, portraits, landscapes, and history paintings of mythological and allegorical subjects.

The epic quality of Rubens' art represented only one side of his multifaceted genius. In addition to running a large studio in Antwerp which produced paintings popular with nobility and art collectors throughout Europe, he was a celebrated diplomat, a scholar and humanist, a learned Classicist and antiquarian, a prodigious correspondent in several languages, and even an amateur architect. Rubens embodied the Baroque fulfillment of the Renaissance man. Rubens was involved in the negotiations for the Twelve Years' Truce between the Dutch and the Spanish, and was knighted by both Philip IV, king of Spain, and Charles I, king of England.

Rubens was commissioned to paint for the Antwerp Town Hall a celebratory *Adoration of the Magi* (1609), which quickly established his fame at home. The decade from 1610 to 1620 witnessed an enormous production of altarpieces for Roman Catholic churches powerful, emotive images of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the saints, and Rubens created many of these masterpieces.

This style emphasized movement, color, drama, and sensuality, and reinvigorated painting with a new lust for life after a relatively conservative period for art. Rubens' signature portrayal of the female form was coined "Rubenesque," a term that remains widely recognized today to describe voluptuous nudes.

Rubens completed his first altarpiece commission in 1600 after traveling to Italy, and was appointed court painter in 1608 on his return to Belgium.

Rubens' 1620 oil painting, *Portrait of a Man as the God Mars* is of incredible value; the only known Rubens portrait of its kind, it fuses mythology with reality. At a Sotheby's auction last year it's estimated value was \$20-\$30 million. Four years after the death of his first wife, the 53-year-old painter married 16-year-old Helene Fourment, who inspired the voluptuous 'Rubenesque' figures in many of his paintings from the 1630s. Much of his time after 1635 was spent at his estate, painting landscapes, including *Landscape with a Rainbow* and *Landscape with Het Steen*.



Portrait of a Man as the God Mars

Travel Club Meeting

LIVINGSTON TRAVEL CLUB - JOIN NOW



Barb Smith

Next Meeting
Mar. 6 - 4:30 pm
Brighton Senior Center
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Web Site

New trips are here. Join our club and be the first to learn about them. Day trips are booking now. Check our site and come along with us. See you at the meeting. - Barb

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Ralph LeRoy - Editor

? RIDDLE ME THIS ?



1. - A plane crashed off the coast of Mexico and every single person died, yet there were two survivors. How could that happen?
2. - The more you take, the more you leave behind. "What am I?"
3. - I make two people out of one. What am I?
4. - How many times can you subtract the number 5 from 25?
5. - What building has the most stories?
6. - Why is a manhole cover round and not square? Can you guess the two reasons?

Answers Below

Riddle Answers - 1. - The survivors were a couple;
2. - Footsteps; 3. - A Mirror; 4. Once after that, the
number is 20; 5. - Library; 6. - 1: It can't fall through the
hole like a square one could. 2: It can easily be moved by
rolling.

REBUS ANSWERS - 1. To be or not to be ; 2. One in a million ; 3. Try to Understand ; 4. Walk in the Park