

• The Best in Tractor Repair and Maintenance Since 1903 •

Official Magazine of the RTRAMSOM

**a
&
a**

+++

**Volume
456-BR7
Issue 20
Clauduary
2006**



5 702012 000737

\$3.99 €10.92

Copyright 2005 RTRAMSOM

ART

It's Really Stupid



available at boring museums everywhere

Axes & Alleys: It Defies Description!

Volume 456-BR7 Issue 20,
Clauduary 2006

Axes and Alleys is
published by the Royal
Tractor Repair and
Maintenance Society of
Outer Mongolia.
118 Egin River Road, Suite
900. Tsagaan-Uul, Hovsgol
V68-9912. People's
Republic of Mongolia.

Executive Department

Publisher

Sir Lionel Buxton Humbridge

Editor in Chief

Delores R. Grunion

Administration

Star McGurney

Angus Lopez

Legal Council

Garret Jones

Law Offices of Humphrey and
Skizzini

Production Department

Photography

Bernard Roosten

Copy Editing and Layout

Buckminster Foley

I.M. Paye

Frank Lloyd Reight

Graphics and Illustrations

George Herbert Walker Bush
(no relation)

Research

Delores P. Grunion

Creative Department

Hogrid Amanden (deceased)

Charles Finneus Buchhampton

Alouicious P. Stoatwobbler

DJ Trickyfingers

A Machine



For years it's saddened us that *Axes & Alleys* has only been able to provide its unique brand of tractor repair and maintenance related excellence to earth-bound civilizations. That is all about to change.

We've now hired the talented voice-actor Clyde Riggmonroe to help us reach a wider audience. Starting next week, Clyde will begin reading every single *Axes & Alleys* issue aloud. This message of tractor information will be broadcast throughout the Solar System, and beyond, using a specialized three foot satellite dish array which we purchased at the SETI rummage sale.

So, astronauts, aliens and angels, get ready for the best magazine that this little blue planet has to offer.



Jennifer Morison plays Doctor Allison Cameron on the hit TV show *Hospital*. She can diagnose my acute malignant angioplasty any time...if you catch my drift.

**WRITTEN
CORRESPONDENCES
FROM GOOD NA-
TURED GENTLEMEN
WHO HAVE READ
OUR PREVIOUS IN-
STALLMENTS AND
WISH TO COMMENT
ON SOME ASPECTS
THEREOF.**

Dear Poker Pete,

Look, mate, I've been trying to reach you for three weeks ever since the last game. You owe me your watch, hiking boots and all of your house except for the garage and deck. It's time for you to pay up. I've telephoned, come by your place, been down to the race track and even sent a courier to your office with a notarized letter asking that you pay up. Seriously, mate, I'm bloody well looking forward to hanging 'round my new den.

Miser Bob

Leftwich, UK

Dear *Axes & Alleys*,

I know you've received a ton of mail about this, but I just wanted to drop you a line about your discussion of breasts a couple of months back (Volume 456-BR7, Issue 17). My girlfriend had always complained to me about how I felt about her breasts. She was under the impression that I didn't like them, even though I've paid them a lot of attention. I'm not sure what her hang up was, but I showed her that article just to prove that I loved them. She also enjoyed the pecs at the end of the article. Thank you for saving my relationship. Thank you for saving my life!

Elmer Holmes Bobst

New York, NY

Yo A&A,

That Katie Stalin is really amazingly hot. I wanna roll around in some nacho sauce with her, if you catch my meaning. If you don't, what I mean is that she has amazing analytical skills when it comes to sociology.

Peace out,

Trent McNally

Chicago, IL

Dear *Axes & Alleys*,

It has been my experience that the youth of today are not very good. Why, just the other day I spotted a group of youths strolling down the street and offered them a stern lecture on the importance of bread. Did they listen intently, asking questions at the appropriate moments so that their lives could be enriched by the experience of their elder? No. Instead they met my heartfelt talk about bread with jeers and mockery. This is indeed a sad state of affairs. Many people have spoken of the failure of the youth, but no one has specifically stated that the youth have failed to appreciated bread.

Did you know that you can visit the ruins of Pompeii, beneath the towering cone of Vesuvius, and see old bread that has been carefully preserved by the action of lava? You can indeed. Do you think that the youth have any interest in seeing thousand year old loaves of bread? I think not. Perhaps the problem lies not with the youth of America but rather with their school system.

Every child in high school must take four years of math, four years of English and three years of history and science. But how many years do they take to study bread? That's right: zero years. While bread may be involved in their lunches, children do not learn at lunch. There's not a single class devoted to studying all the intricate wonders of bread. The graduation exams each student takes before graduating do not test their knowledge of bread and millions of American students go off to college without being adequately prepared in the study of bread.

Mind you, there could be not a single sandwich without bread. In a world without bread we would have no toast to accompany our coffee in the morning and we would have garlic bread with our spaghetti. This is not a world that I ever want to live in. No, sir. Children have been taught that they can take bread for granted and this is a crime. They can't even tell sourdough from a tortilla! A tortilla is only sort of bread.

Perhaps one day children will be taught to know bread, not just to eat it. Without bread, society would collapse into sandwichless anarchy. Who will speak for bread? I will as long as I have breath in my body and a tongue in my mouth. I will shout it from the mountaintops; bread is good. Let every child know that bread is of vital interest. Please, before it's too late.

Sincerely,

Former Attorney General Janet Reno

Miami, Florida

THE TABLE OF CONTENTS

OH YEAH, THERE ARE PAGES

NEWS

Page 6

News of the World
The Good Guys finally have Victory in sight

Page 10

The March of Progress
The Low Mineral Diet.

FEATURES

Page 12

Writing the Perfect Resume
It'll help you land the job of your dreams.

Page 13

The Historigon
Featuring this month in history.

Page 14

Katie Stalin: Out and About
This time she heads to Paris.

Page 17

Poetry by H.G. Peterson
He sure writes poetry.

Page 18

The Hidden Branch of Evolution
All about chordates.

Page 19

An Editorial
Ms. Ciccone sure hates the dentist.

Page 22

Ask Montezuma
He knows all and sees most all.

Page 25

Fifty Things
Why God put on this wretched planet.

Page 26

The Sticker Page
Stick and enjoy.



The Final Lunge for VICTORY!

Surrounded and Dug-In, the Bad Guys Vow
to Keep on Fighting.

9th Army

BAD
GUY
HQ

3rd Army

Battle Group X

Our Brave Boys Vow to Keep on Killing.



Hey, Does This Pole Still Work? Brave Laotian guerrillas fight a desperate battle behind the Bad Guys' lines. In battle they often fight with guns.

Ban Ban, Laos- In the early morning hours, with the flashes from distant artillery still lighting up the darkened sky, my guide Chau took a sip from his canteen and offered it to me, saying "Yes, have some." That was just what I needed, the ever popular Hmong confection of gin and powdered pumpkin mix. On a night like this, it tasted sweeter than any drink I've ever imbibed. Chau smiled and took another swig before strapping the canteen back to his worn combat webbing. Looking into the hills, his eyes narrowed into slits. "Listen" he implored me "Do you smell something." His laughter was infectious and for a moment I forgot about the death all around us.

In covering this hellish war, I've been all over; from the frigid wastes of Antarctica, to the nightmare jungles of Madagascar, the endless plains of Siberia, the humid brothels of Sao Paolo and the molten swamps of Palauan. Now, here I was in the hills of Laos, overlooking an expanse of rice paddies, on what everyone hoped would be the last day of the war. During the difficult travels and the cacophonous battles, I met people of every nation and station, people whose bravery, intelligence, audacity and courage never ceased to amaze me.

The Laotian guerrillas here in Ban Ban reminded me of Tennyson's old Light Brigade; for here they were, calm and serene and ready once again to charge into the jaws of death, into the mouth of hell. My companions this night weren't professional soldiers. They were ordinary brick layers and taxidermists, fighting the Bad Guy invaders. The Bad Guys who had decided that their final stand would be made here in the hills outside Ban Ban, in their multihued Kevlar skirts and camouflaged, impact resistant polo shirts.

During the last eight weeks, the Laotian guerrillas kept up to date on the events bringing the war closer, and closer, and closer; inching, creeping, sometimes spurting towards their homeland: a communist Chinese satellite state in the stagnant and hilly jungles of South East Asia. On their blogs and web boards they posted their feelings, their hopes and fears and belief that victory would come soon. But also, surprisingly, were well-aware of the latest Hollywood gossip, and were attempting to find companionship and love. All the while they prepared and planned, went on patrols and passed vital intelligence information on to the Good Guys, via email and also via updates to their guerrilla homepage.

As Field Marshal Cleruchy's Third Army chased the bad guys from Madagascar, to Sri Lanka and Thailand, the Laotian guerrillas trained and readied their supply caches, weapons and equipment. At a stop in Singapore, I heard much criticism of Cleruchy's decision not to nuke the dilapidated dregs of the Bad Guys. In the brief time I had to speak with him, I asked Cleruchy what he felt of such criticism. Due to his deafness he had not heard it until I mentioned it and so pulled out his service weapon and eyed it significantly. He then ended the interview by offering me assorted local confections.

While the G.G. Battle Group Aleph made mincemeat of the Bad Guy's remaining fleet, the heroic Hmong guerrillas set charges at key bridges, cut communication lines and trained monkeys to throw grenades. And as the Russo-Belgio-Sino-Algerian 9th Army sped down from the Pole, those stuck behind the lines in Laos tried to survive the best they could, tried to eat and drink and be merry and always prayed to Lenin, their false communist god.

Word around Ban Ban has it that the remnants of the B.G. Army are in horrible shape. Surrounded, ill-equipped and constantly battling disease, hunger and Laotians, the Bad Guys are in a sorry state. Morale is low and supplies of ammunition and cupcakes are even lower. Still they will fight on. Even as the Good Guy forces surrounded them like a three pincer tiger, they prepare for the final showdown. In a video released on the popular TVgo.com, F'a Dommen declared "...we [shall] turn the rice paddies of Laos into paddies strewn with blood and various [body] parts...the Good Guys will become [best] friends...with the specter [of] death..."

As we sat down for a cigarette, the sky was ripped apart by the roar of twenty B-3 "Vicious Hawk" bombers. The subsequent explosions were like a new dawn on the horizon. Taking a long drag on his cigarette, Chau just smiled and said "We come, we see, we kick ass." It seems these guerrillas are big fans of the *Ghostbusters*, as it wasn't the first quote from that movie I had heard. It wouldn't be the last.

"We will show the Bad Guys how we do things downtown." Back inside, where by the light of a single 60 watt bulb, the courageous Laotians sat at the map table, planning their own final push for victory. As I entered, another smiling guerrilla asked "Are you the Keymaster?" He chortled and went back to his bowl of Skittles®. Loa, the commander, pointed his finger at the map, right at the location of the B.G.H.Q. "Aim for the flattop." The grizzled fighters responded with a hearty cheer of "I love this town!"

Stuck behind enemy lines, with the worst war can offer shoved upon them every minute, these stoic soldiers will do whatever they can to free their godless, communist rice paddies from the invader. And so, I'm left to say "Honor the charge they made, honor the Light Brigade."

WANTED

Dead. Just Dead.



Bad Guy Commander

Arja F'a Dommen

After the surrender and capture of General Arribiceifong and the death of Grand Admiral Tsotsigo at Second Andaman, F'a Dommen has assumed control of all Bad Guy forces.

Known for his tactical cunning and skillful strategies, F'a Dommen has vowed to wipe out the Good Guys once and for all. Known to employ nuclear and chemical weapons, F'a Dommen is a formidable enemy. He is undefeated at checkers, Clue™, and backgammon.

The Good Guys will see that his victory streak comes to a screeching halt.



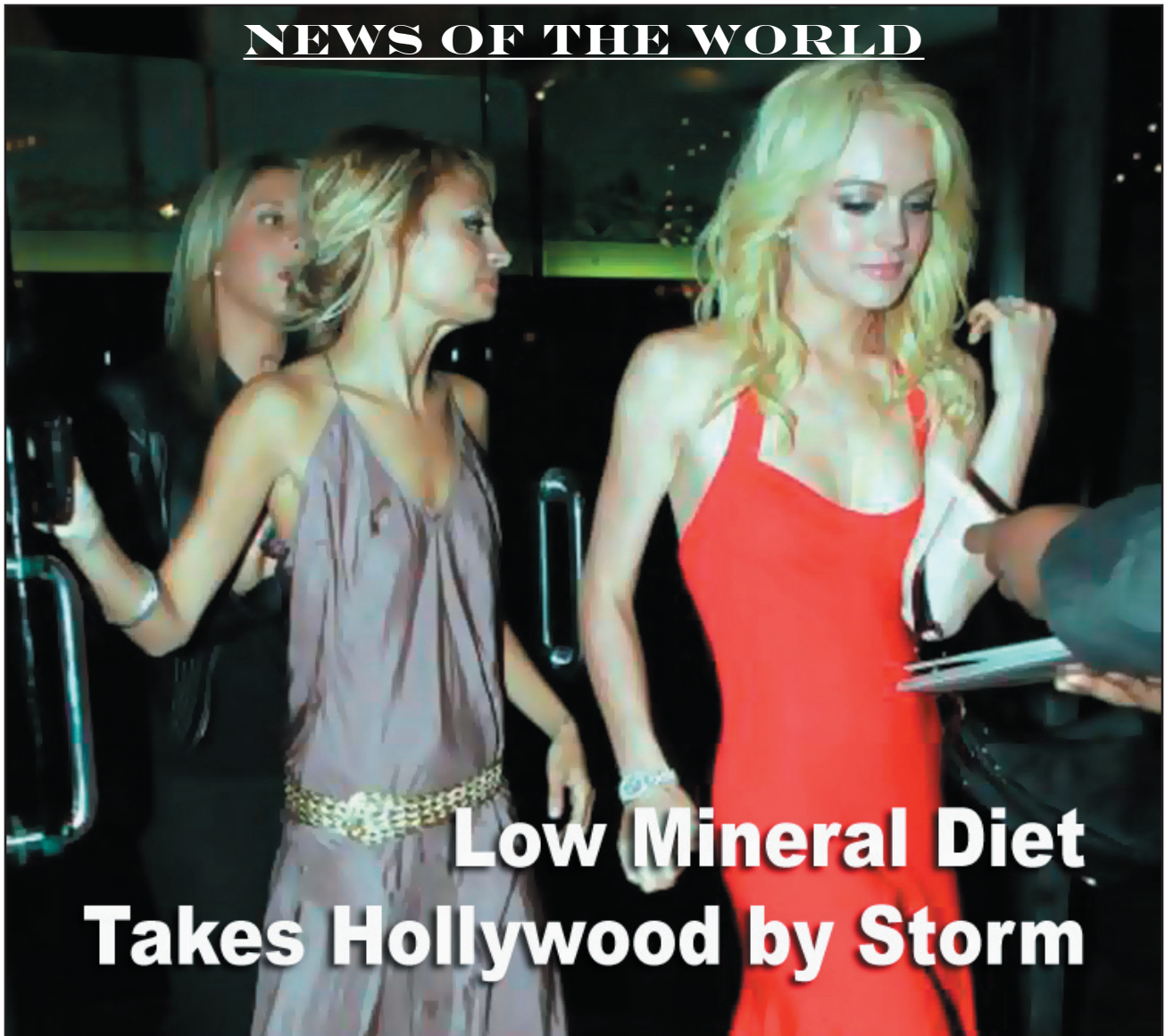
Axes & Alleys
Info-Rectangle™

STEVE JACOBS

Robot Fighter

Available for Lunch.
"I'd Love to Have Lunch
With You."

NEWS OF THE WORLD



Low Mineral Diet Takes Hollywood by Storm

Glamorous Celebrities, Not Emaciated POWs: Actress Miranda Chase and her Best Friend Forever (BFF) Lucy Borden look horrid, disgusting, skeletal and fabulous thanks to the newest fad, the low-mineral Trap Diet.

Miranda Chase, A-list star of the new film *Any Thursday*, stated in her latest press junket that she's an adherent to Dr. Michael Trap's new low-mineral diet. She's not alone in this new diet fad. The Trap Diet allows people to eat whatever they want, as long as they maintain low mineral content in their diets.

"The aircraft carrier *Nimitz*, displaces one hundred thousand tons, and what do you think that's made of? It's made of minerals" stated Dr. Trap. "Would you eat a hammer? Hammers are heavy and every time you eat minerals you're essentially eating a hammer."

Always lovely and roughly skeletal in shape, Ms. Chase defended the Trap Diet which has come under fire from those who practice common sense. "Mountains are big and fat and heavy. I don't ever want to eat a mountain, or a train or anything else made of minerals; like a geode or a tongs."

While scientists, doctors, nutritionists and those with common sense are still skeptical, the low-mineral Trap Diet remains popular with those who have already tried and failed on such previous fads as the low carb, low fat, low protein and low vitamin diets.



Choose Life



Choose Disco



Choose Dandelions

Brought to you by the Pro-Life, Disco Dancing,
Dandelion Enthusiasts of Chicago



Unless you're a trust-fund kid whose parents have more money than God, you'll need a job. Unfortunately, finding a job, much less a career, can be a difficult, stressful and annoying project. One thing that will help make the search a bit easier is a killer résumé.

1. Don't try to go overboard on the style. While everyone wants their resume to stand out, try to limit the use of the windings font to four characters per sentence.
2. Make sure that you put your name on the paper.
3. You can lie on a résumé, but don't make your lies too big or they'll be unbelievable. They might buy your the last four years of TV watching as a "furniture tester experience," but definitely won't believe that you invented the light bulb, served as Vice President of Norway or played the title character in *E.T. The Extra Terrestrial*.
4. If you do end up claiming you played the title character in *E.T. The Extra Terrestrial*, practice saying "Bee" in a weird voice so you can maybe try to prove it.
5. The interviewer might ask some background questions about your *E.T.* experience; make sure you do some research. You could for instance mention that Drew Barrymore is a vegetarian and animal rights nut. Maybe invent a funny anecdote about Steven Spielberg and an accident with a blueberry pie.
6. Make sure you figure out how exactly you played E.T. Remember, the more details you can provide the better. Were you a puppeteer or did you provide voice work? Chances are someone at the company has seen *E.T. The Extra Terrestrial*, so know what you're talking about.
7. Don't try to impress the interviewer by offering them a small part in *E.T. The Extra Terrestrial 2: Revenge of the Phoenix*. There is no such movie and a quick look through *Variety* will reveal your boast as a lie.
8. It may be helpful to bring along some memorabilia of your *E.T. The Extra Terrestrial* experience to help prove your case. You could forge some pictures of yourself with Henry Thomas or even have a friend call during the interview claiming to be Dee Wallace-Stone.
9. In case they should check, hack into the Internet Movie Database and add your name to the cast list for *E.T. The Extra Terrestrial*.
10. Should the interviewer have actually been involved with the production of *E.T. The Extra Terrestrial*, don't panic. Just casually mention something about the upcoming cast and crew reunion in Pasadena and then quickly change the subject.

Yes, writing a résumé can be difficult, but by following the above tips you can be certain that you'll have a lucrative career in no time. Good luck.

The Axes & Alleys HISTORIGON

During this month in history:

*2005 AD: *Axes & Alleys*' offices enter their second month without a secretary. Almost every staff member has started coming unglued by this point and documentation of the period is scant.

*2004 AD: President Dick Armstrong wins the Radford, Virginia Bird Call Competition for third year straight when his near-perfect Alaskan gray mallard call scores an astonishing 9.4.

*1982 AD: After declaring war on the decadent West, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China jointly invade India in retaliation for the destruction of a Soviet transport in the Black Sea by a British destroyer.

*1971 AD: Pop-Artist Andy Warhol sits in his underpants eating cornflakes and watching cartoons for two and a half days straight.

*1947 AD: Howard Hughes accidentally impregnates a crashed Dran visitor, who gives birth to a male child in 1948. With his origin covered up by the Illuminati, the infant William Gibson is adopted by a couple in South Carolina, who never reveal the truth about his past.

*1943 AD: General Douglas MacArthur defeats Chiang Kai Shek in a bout of bare-knuckled pugilism, enabling U.S. Army Private First Class Phillip Donner to win \$4,000.

*1912 AD: Suffragette Elizabeth "Kitty" Standon dons a five foot diameter, eighty-three stone hat which causes her to topple over before she can ever chain herself to a railing.

*1899 AD: Jakob Schwartzkinderpopologan invented the cathode ray cone, an almost completely non-functional predecessor to the tubes found in most modern televisions.

*1865 AD: Corporal Ebenezer Johnson becomes the last person to die in the Civil War when he chokes on an peanut eight minutes before Lee's famous surrender at Appomattox Courthouse.

*1854 AD: Future president Horace B. Borden spends five days inconsolable over the loss of his favorite pair of shoes. The shoes are eventually found behind a divan and all ends well.

*1721 AD: Sir Seymour Dial Button invents the knob.

*1603 AD: Skippy Sellase, a close relative of the Ethiopian Emperor, unwisely points out that the empire's not terribly impressive.

*1532 AD: Hungarian explorer Jan Troplovich becomes the 328th person to discover the New World.

*1333 AD: Nuctuhualpayo, an ingenious Incan man, creates a wheeled cart for transporting goods. His village is not impressed. Several weeks later he attaches the cart to an alpaca, creating the New World's first coach. He is incessantly mocked for the invention's ridiculous appearance and quickly abandons it.

*1066 AD: William the Bastard of Normandy, on his way to board a boat steps on a frog, causing him to careen into a nearby fruit stand where his head gets stuck in a large melon, blinding him so that he steps on a hoe which smacks him in the head, knocking him back into a pile of cow manure which subsequently catches on fire. He is able to turn this into a good omen by proclaiming "Shit, I hate the Anglo-Saxons."

*89 BC: Sulla and Marius both arrive at an orgy wearing the same toga style in an event which would eventually prove disastrous for the Roman Republic.

*1290 BC: Yatkub ben Gelafa, formerly part of the Exodus made famous by God's *The Bible*, sneaks back into Egypt to retrieve his favorite loin cloth.

*3280 BC: Shokindush of Ur invents the wheel after his ninth unsuccessful attempt to invent the donut.

*14102 BC: While others around him are slowly getting to know wolves, sheep, goats and oxen a little better, Trufgor thinks frogs could be mighty useful friends.



Katie Stalin: Out and About

Paris: The City of Lights

Paris, France, E.U.- Paris is many things to many different people. To some it's the city of lights, the city of love; a place of history still haunted by oppressive Sun Kings, underfed and murderous peasants and hunchbacks of Notre Dame. For me that's great because I came to Paris to see some history, some love and, I hope, at least a couple of hunchbacks.

For a bit I strolled down the Champs-Élysées; gawked at the giant Arc de Triomphe and then took a ride up to the top of the Eiffel Tower, which is a hundred year old monument now functioning as a radio tower. Of course, this city is also famous for its cafes, which is where they serve coffee, which they call *café*.

I ended up in a *café* because the Paris bus map looks like spaghetti. That's pretty odd, right? Because spaghetti's Italian. I took a seat outside on the sidewalk at the nearest *café* and the waiter brought me a glass of wine which I promptly downed.

See, I was thirsty. Luckily he brought a lot more. The French love their wine. Then he brought me this awful crap called anisette. It's like Robitussin without the fun of having a cough.

Though the waiter was a bit rude when I complained about it, he changed his attitude when I pointed out that America saved France's ass back in World War II. Realizing that, but not for America, he'd be speaking German, he apologized for his behavior and brought me a couple more bottles of wine on the house.

Fortunately he didn't bring up any of that French navy baloney from the American Revolution, otherwise I might have had to smack the taste out of his mouth. There's no sense of joy or accomplishment in smacking the French. Trust me.

Soon after I was joined by a couple of young guys from England; Charles and Dogbody, who said they were in Paris for business. We had some more wine and they offered to let me help them with their latest business enterprise. All I had to do was show up at the Louvre the next day at opening time. They even offered to give me a thousand euros, which was disappointing until I learned that euros could be traded in for real money.

The next day was bright and I got up and headed right toward the Louvre, which is a famous museum filled with old stuff. Dogbody

walked by, but didn't say hello, all he did was drop a folded piece of paper on the bench next to me and then he just walked away. The paper had my instructions on it. All I had to do was show up at the Louvre the next day at opening time. They even offered to give me a thousand euros, which was disappointing until I learned that euros could be traded in for real money.

The next day was bright and I got up and headed right toward the Louvre, which is a famous museum filled with old stuff. Dogbody walked by, but didn't say hello, all he did was drop a folded piece of paper on the bench next to me and then he just walked away. The paper had my instructions on it. All I had to do was wait for their signal and then run up to the guards; I was supposed to cry and act hysterical and tell them I couldn't find my little baby.

Sure enough, a half hour later, I heard the alarm; that was my signal. So, I ran up to the guards and cried and cried and told them I couldn't find my baby. I did a really good job, you know "I'd like to thank the Academy." The guards were really confused and didn't know what do. After a bit I just slid off and then got an ice cream cone because you just can't find nachos in this city. Funny, they've got snails but no nachos. And they call French cuisine famous.

Back at the hotel, Charles and Dogbody stopped by with a couple of friends of theirs. Yeah, they totally had brought some champagne and we had a few toasts. The bubbles tickled my nose, but the champagne was great. They gave me a thousand euros in a brown envelope and showed me the painting they got from the Louvre.

It was this little thing with an ugly lady in it and her smile was kind of weird looking. It wasn't even new. I didn't think it was that good a painting, but they seemed to like it. Then we turned on the news and guess what? We were all actually on the news. It was in French, so I wasn't sure what it was about, but still it's nice to be a little famous.

Back at Charles de Gaulle airport, I had a couple more glasses of wine and said a quick goodbye to the city of Paris. My trip here was fun and I'm glad I got to see so many famous landmarks and meet so many nice people. But, let me tell you, it'll be nice to get back to America and have a big glass of *vin*, oh wait, I mean wine, eat some tacos, have an order of Mucho Grande Supremo Nachos with extra jalapenos and cheese at Marcos Ribeira's Outhouse, and then make out with the cute busboy. See ya'll later.

Who is this Katie Stalin Person Anyway?



Katie Stalin has been many things, including investigative reporter, master of disguise, travel industry enthusiast and cloud berry expert. Katie has been invaluable to us. Ms. Stalin likes baseball, canned flounder, citrus fruits and absolutely loves nachos. Sometimes she uses a stapler.

INSECTS

SIX LEGS TO FREEDOM!



We're already in your house.

POETRY FROM H.G. PETERSON



“It Was My Last Hour in the Park”

by

H.G. Peterson

May I offer several lines
On behalf of fireflies?

Summer evenings, don't you know
They add magic with their glow

There is something most ethereal
'bout bugs full of lit material

With their flashing merriment
They're stars reborn to firmament

So enjoy them, as they hover lightly
When out to play, they come nightly

If fireflies could converse
I feel their message would be terse

They would say “oh don't be vicious”
“C'mon my friend, now please don't squish us.”

THE HIDDEN BRANCH OF EVOLUTION BY BILLY BOB JORDAN



Dr. Billy Bob Jordan is the new Professor Emeritus of Evolutionary Biology at The Contumacious University in Contumacious, WL. Dr. Jordan was previously the director of President Armstrong's Office of Science and Technology Policy, president of the American Scientician Confederation, and vice-president of the Apiological Hobbyist's Society. He is not the Dr. Billy Bob Jordan convicted of bigamy during 1987 in Tallahassee, FL.

Over 520 million years ago a common ancestor gave rise to the chordates, creatures as varied as the shark, the trout, the frog, the gecko, the pigeon, the gopher, the sea squirt, and the lamprey. The first six animals represent a contemporary class of subphylum Vertebrata: Chondrichthyes (the cartilaginous fish), Osteichthyes (the bony fishes), Amphibia (amphibians), Reptilia (the reptiles), Aves (the birds), and Mammalia (the mammals). Along with Vertebrata, there are the Urochordata (animals such as sea squirts) and the Cephalochordata (the lancelets).

The Urochordata are truly strange. This subphylum consists almost entirely of the sea squirt, which got its name because it continuously pumps water into one body opening and out of another. Fossil evidence of the sea squirts is hard to come by because of

their soft bodies. They look nothing like any other chordates, but in their larval stage exhibit all the characteristics of chordates: pharyngeal slits, dorsal nerve chord, notochord, and a post-anal tail.

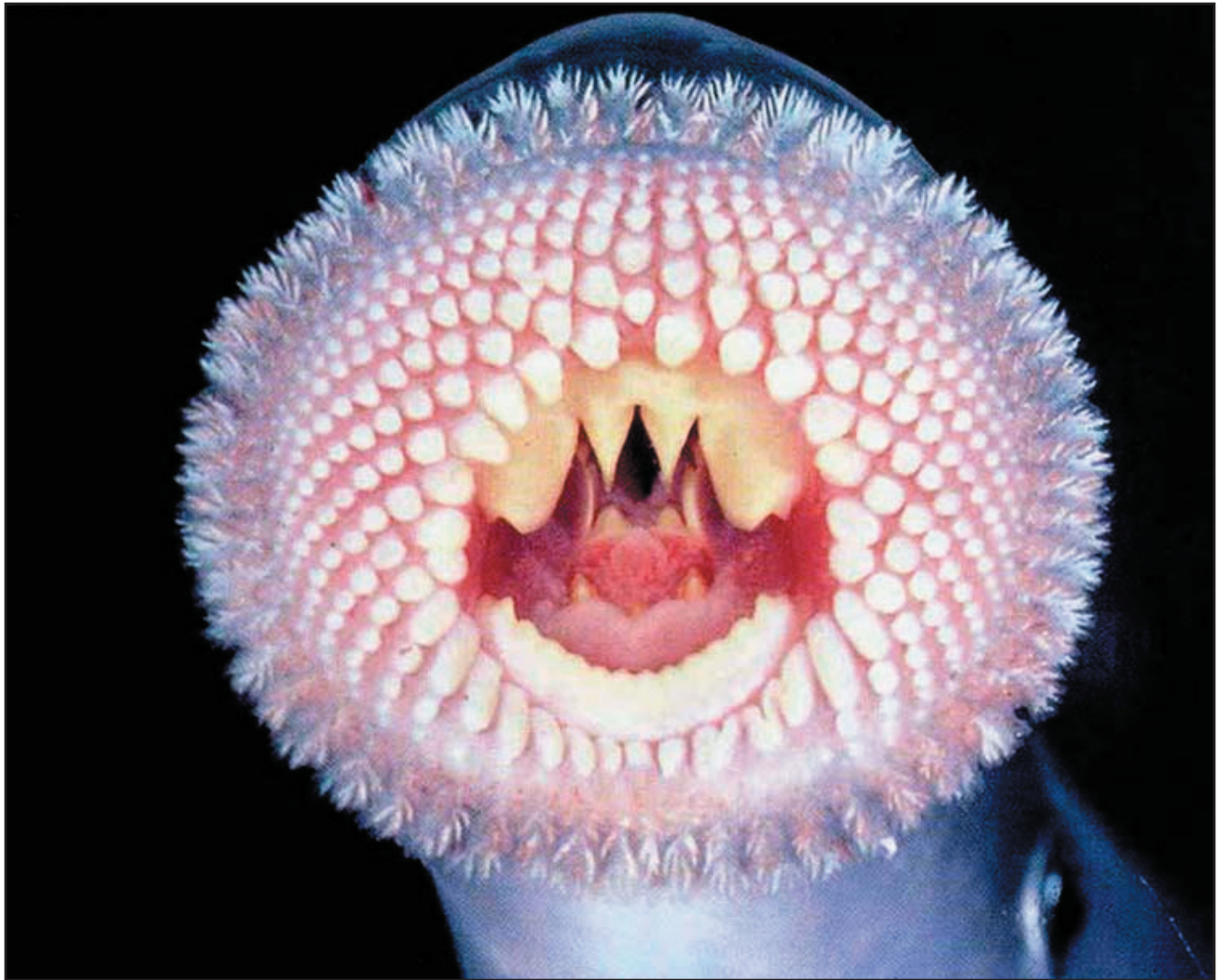
Cephalochordata are not represented very well in the fossil record either, for they have few hard parts to their bodies. The lancelets, the prime example of the subphylum, are small, fishlike animals without real vertebrae, a primitive brain and poorly-developed senses. In some parts of the world they are of extreme importance for ocean farming.

Chordates first appeared towards the beginning of the Cambrian Era. Earlier, during a time known as the Precambrian Explosion, a multitude of phyla appeared, including the ancestors of the chordates. The earliest chordates probably resembled the lancelet in many respects and exhibited all of the characteristics of modern chordates.

Within the chordates soon appeared the jawless fishes, the earliest chordate form known to exist. These primitive animals are still represented today in lampreys and hagfishes. Soon, in geologic terms, the familiar amphibians were crawling about on land.

Amphibians, ectothermic and generally spend much of their time on land, but are dependent upon large amounts of moisture found in an extremely wet environment such as a rainforest. This dependence is due to three factors. The first, and most important, is that amphibians are not amniotes, that is they do not produce a protective membrane around their embryos. Secondly, amphibian young go through a metamorphosis wherein their forms are generally upon the presence of copious amounts of water. Finally, most amphibians require the presence of a good amount of water to keep their skin hydrated and to respire.

From the amphibians came the reptiles, who were the first Chordates to walk away from the water. Reptiles are difficult to define and many biologists tend to define them by what they are not, rather than their relationships. Because they represent a class which gave rise to two other extant classes, this difficulty is understandable. Still, most reptiles are ectothermic, oviparous, scaled creatures.



What a Mouthful: A lamprey. Of course, not all of the chordates are this friggin' ugly.

Now, the reptiles bring up an interesting evolutionary development. From them arose the snake and the chameleon, but also other creatures familiar to the reader. From Reptilia arose to the therapsids, animals possessing traits of both reptiles and the later mammals which descended from them. As well, the bird descends from reptiles of the late Mesozoic Era, specifically during the late Jurassic period. Every time you see a sparrow, you're actually looking at a relative of the dinosaur.

With the great extinction at the end of the Cretaceous period, the multitude of ecological niches which only the great reptiles were able to compete for were now opened to the birds and the weak, snuffling, mouse-like mammals. With this development, no further classes of chordate have arisen in the last 65 million years. If one were to make an estimate

of when the evolution of a new class were to take place based upon the geological

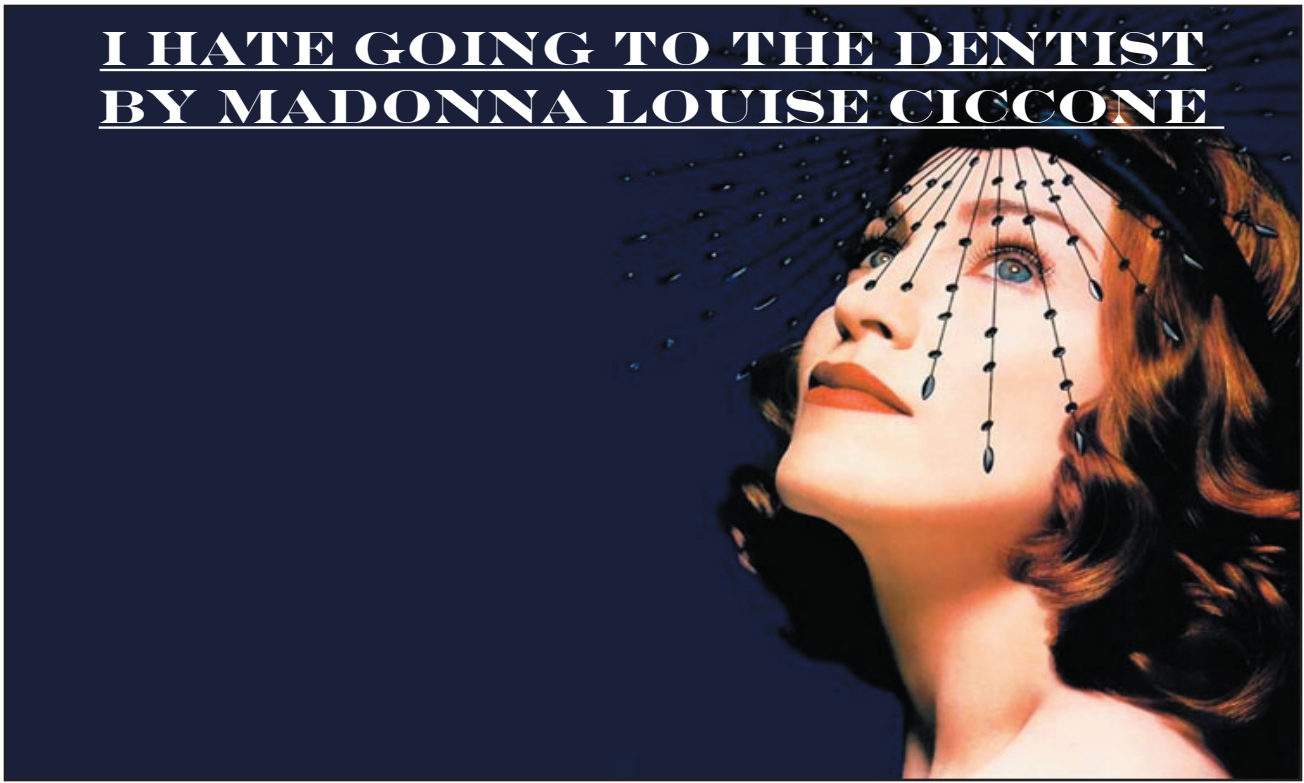
record, one might assume such a class appearing anywhere from 40 to 75 million years in the future.

While chordates do not represent the sheer number of individual species represented in the Arthropoda, their representatives range across the globe, from the most extreme to the most temperate environments and from the most familiar appearances to the strangest. Sea squirts, lions, echidnas, lampreys, vultures; all are our wonderful and strange cousins.

Some, like the birds, arose as nearly as late as our own mammals. Some, like the jawless fishes are the oldest and alien to us. Some creep, some swim. Many might breathe air, while many others breathe water. Amongst us we share traits as diverse as skin or scales, eggs or live birth, feet or fins, even eyes or no eyes. No matter our diverse biology, be it mongoose, shark, ball python, sparrow, or poison arrow frog we all share one trait: chordates are cool.

I HATE GOING TO THE DENTIST

BY MADONNA LOUISE CICCONE



It always smells of straw and manure because of all the horses lined up to get shoed. The heat is oppressive, too, what with the furnace blasting away all day and the dentist's apprentice stoking up the fires constantly.

Also, I'm not a big fan of the clanging and banging going on all the time. It's already a painful process because the dentist is a teetotaler and won't give me some of that whiskey anesthetic more accomplished dentists use. And don't get me started on the actual pulling. My dentist usually lets his apprentice do the dirty work and that kid never picks the right-sized tools. One time he could barely fit the thing in my mouth and tore my cheek a bit.

So I had to go to the surgeon's, but he wasn't there and his wife took care of me. I don't like getting stitched up by the wife. Her place is full of bolts off wool and cotton, to which I'm allergic. Do you know how hard it is to get that big old needle through my flesh when I'm having a sneezing fit? It's pretty hard. And painful! So painful that sometimes it doesn't go right and I have to wait for the surgeon to show up.

Now, the problem with the surgeon is that he just doesn't wash his hands when going from one project to another. No, he'll be shaving one guy's face, then cutting some other guy's hair and finally gets to me. By that point I'm bleeding all over the place and

he just sticks his lathered, stubble-flecked hands in there. At least he gets the job done quickly.

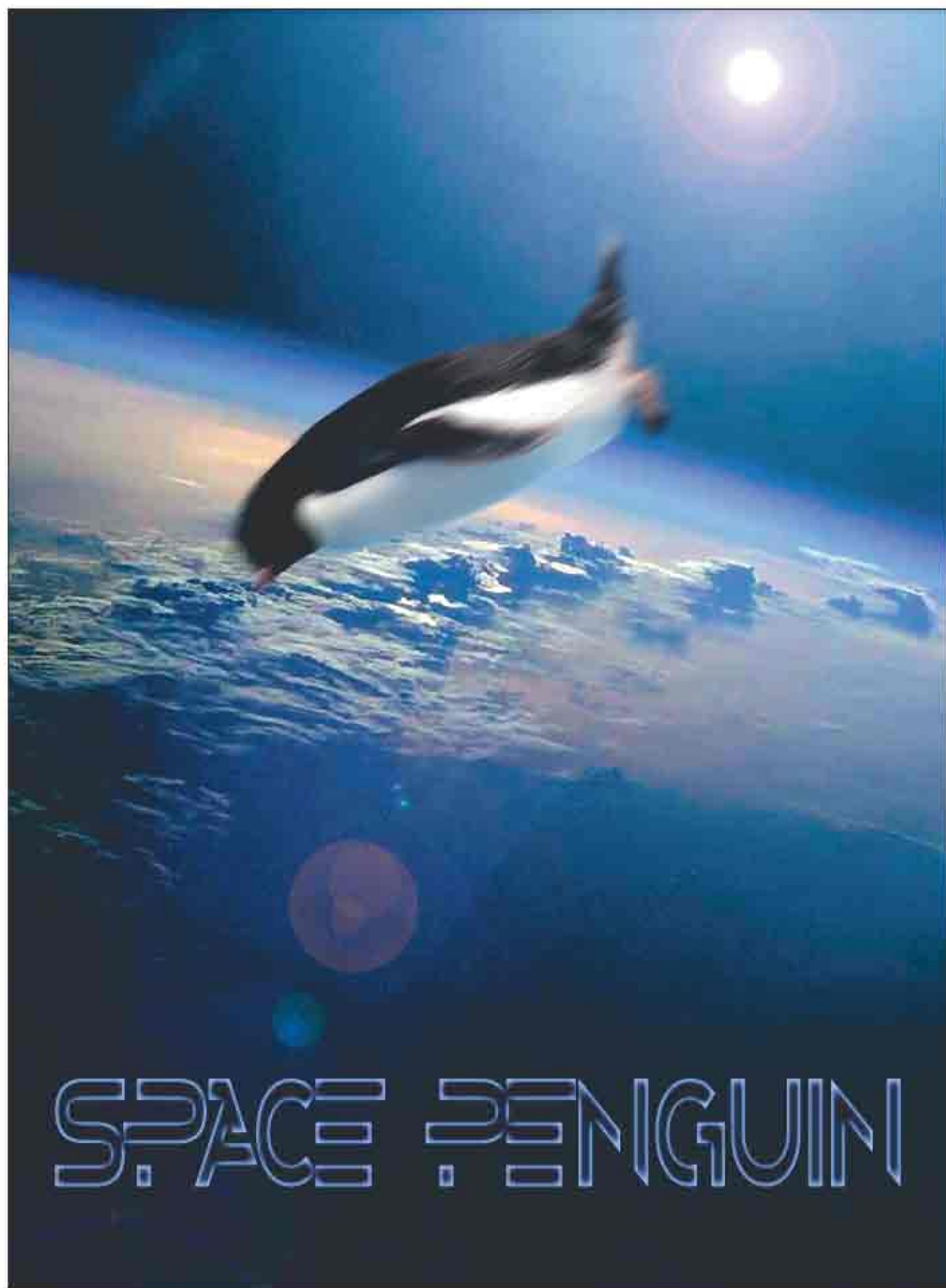
Of course, after all this I need to hit the pharmacist's for a poultice of some sort. I really hate going to the pharmacist's. It takes absolutely forever to get my prescription, sometimes two or three hours, and it smells awful there.

This is usually because the pharmacist is always pouring various liquids on lead, or into boiling lead, or putting lead in bags and waving it at calico cats, or poking neighbourhood children with lead, or sometimes just up and throwing lead out the window. This is usually followed by a shout.

Eventually he gets around to giving me my poultice, which is occasionally pleasant (unless he uses some manure he picked up at the dentist's in the concoction), although sometimes he gets interrupted by some idea having to do with lead again.

The poultice is warm and fragrant, though it doesn't always seem to do much and my raw, oozing cheek stays that way for weeks and weeks. Sometimes it turns black and the smell starts bothering my wife. By this point another tooth is usually bothering me.

I hate it when that happens, because then I have to go back and do the whole thing over again. Man, I hate the dentist.



SPACE PENGUIN

ASK MONTEZUMA

ANSWERS FROM THE GREAT BEYOND!



Montezuma's new band *Organ Transplant By Proxy* is currently on tour with Peter Frampton and Rivers Cuomo's Weezer.

Dear Montezuma,

My aunt, who is Welsh, gave me a brand new Macedonian flag the other day. It's absolutely beautiful, its bright red and yellow stripes almost look like a weirdo Japanese flag. I've got it hanging up in my bedroom so I can think about Macedonia while I make love to my girlfriend. I guess what they say about that fine nation's flag enhancing lovemaking is true! Which makes me curious. Why do male ducks often drown female ducks when they do it?

Simon Smedleyman
Lathe, NE

Simon, did you know that Macedonia is also the Land of the Rising Sun? In 1946 over 300,000 Japanese refugees arrived in Macedonia. Through some as yet inexplicable phenomenon, many doorways in Japan lead to the verdant fields of the Balkans. With these fleeing wretches came throngs of Asian ducks. Ducks from the Orient are generally much larger than the species which are their counterparts on the European mainland, though English ducks are themselves quite large. Those fabulous Brittanic water fowl have been throughout their history quite lazy, so no problems ever arose from that quarter. However, with such a rapid influx of oversized quackers appearing in the middle of the great

Socialist Republic of Macedonia, things began to change. The mischievous birds from afar soon took a liking to the delicate, flat-billed denizens of Europe. Unfortunately, what scientists have dubbed the largeness gene is transmitted only through the male sex chromosome. While sexy duckish broads remained as dainty as can be, their brutish counterparts became so overgrown that they often destroy those with which they choose to procreate. You can see what a dangerous country this Macedonia is.

Montezuma!

I was coming out of the store last week and this dude is standing there all proud with his blue windbreaker what got SECURITY written on the back. Me, I was minding my business, but this hard case up and says hello to me a bunch of times and starts chasing me with a highlighter. Why's this banana head wanna wave a pen in my face?

How A Real Dude Operates Nicely
Topeka, KS

My, my, HARDON, you've put me through quite the ringer on this one. Four cultures are known to greet strangers through the use of a merry-colored highlighter-styled penulator: Nicaraguans, Australians, Zambians, and the Remans. As the Remans no longer exist, we can rule them out. I called up an old 43 man squamish partner who works at the Department of Homeland Security, and she stated that no Zambians or persons of Zambian descent currently reside in Kansas. Australians have been assumed to exist, but this is not proven, so I believe it improbably your security man is one of them. This leaves us with your security guard being Nicaraguan. However, it is widely understood that the Uighur people will greet a passerby waving a highlighter to express melancholy.

Hi Montezuma,

I don't really understand this "alt porn" stuff. I mean, I get that it's supposed to appeal to people of my generation because everyone's all tattooed and pierced and they have funky hair and some of the guys have sideburns. It's apparent to me that they're trying to present me with girls who look like the girls that live around me. The problem is, really, that I expect

unwashed trendnik guys and punked-out girls to be licentious (I've been to a couple of Sum 41 shows). Why isn't it as interesting as watching what you think is medical drama, only to discover that unthinkably the nursing staff is engaged in orgiastic rites with bed ridden accident victims?

Slappy Ass
Brooklyn, NY

Sociologists have discovered, Slappy Ass, that a prime component of any viewing of pornographic content involves the visualization of the participants at some point as elderly. This is quite easy to do when the characters presented to you are engaged in reasonable occupations and appear (apart from certain enhancements) to be standard issue humanity. Unfortunately this is quite impossible, it has been found, when viewing pornography containing the sub-culture you mention. Everyone expects such people to die at an early age due to an inability to gesture at one another about oncoming traffic, or an overuse of irony and sarcasm leading to massive blunt trauma to the cranium. Essentially, "alt porn" cuts out a necessary step from the erotic experience: believability.

Dear Montezuma,
I really like vintage, retro clothing and culture.

Unfortunately, no one makes products for me: the girl who enjoys the culture of America in 1831. Is there some publication, shop, or online destination which might be able to fit my needs?

Rebecca Anne Delaney
Traviston, LA

RAD, no, there isn't. I did manage to find the wonderful folks at 1833-o-Rama, in downtown Roanoke, Virginia, who specialize in all things from Canada in 1833. If you are capable of moving changing your preferences only slightly in temporal and geographic terms, they could be just the place for you. 1833-o-Rama is a clean, welcoming place, which runs a mail order service by telephone or over the interconnected network.

Dear Montezuma,

Let's say I had three nail clippers, a used up deodorant tube, a plain metal lunchbox, a bottle opener decorated by the Estonian flag, a dog food bowl with the name Saint Xavier on it, half a black board and an uncovered cap of detergent. How much would that be worth in 2020 dollars?

Mickey Hart
Elmsworth, WY

About three Euros, but I'm unsure of the exchange rate that far in advance.



**The only board game
endorsed by the U.S.D.A.**



**Fun For
The
Whole
Family!***

*Excluding your whiney teenage vegetarian daughter.



The dress she wore was radiant.
It was a skirt with an attached bodice.

The Yves Soliel Boutique
"No, You can't afford to shop here."

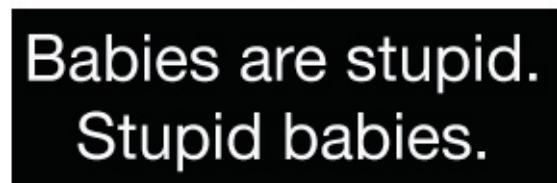
FIFTY REASONS

GOD PUT US ON THIS EARTH

1. There weren't any other available accommodations.
2. To look funny in clown shoes.
3. Angry faces.
4. The pleasure of seeing hippies beaten.
5. To trip over nothing and look indignant.
6. All the bad poetry...well...all the poetry.
7. Because He could.
8. What else goes with a fez and a go-kart?
9. Same reason as alpacas.
10. So He could watch us get fat, pasty and bald.
11. So we could ride across from cute people on the train.
12. The Gold Standard.
13. So we could abuse our bodies by smoking a joint and a cigarette simultaneously while eating a bucket of fried chicken, drinking a fifth of Jack and receiving oral sex from a prostitute.
14. So there would be someone to see all the human faces in everything.
15. One word: velocipede.
16. Balloon races.
17. Agriculture. No, really, He loves looking down at all the irrigation ditches, dividing lines and rows of corn.
18. To pray for victory in the next ping pong match.
19. Shoestring potatoes in a can.
20. Someone was needed to come up with better ways of killing than simply biting the heck out of another creature or surrounding it whole with pseudopodia.
21. Daniel Bester.
22. He just couldn't wait to get to the square dancing.
23. It's funny when spiders scare us.
24. Imagining book-reading insects because of the confusion wrought by the words entomology and etymology.
25. The all-you-can-eat buffet.
26. To figure out how coconuts got here.
27. Two words: New York
28. Lists of things.
29. Because the earlier experiments wherein God put us on Mars were terrible failures, but will eventually result in puzzling exo-archeological finds.
30. Someone had to invent the whoopee cushion and you know squirrels wouldn't have ever gotten around to it.
31. Food for tigers.
32. Because dogs couldn't play fetch otherwise.
33. So someone could really appreciate pomegranates
34. To herd goats.
35. To dangle string in front of cats.
36. Because we would eventually name a body of water Lake Titicaca.
37. A universe without Bruce Vilanch would have been just pointless.
38. Only we know how to make Kool-Aid ®.
39. *From Russia, with Love* wouldn't have been nearly as good if the key roles had been played by watermelons.
40. We were the only ones who could be counted on to identify the Noble Gasses.
41. Rubber band balls.
42. To figure out the answer to the ultimate question of life, the universe, and several things.
43. Languages with clicks (!).
44. To make beetles look even cooler as a species.
45. Tacos! Tacos! Tacos!
46. Musical theater needed to be properly hated.
47. To show dolphins how it's done.
48. The manufacture of squeaking things.
49. So we could kill that bastard JFK.
50. Because He felt like it, damn it.

THE STICKER PAGE

Just print these out on adhesive paper and then stick them on objects.





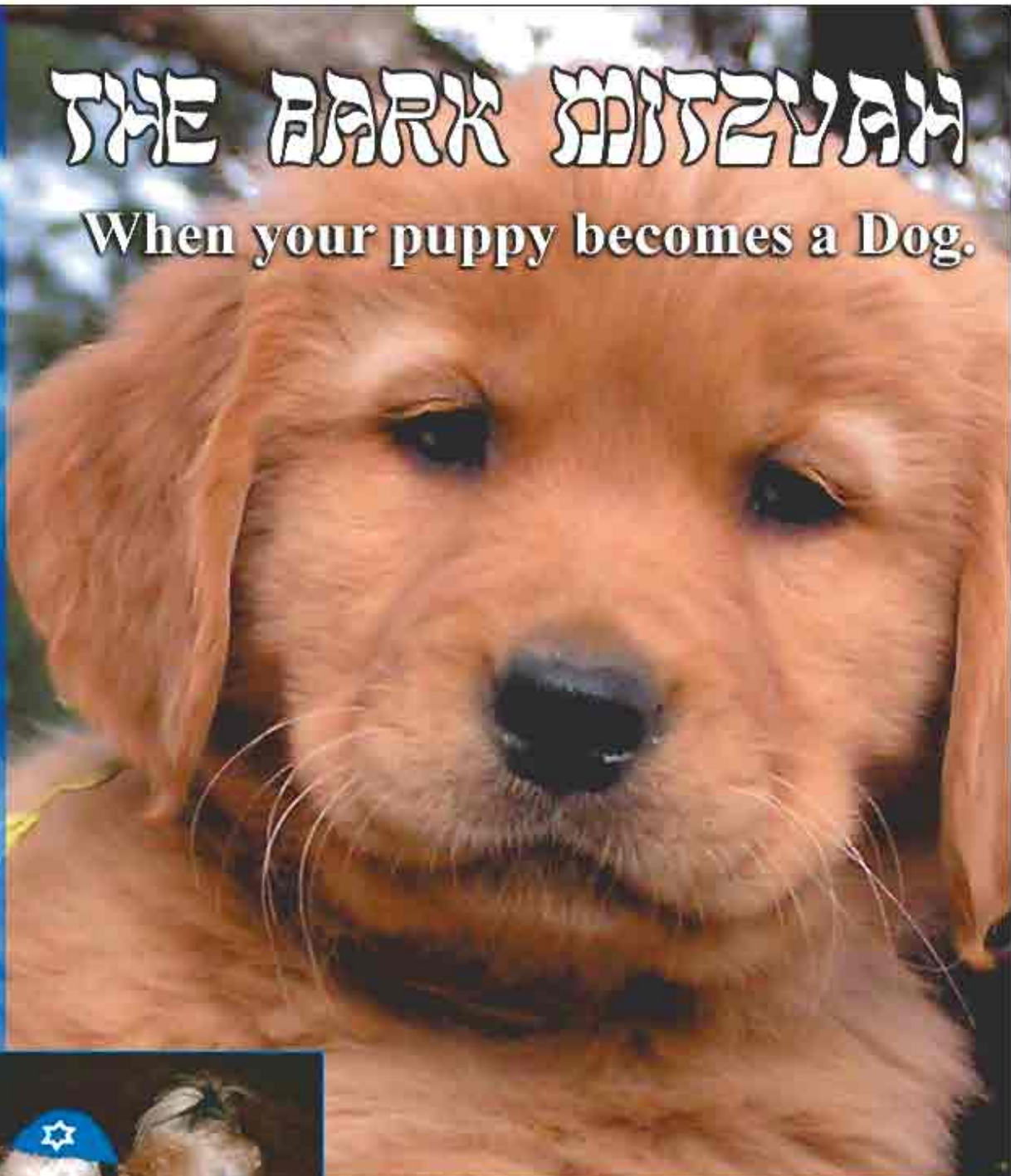
Just like the Moon, but closer to the Sun

MERCURY

A Total Hottie

THE BARK MITZVAM

When your puppy becomes a Dog.



For more information see
Rabbi Jared Schmendelson
at the Johnson
Ridiculously Reform Temple
Mesa Canyon, Ponderada

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISIENTS

FOR SALE

My three favorite staplers. I named them Grey Ghost, Chomper and Ol' Rusty. All are in good condition, except for Ol' Rusty who is slightly rusty. Bill Williams, Billiam, MN.

FOR SALE

The letter "J." It seems as though we actually patented this letter in 1624 and are now interested in selling it to a government or major corporation. The royalties alone are worth billions. Jacombe and Morley Printing Co. Sheffield, England UK.

FOR SALE

Neckties in sloth sizes. Available for three or two toed varieties. Lots of fun styles to choose from. All are \$4.00. Sloth Tie Company, Route 1, Madagascar City.

WANTED

Necklace made of robin heads. Preferably fresh. Will pay \$2 per robin head. Males only as they have more colourful plumage on their detached heads. Monica Travis, Box 022.

WANTED

World peace, plentiful food for all, an end to disease and three Detroit Redwing

uniforms with helmets. Jasper Johnson, Martinmas Island.

POSITION AVAILABLE

Door knobbler needed to knobble doors. Knobs Inc. 483-39832-884.

FOR RENT

Poorly-functioning area in our power grid. Broken feeder lines and melted above-ground cabling abound. Yours for a pittance! Consolidated Edison New York, NY

FOR LEASE

Peg leg. I just lost my other leg and don't need it at this time. \$55 per month. Polish included.

Ramsay K. Peetingworth W. Nomaha, NB

POSITION AVAILABLE

Ustrasana yoga position. Lascivious thoughts sold separately. Will offer deal on pair.

Ann Pizer Brooklyn, NY

FOR SALE

Apple. It is a new hybrid of Granny Smith and crab. I call it the Grancrabble (TM). It's got a rather awful taste. Everyone who eats one immediately complains. Five for a dollar. Ghengis Torkum, Box 8382.

FOR LEASE

One truck load of non-compressed air. Once breathed by Mel Brookes and other celebrities. 1000 rupees per day, plus expenses. Medelson Air Providers. 54-3843-4844-38. Ext. 01. Ask for the air thing. They'll know what you're talking about.

LOST

My virginity. I'm pretty sure it was behind the sofa, but I seem to have misplaced it after having sex with Tony at that party. Lucy Thompson, Brassdale, AL.

PANCAKES

Are freedom.

FOR SALE

1003 life size busts of Ballywood film editors. Free slightly chewed pen cap included. Tony Blair, 10 Downing St. London, SW1. UK

WANTED

Sexy male neighbors of all shapes, sizes, colors and creeds. Must be sexy and male of any persuasion. I cannot emphasize the point enough. I'm tired of looking at my flabby males, I would like some nice one around for once.

Natalie Broadnax Ovaltine, NC

Axes and Alleys

was

Conceived, Written and Produced

by

Scott Birdseye

and

Jeremy Rosen



2006 A.D.

for more information please consult

www.axesandalleys.com