

**here's your free gift –
send \$10 for shipping**

ROBERT S. SWIATEK



Swiatek Press

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First Edition

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to Stan Cieslar, my editor and teacher

also by Robert S. Swiatek

*The Read My Lips Cookbook:
A Culinary Journey of Memorable Meals*

Don't Bet On It – a novel

*Tick Tock, Don't Stop:
A Manual for Workaholics*

for seeing eye dogs only

*This Page Intentionally Left Blank
– Just Like the Paychecks of the Workers*

*I Don't Want to be a Pirate – Writer, maybe
wake up – it's time for your sleeping pill*

*Take Back the Earth – The Dumb,
Greedy Incompetents Have Trashed It*

Press 1 for Pig Latin

*This War Won't Cost Much –
I'm Already against the Next One*

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Introduction

This is another book on the three “Ls”: language, laughter and lunacy. Almost a sequel to *for seeing eye dogs only* and *wake up – it’s time for your sleeping pill*, this is the last of the three books. Note the Doberman on the back cover, which can be found on each of those books. I really put him through hell, first skydiving, then health care and finally the postal service. It is possible that I will do another similar book in the future – but only by popular demand.

Because of all the missing intelligence around us – you need not search very far – it didn’t take me long to finish the second book. As soon as that was out of the way until publication, I started collecting more gems. As a result, *here’s your free gift – send \$10 for shipping* may be the book that I finished in the shortest time. Unfortunately, there was a lapse between that point and the publication date, due to my work on other more important books.

Speaking of short, that adjective also describes this introduction. Without further ado, let’s get started. Here’s to plenty of laughs!

1. Headlines, news and quotes

What follows here are almost in order. I thought about listing things just as they occurred, but since our world seems to defy reason all too often, I decided not to bother. In my 2008 book, *wake up – it's time for your sleeping pill*, I included the “best” headlines of 2005 – I’m not sure what the guidelines are to qualify. What I have done is check the news for stories and headlines – both newspaper and online versions – that could be better stated and posted them with my thoughts. The hope is that you’ll get a chuckle or two and realize that newspaper people don’t get enough time to meet their deadlines.

It may be a new year, but even that brings more lovely headlines. On January 2, 2008, I saw these words just before checking my email – mostly spam:

Man re-creates ‘Star Wars’ in garage with family, neighbors

I wonder if that’s with the original cast.

There’s another headline on that same day:

Justice Department to launch criminal probe of CIA tapes

Why waste time probing – if it’s the CIA, isn’t it criminal?

On Monday, January 7, 2008, I happened to spot this question just before going to do an email check:

Why do Mexican jumping beans jump?

You’d be jumping too if you were fried, let alone re-fried.

Another headline on the same day was:

Bush tries to maintain silence on 2008 race

Ah hah! Another good use of duct tape!

Sometimes headlines can give you useful information, such as the one of January 10, 2008 – which follows and I didn't pursue, since I'm retired:

3 signs that you have a miserable job

I don't believe these were listed but should be considered:

1. *You have to raise your hand before using the rest room*
2. *You're required to work on the 31th of every month*
3. *You have to give two weeks notice if you die*

On that same day, I saw something that may be related to a previous headline:

Stocks jump as Bernanke says Fed ready to lower interest rates

Do you think Mexican beans had something to do with this?

Some days are an extravaganza for headlines – at least for this book. January 11, 2008 had a few, including this one:

NYC's Bloomberg tests waters for presidential run

I hope he's not planning to stick his foot in the Hudson River. Oh, well, it's his body, not mine.

The second one on that same day was groundbreaking:

Baghdad gets first snowfall in decades

Unfortunately, it was not the first snow job in that period.

There seemed to be no end on that banner day, because I caught this one as well:

Singapore called Asia's happiest country

There's must be something in the water or else they're watching the Comedy Channel.

The fourth headline of note on the 11th of January was:

Scientists rule out possibility of asteroid hitting Mars

I wonder if there is still hope for cleaning up the lobbyists in Washington with it.

You could find this headline on Wednesday, January 16, 2008:

Bush promises to stay engaged in Mideast peace
Won't that upset Laura?

Another that I couldn't pass on that same day was this one:

Huge rodent species found
This is not to be confused with the politicians in Washington.

It appears that that same day may fill up the chapter. Here's another:

Don't send in the clowns: A survey finds clowns are "universally disliked" by kids
Is that why Congress today has an approval rating of eleven percent?

A day later, this headline graced my PC screen:

A new species of palm tree that flowers once every 100 years and then dies is discovered
It's too bad that this characteristic couldn't be passed on to telemarketers.

On January 21, 2008, you could see this educational tidbit in the news:

Food poisoning can cause long-term problems, scientists say
This assumes you survive past the short term. Were there any clinical tests used to arrive at this conclusion?

After returning from my trip – there's more from that venture in the chapter on signs – I saw this headline on Wednesday, January 30, 2008:

Hen in Mexican village lays rare eggs with green shells

Could this be an example of environmental poultry?

Sunday, February 3, 2008 was the day that I saw this headline on yahoo.com:

Wind-power industry faces shortage of experienced technicians

Attention to Congress and the Administration: JOBS! JOBS! JOBS! – and high paying ones at that.

You could see this headline on that very same day:

Clinton, Obama in dead heat ahead of big vote

*The groundhog just saw his shadow and we're in the middle of winter, and you're talking about **heat!***

A day later, I saw these words:

More Americans turning to Bible for financial advice

I hope they're looking in the book of Wisdom. These people can't be serious.

In keeping with this religious tone, there was another headline the very same day:

New 'Virtue' perfume is said to bring people closer to God

*Wouldn't they be better off with Calvin Klein's **Eternity?***

Maybe I should write a book on these headlines, because I saw this one on February 5, 2008:

Clemens testifies to Congress about steroid use

I didn't think Mark Twain used those things or they were even around. I didn't know he was alive.

Another I saw that same day was:

Japan reportedly resumes whale hunt in Antarctic waters

Of course they're looking for the missing whales. Did they ever stop to think that maybe over fishing has led to the scarcity?

On February 8, 2008, I saw these words on the Internet:

Signs your staff dislikes you

Detecting these signals from your employees might indicate you're a lousy boss.

Here are ten signs that tell you it's time to fill out your resume:

10. *There's something ticking in your office and your clock is in for repair.*
9. *You're not included in the office Super Bowl pool.*
8. *You're the only one who doesn't get a cake for his birthday.*
7. *More rope is delivered to the office than required by the shipping department.*
6. *An order of tar and feathers arrives at your office.*
5. *One of your employees invites you to his ranch to go quail hunting.*
4. *Your Christmas gift has white powder on it.*
3. *Someone gives you a cigar and recommends you not light it until she leaves your office.*
2. *One day, the head of a dead horse appears on your desk.*

1. *Your staff votes you the winner of two weeks vacation to Iraq.*

Wednesday, February 20, 2008 brought this headline:

Yahoo! introduces new severance plans

Yeah, it's called logging out after checking your email.

There were a few headlines the next day that I had to include here. The first was:

Magnitude 6.3 earthquake strikes northeast Nevada

Unfortunately, all the casinos are still standing.

The next one featured was:

Amazing 'sailboat' stadium

The proposed \$450 million waterfront baseball stadium would be like no other.

I assume this is to be built in San Francisco, because of the wind and close proximity to the bay. I hope the fans like sailing.

The third headline was:

Grocery bills mount as price of wheat skyrockets

This is the case even for people with allergies.

There was another – this seemed to be a banner day – that said:

Does the shape of your nose say anything about personality?

If it's longer than four inches, you can run for political office or become a lawyer.

I really feel it's time for a woman president, but I don't believe it should be Hillary. By the time you read this, you'll probably know if others felt the same way. On Friday,

February 22, 2008, I saw a headline which I couldn't leave out:

Hillary Clinton accuses Barack Obama of plagiarism as candidates trade jobs in Texas

Let me get this straight: She's a senator and she's running for president. When does she have time to be an English professor?

Another beauty that same day was:

White House defends McCain

No kidding! If I have to explain this one, you can stop reading now. I hope you paid for the book.

Saturday has headlines as well as the rest of the week. Here's one from February 23, 2008:

Bank accidentally gives man \$5 million

Are you still wondering why we had the savings and loan crisis as well as the more recent debacle with lending institutions? Chapter 8 is dedicated to similar brain tumors. It gets a lot worse.

These few words could be viewed on Tuesday, February 26, 2008, if you got your email from Yahoo:

8 careers that help lower your stress level

I didn't read the article as I was too busy writing, but I thought of a few professions that could fit the bill.

8. *Weighing trucks at a gravel pit*
I actually had this job one summer during college and I read quite a few books.
7. *Testing beds at the factory*
6. *Refrigerator salesman in the Antarctic*
5. *Journalist for a newspaper that only comes out once a year*
4. *Ranger at a National Park with no roads leading into it*

3. *Working two contracts at the same time; each employer assumes you're at the other job*
2. *Letter-turner on a game show with vowels and consonants*
1. *One of those washing machine repairmen*
Make sure it's the right company. Obviously, to get one of these assignments, you'll either have to know someone or pay someone off.

On March 4, 2008, I saw this question on the WEB just before logging on to get my email:

What's the worst U.S. city for identity theft?

I don't have time to go follow up for the answer, but would that be the Steal City?

A day later, when tracking some books that were on their way to California, I saw these words on the USPS web site:

The U. S. Postal Service and HBO invite you to customize and send a FREE JOHN ADAMS greeting card.

Won't that confuse some people?

Just before logging on to check my email on March 6, 2008, I saw these words:

Study: Some men find housework has many rewards

They just have to do a great deal of searching to find where their spouse hid the money.

On Friday, March 7, 2008 – TGIF – I saw this headline:

Atlanta man builds high-tech robot to deter drug dealers

Wouldn't it be cheaper to get a gun or just stay away from those areas?

Another the same day was:

British man aims to be oldest marathoner ever

Just from looking at his picture, if he keeps up the running, he won't be.

Saturday, March 8, 2008 had a few examples of missing intelligence – maybe that's why the country is in the state it is today. The first one was:

MIT tackles urban gridlock with foldable car idea

*I think implementing and improving on mass transit could make more sense. What do you expect from this group of geniuses. Check out their idea of the **clocky in wake up – it's time for your sleeping pill**, my 2008 book.*

The next one may come as a shocker:

Bush to veto waterboarding bill

He probably thinks it has something to do with housing at sea. Does that come with meals?

Some people will do anything to save a few dollars on shipping, as this headline of that same day illustrates:

A black and white kitten survives crossing the Pacific in a shipping crate

I'm happy to see she made it across, though I'm sure she'd rather have gone to Disney World. I don't think FedEx, the USPS or UPS are thrilled.

That beauty was accompanied by this piece:

How to handle switch to daylight saving time

The most important thing to do is set your clock ahead one hour, before you retire for the night. If somehow you forget, sometime on Sunday, you will be made aware of the missing action. Somehow you will survive.

This next headline could be found on Monday, March 10, 2008 and it had laughs written all over it:

Vatican lists ‘new sins’ for the modern age

Was there any mention of sins that were switched to another class, lessened in intensity, de-classified or taken off the original list?

Speaking of which, I’m not sure how long it’s necessary to wait on a headline about someone’s ill fate, but by the time this is published, it should be past the mourning period. For politicians, I don’t believe this delay applies, so I should be safe. This was predicted in my 2008 publication, ***I Don’t Want to be a Pirate*** – although not quite exactly the way it all played out. This late-breaking news was also on March 10:

NY governor linked to prostitution ring

A law enforcement official says New York governor Eliot Spitzer was caught on a federal wiretap. He is expected to resign.

Eliot was trying to help the economy – it needs all the stimulation it can get. Surprisingly, he’s not a Republican.

Another headline that same day may need some explaining for people who don’t live in Buffalo, Chicago or Milwaukee. These words could be found:

U.S. general: Al-Qaida in Iraq may be planning ‘large’ event

I know at the time of this news it was close to Easter, but I don’t think it’s a Dyngus Day Party.

The day after brought this headline:

Man’s technique sets record for most claps in one minute

Oh, that’s different. Never mind.

I didn't read the full story, but these words were there that same day:

4 things to never say to the boss

As you can guess, these are my phrases.

1. *Was that you last night with Eliot?*
2. *I picked up Monica's dress from the dry cleaners.*
3. *I found your resume still in the copier.*
4. *Is this your stash?*

This headline that same day was loaded:

Emotional Hall of Fame night

Madonna gets choked up during her speech; Justin Timberlake diss his exes. She forgets to thank her family. *Was she chewing on some chicken wings? Who has time to thank anyone when you're just trying to breathe? He obviously didn't read the story behind the headline above.*

I hope I don't have to explain this next one:

'Ask a Ninja' creators to remake cult hit 'Killer Tomatoes'

I thought that the myth about those fruit was debunked decades ago. Maybe, it's a new hybrid that I haven't heard about.

Baseball season is just around the corner, so this next headline isn't that surprising:

Yankees sign actor Billy Crystal to play baseball

Either George is losing it or Billy's running out of jokes.

They just keep coming, as these words illustrate:

If Spitzer quits, U.S. would have first blind governor

That may be true, but there was a deaf and dumb governor in the 1990s. Actually, he may not have been deaf.

What a day for headlines! Here's another from March 11:

Arctic town awakens to sunlight for first time in five months

The bars ran out of beer a few nights before.

Another gem from that same day was this one:

Baggage becomes a big-ticket item for fliers

These people never considered grocery bags.

The very next day, I saw this headline:

Town celebrates end of 5 months of darkness

The sunlight will soon be gone.

These words could also be found on March 12:

Japan investigates iPod after Nano overheats, shoots out sparks

I thought that was a special new feature.

You may recall Woody Allen's words about the lamb laying down with the lion. These words on the same day reminded me of that:

Shark is reintroduced to larger shark that tried to eat it

Unfortunately, there's only one shark left. It wasn't a good introduction and apparently the aggressor was still hungry.

March 13 may not be your lucky day if you follow this headline from that day in 2008:

How to grow your career in a recession

Won't the grower be arrested and the weed in the fields be confiscated?

Another bit that same day connected to farming was:

Is corn to blame for America's obesity epidemic?

I think duct tape is to blame. We need more of it to apply to people's mouths so they'll stop eating.

I wasn't going to include this next headline of the same day, but it appears the laws of science have been changed without my knowledge:

Eat more and weigh less

A diet that lets you eat more and weigh less

More likely, you're not allowed to swallow.

I couldn't leave this one out:

Explaining Spitzer scandal to children proving tricky for parents

That one word starting with "t" probably won't make it any easier.

The brilliance in the headlines doesn't seem to end. Here's another:

Survey: Recession is here

Most economists surveyed by the Wall Street Journal see bad news.

Did these guys just wake up?

Here's another on that unlucky day:

Monitors fail to stop patients from waking during surgery

In some respect, that's not all bad news. They'll just have to increase the dosage.

On Friday, March 14, 2008, you could find this headline on the Internet:

Sand dollars clone themselves when in danger, studies find

Unfortunately, with inflation, there's still going to be a shortage of cash.

A day later, these words appeared:

As more countries launch spacecraft, some warn of traffic jam

Won't that create more jobs for air traffic controllers?

Monday, April 21, 2008 brought this headline:

South Korean astronaut describes frightening return to Earth

I can't say I blame him.

There was another news note that same day:

Hamas is willing to accept Israel as its neighbor, Carter says

But not its nuclear plant or any landfills.

The next one on the same day I had to include because it really fits in with people not using their heads. It is from a poll:

Voters more worried about economy than Iraq

I may be wrong, but perhaps the last five years of the Iraq quagmire has something to do with the economy. I hope people wake up in time to vote in November.

Just before logging on to check my email on October 15, 2007, I saw the following on Yahoo:

Ouch! Do-it-yourself dentistry

The falling number of dentists in England leads to people extracting their own teeth. » Superglue used too

You have all the tools at home; you can save some money and probably won't have to worry about retirement.

It was a good day for headlines because on that same day, I saw this gem:

Maritime pirate attacks increase worldwide

It is their month, isn't it?

Again that very same day, I found this headline:

Scientists find that some fish suffer from insomnia

Shouldn't that keep them from getting hooked?

On Thursday, October 18, 2007, I caught these words on Yahoo.com:

A study shows that swearing can improve the office vibe

Is that a &%\$#@ good thing? I'm glad I'm not in that office.

Tuesday, October 30, 2007 brought these words on the Internet:

Lose weight on lunch break

The secret is the Joey Falco diet plan – it's called duct tape. You put it over your mouth so you won't stuff it with food.

On the last weekend in October 2007, I saw this headline a few times:

Some cavemen had red hair

Apparently Carrot Top and the Wendy's girl go back quite a ways.

On Thursday, October 11, 2007, I saw this headline before logging on to check my email:

Researchers create glue based on toe pads of tree frogs

*I bet one of the frogs was named **Elmer**.*

On the morning of November 13, 2007, I happened to come upon this gem:

Expert says ninety percent of Earth's species still unclassified

I didn't think the percentage of lawyers and telemarketers was that high.

Two days later, I saw these words as things to avoid during job interviews:

If you're aiming to make a good impression in a job interview, don't sing

Apparently, it's okay to dance – just not like Elaine on Seinfeld.

I saw this headline on November 7, 2007:

Rebecca De Mornay reportedly arrested for drunken driving

Is this the bookstore saleswoman on Seinfeld who flagged George's book?

This headline caught my eye on November 8 of the same year:

London calls for slimmer Santas to discourage child obesity

Won't that affect the ho-ho-hos coming from those red-clad holiday gift-givers?

On November 29, 2007, I couldn't miss this headline:

China: 'Erroneous' U.S. actions have harmed ties

I assume this won't affect business casual on Fridays.

This was a headline that I caught on November 19, 2007 as I tried to get my email, and these researchers should all be fired:

Sleep-deprived mothers prone to gain weight, researchers say

If you're asleep, it's quite difficult to put food into your mouth.

A day later I saw this headline:

Bowl Championship Series may widen pool of at-large eligibles

It's about time that bowling got the recognition it deserves!

On the very same day, I saw these words in print:

Eating contests under scrutiny in connection with obesity fears

Why not turn this into something good by combining these overindulgences with bulimia?

Some days are better than others because I also saw this headline on that day before Thanksgiving in 2007:

Huge ancient bug discovered

That explains why I've been having so many problems with my PC.

On Monday, November 26, 2007 I saw these words in a headline on the WEB:

Iraq may offer deal to U.S. for long-term presence

Maybe people haven't heard: neither I nor the majority of Americans care for this "deal."

The next day, I saw this headline before checking my email:

Twelfth-century copy of Roman road map displayed in Vienna

People still got lost since it was designed by MapQuest.

I'm creative, but I didn't make this one up. I saw it on Tuesday, December 4, 2007:

Italian court orders Tweety, Donald Duck to take witness stand

I hope their attorney isn't Goofy, but from my experience, it probably is.

Maybe this publication isn't the Times or Post, but I did see this on the cover of the Star at the supermarket on December 11, 2007 – I didn't buy a copy. It had to do with Jen and Brad and apparently the former will be spending the holidays at the home of the latter's. When Jen was asked where she would be at the end of December, her reply may have been, "It's the Pitts!"

I saw a few gems on Wednesday, December 12, 2007 just before trying to get my email. The first was:

Scientists discover how pregnant women keep from tipping over

Has that been a problem?

The last one on December 12th was:

Man sickened chugging vodka at airport

This is a big surprise, which probably wouldn't have happened had he not been doing cartwheels just to get that last seat on the plane.

It appears that I should do a book exclusively on these headlines because a day later, on December 13, 2007, I saw these words:

Cloned cats glow in the dark

Does that surprise anyone? Felines are overjoyed during power failures!

There's another headline from the same day:

Rescue workers save man from car dangling six stories up

How did this vehicle get past the guard on the ground floor?

Oh what treasures this Internet brings! Here is another from the same day:

French store uses dancing men in underwear to sell clothes

Dressing Santa Claus this way may not work. Where will he put his pipe?

Not quite a week later I saw a headline that I will comment on later as well as this mind-boggling one:

Court decides baby can't be named 'Friday'

I don't see why not. That was Sergeant Joe's name.

This revealing headline was seen on December 20, 2007:

Uninsured cancer patients more likely to die

I'm glad someone told me this and I hope they didn't spend too much to come up with this conclusion.

Another one that same day was this:

Missing family rescued after 'help' sign spotted in the snow

I wonder if the sign was yellow and hand written.

I couldn't leave this headline out from the same day:

Minivan fender-benders leave big dents in wallet, tests find

Leave them home and just bring loose cash.

On the last day of that same year, I saw this headline:

Florida couple find rare purple pearl in plate of steamed clams

I wonder if this belongs to Barney.

Even on the weekend, you will find headlines to write about in books on missing intelligence. On Saturday, October 6, 2007, I saw this gem:

Pakistan's Musharraf sweeps presidential election

He just brushed his opponents aside.

On Friday, September 28, 2007, I saw this headline while trying to get my email:

Group may become conservative version of MoveOn

What are they going to call it, MoveBack?

A bit later that same day I saw these words:

Uncle Kracker pleads guilty to misdemeanor assault charge

He wouldn't have had this problem without so much sodium.

On Thursday, September 6, 2007, I saw another great example of missing intelligence on the Web with this headline:

Study: Early-risers at higher risk for heart problems

Duh, people who get up early generally speaking are workaholics and type A individuals, since they need all the time in the day that they can get.

On the last day of August 2007, I saw these words on the web:

Elephant escapes from circus in India to elope

Otherwise, it would have been a shotgun wedding.

On Wednesday, August 2, 2007, I saw these words on the web:

Death toll dips to 4 in bridge collapse

Were some of the supposed victims named Lazarus?

On Thursday, October 4, 2007, I saw this brilliant headline:

Physicists unravel the mystery of how knots form

I'd say it starts with a bit of rope. You can figure out the rest.

Later on the same day, I saw this headline on Yahoo.com:

Sen. Craig poses dilemma for GOP colleagues

I hope he doesn't pose for anything else.

On Tuesday, July 17, 2007, I happened to catch the following headline:

New orchid smells like 'sweaty feet'

Where can I get some of these? I'm glad my job isn't to go around with my nose close to flowers.

On that same day, I got a letter addressed to me as president.

I didn't even know there was an election or that I was running for office.

I couldn't resist reporting on this headline of July 2, 2007:

Bush and Putin meet to discuss ties

This must be a fashion conference.

On Wednesday, June 6, 2007, I found this headline before logging on to get my email:

Man tries to jump into the popemobile

Maybe, he was just tired of hitchhiking.

I saw these words on June 3, 2006 in the Parade Magazine of the Sunday paper:

I wish I were invisible

Apparently, this person spends a great deal of money on clothes.

On the Internet the very same day a bit later, I saw these words:

\$1 million bathtub vanishes from hotel

The hotel owners may have been overcharged.

I happened to see this headline just before I got my email on Friday, April 13, 2007:

Synthetic hormones in milk cows anger consumers

I wonder how the cows feel.

I saw these words just before getting my email on the morning of May 17, 2007:

Chance finding in wounded lab mice could point the way to reversing hair loss, scientists say

Would this give the rats a better chance of finding a date?

I saw this headline on the Internet on the morning of May 1, 2007:

Dutchman Johan Huibers has decided to build a life-size version of the Biblical boat

Does he know something we don't know? This must have something to do with global warming.

There were three headlines on Yahoo news on April 26, 2007. The first was:

Senior U.S. soldier in Iraq accused of aiding the enemy

I'm not sure what a soldier is, but it might be similar to a liquider, whatever that is.

The second one, that same day was:

Intelligence not linked to wealth, study finds

The latter is linked to criminality in most cases, but you don't need a study to conclude that.

The third one was:

Police find horse left in bank overnight

I wonder if he was making a deposit or a withdrawal. I hope he had an account there.

There's an ad I saw when I tried to get my email on Wednesday, April 25, 2007. It probably will be there for a few days and it says:

How To Look Thinner in Photos

That's easy – have your picture taken with obese people.

I saw these words briefly when I was trying to get my email on Friday, April 20, 2007:

Your diet can affect your skin

Yeah, if you eat too much, it will expand!

I saw the following headline when I logged onto the Internet to check my email on April 7, 2007:

Scientists discover source of Milky Way's red glow

It seems to be fading but there is still a trace despite the demise of Communism.

On the same day, I saw this headline as well:

Mysterious illness at Mexico school may be psychological

I think it's probably just from the enchiladas.

The following headline was seen on Valentines Day in 2007 on the Internet:

Group says hybrid cars dangerously quiet for pedestrians

No &%%\$# Sherlock! Not only do these cars save energy, they reduce noise pollution. That must be a bad thing.

The following headline was seen on January 30, 2007 on the Internet:

Fallon says U. S. miscalculated Iraq

Did he just wake up after all these years? Maybe his first two names are Rip and Van!

I saw the following headline in the news on Friday, January 26, 2007:

Hospital settles lawsuit over towel left in patient

The patient was in for alcoholism and needed to dry out.

On NPR on May 14, 2007, I believe it was Steve Inskeep who uttered these eight words, “So how do you assemble an atomic bomb?”

I didn't stayed tuned to get the reply but I believe the answer is, “Very carefully.”

I think everyone knows that Myanmar is the name of the country formerly known as Prince – oops, that's Burma. Nonetheless, I did hear George W. Bush mention the people of Burma while talking in late September 2007.
Maybe he hasn't heard of the name change yet.

A few days later I heard mention of that same country beginning with the letter “B” on National Public Radio – I believe the speaker was some representative of the current administration.

Apparently we shall be hearing those words, “formerly” and “Burma” together in the same sentence for some time. Just

because someone is talking does it mean that others are listening.

On September 27, 2007 I didn't catch the entire story but I did hear something about *Freddie Mac*.
Is he the brother of Bernie Mac?

The Associated Press had this headline in the Buffalo News on Sunday, October 21, 2007:

Card mailed in 1943 reaches destination

A Japanese soldier mailed a postcard during World War II from Southeast Asia and it reached its intended destination on Friday, October 19, 2007, via Nagasaki, Arizona and Hawaii, according to a statement from Mukogawa Women's University.

The goal of this postal service is for mail to see as much of the world as possible – the Milky Way isn't out of bounds. There's no rush, either. I've heard of snail mail, but this is ridiculous. They should have used zip code + 4!

The following was supposedly seen in the New York Times:

Worker dead at his desk for five days

The employee was employed as a proofreader at a New York firm for thirty years and died on Monday of a heart attack in an open-plan office with about two dozen others, but wasn't found until Saturday by an office cleaner.

Who said New York wasn't a friendly town?

I hear the following quite often on NPR radio around supertime, more or less, "Support comes from the Melville Trust, looking for the cause of homelessness..."

*Heck, I hope they're not spending a great deal of money in this endeavor. The answer is quite simple: these people don't have a place to live. I think this organization has something to do with **Moby Dick**.*

I couldn't resist this quote:

"I'd give Charles Darwin videotapes of *Geraldo, Beavis and Butt-head* and *The McLaughlin Group*. I would be interested in seeing if he still believes in evolution." – Dean Koontz

"We need an energy bill that encourages consumption." – George W. Bush
Apparently the word "conservation" never entered his vocabulary, even though he claims to be a "conservative."

"It's going to require numerous IRA agents." – George W. Bush, on Gore's tax plan during the 2000 campaign
Doesn't he mean the ERA?

"I think it's very important for world leaders to understand that when a new administration comes in, the new administration will be running the foreign policy." – George W. Bush, January 12, 2001
From what I have seen over the last few years, I think he meant "ruining" not "running."

"It's important to have China at the table." – George W. Bush, May 31, 2005
Well naturally, how else can you serve dinner?

"For a century and a half now, America and Japan have formed one of the great enduring alliances of modern times." – George W. Bush, February 18, 2002
Apparently, December 7, 1941 doesn't count!

"The ambassador and the general were briefing me on the – the vast majority of Iraqis who want to live in a peaceful, free world. And we will find these people and we

will bring them to justice.” – George W. Bush, October 28, 2003

Someone said he saw the Mayan ruins and uttered the same last sentence.

And speaking of crooks, you hear this announcement on the news almost every day:

Chris Jones is leaving his / her post to spend more time with his / her family.

He / she is really departing before he / she gets canned or indicted.

From the October 11, 2007 issue of the independent Buffalo paper, *ArtVoice*, comes this gem from *News of the Weird*:

The Tata Group, a Mumbai, India, company that handles customer-service calls for several U. S. firms, has outsourced some of its work to a firm in Ohio (according to an August *Fortune* magazine report), on behalf of a client that insists on operators knowledgeable about American geography.

Apparently, they're doing an outsource of an outsource. I wonder if the workers will have to pay rather than get paid.

The February 21, 2008 issue of *ArtVoice* also had another story in *News of the Weird* that I just couldn't omit.

In Huntington Beach, California the local police had been hassling Iman Idyot because he had been raising money by collecting tips at the Pier Plaza. He did this while hammering nails into his nose, most of the time without serious injury. Blood was drawn at times.

In December 2008, the authorities finally ended their harassment of Iman. The American Civil Liberties Union is monitoring this event, since they feel that this individual has a right to perform his nose-nailing, fire-eating and sword swallowing acts.

I must have missed reading that part of the Constitution – I wonder which of our Founding Fathers put it in. Maybe the ACLU feels this is a community service.

I close the chapter with another wonderful example of missing intelligence by a group that should know better. This comes from the update of *Conspiracy* by Anthony Summers called *Not in Your Lifetime*, a lengthy book but one worth reading. If you read my previous offering of *for seeing eye dogs only*, you may recall the starshells and Fidel Castro. This tops that. The wizards of the CIA – maybe in the place of odor eaters, not that they were needed – felt that adding a chemical to Fidel's shoes would do much to eliminate the leader of Cuba. It wouldn't kill him, just make his hair fall out. The result would be a bald, beardless leader now missing support of the people as well.

Why not put the stuff in his hat? It would probably have been more successful. Apparently these brilliant minds never heard of Kojak, Yul Brynner, Eisenhower and more recently, Jesse Ventura.

2. Read my lips – again?

If you're familiar with my writing, you know that the first book I had published was *The Read My Lips Cookbook*. People have asked if I would write another cookbook, but since I doubt that I could top it, there's little hope for that. If you're not sure of what I'm talking about, check out the reviews on my web site and while you're at it, order one. Put the secret word in the memo on the form and you can have it for \$10. By the way, the secret word is "intelligence," and my web site is listed on the back cover of this book.

Nevertheless, you can't rule out the possibility of republication with a new title and cover. The new edition would have a few more recipes, many of which can be found on my web site. In addition, there would be a few new stories. What follows are a few examples of capers – I'm not talking about those tiny round things that you can find in a jar. I really have no clue to what they are. Someday, I'll look capers up.

From about June to October, I get a grocery bag of vegetables from Porter Farms in Elba, New York – that's about forty miles from here. The cost for an entire season from July to November is a less than \$300 and the produce is grown organically. This means it's safe to eat, but obviously you can't keep it around too long since it's missing all those preservatives. You also may get an added protein bonus, such as a worm or two in the broccoli. If you aren't thrilled with those critters, you can cook the stalks and the heat will separate those ugly green things from what you will be eating. Another suggestion is to soak the broccoli in salt water for a few minutes and the worms will come to the top. *At that point they can be cooked separately if you so desire.*

I try quite a few new recipes and as you probably know, even good cooks have their moments, and I'm not

talking about those of senior citizens. Towards the end of September 2007, I had another huge zucchini from Porter Farms so I decided to try a new recipe for bread using that vegetable. After being in the oven for an hour or so, the bread looked fine, but I figured it would need a few extra minutes. When I checked it in the oven a short time thereafter, the top looked fine but the bottom resembled some kind of inedible soup. I wound up tossing it since another half-hour wouldn't have made a difference. Two more hours may have made it a bit too crunchy. The reason for the disaster was that I left out two cups of flour, which is exactly what the recipe called for.

Lesson of the day: If you bake bread of any kind, you'll probably need flour!

For a party at my home just before the beginning of 2008, I cooked vegetable vindaloo. It was quite good and the people heaped good comments about it.

This is not to be confused with vegetable boogaloo, a 1960s dish featured mostly at dance parties.

I was at a book signing in Buffalo at Talking Leaves Books and overheard a gentleman say, "I'm a serious cook." *If you read my cookbook, you might feel that I'm a comedic cook, but in an instructional sense.*

I see this in quite a few recipes and wonder if I make a slight modification by not following the recipe precisely, will I wind up with a disaster? It has to do with a measurement. Ordinarily, a recipe calls for a *quarter cup of Sherry*. This particular one lists the requirement as a *quarter cup plus 2 tablespoons of Sherry*.

Perhaps the recipe was stolen and the thief wanted to make it original.

For my New Year's resolution, I will try to bake breads that reflect the counterculture more.

I plan to use Kerouac seeds.

I close the chapter with something I could have included in the chapter on technology just as well, since it involved emails that had me shaking my head. I will try to have some consideration and not use names, as I want to spare the individual involved – and not get sued. After you read this, I'm sure you will agree that some people don't have quite the intelligence of a lima bean. This episode fits in here because of that fact and the name of my web site.

The adventure began when I decided to place an advertisement in a magazine about my web site. I found out that I needed to have at least fifteen words in the ad and it had to run for three months. The cost wasn't inexpensive, but for some bizarre reason, I decided to go ahead anyway – I probably had a temporary brain tumor.

Quite a while ago I placed an ad listing my web site in some magazine shortly after my cookbook was published. This was before the outstanding reviews showed up on my doorstep. For about a month, I was getting about fifty hits each day. The bad news: no one was buying the cookbook, or not that many people. They certainly weren't purchasing it through my site. Of course, I was just getting started, so I was at a great disadvantage. This fact somehow justified spending money for another ad – perhaps it will pay some dividends. This might lead you to believe that my venture involved a cooking magazine, but I can't reveal that.

I used my credit card and had a few email problems at first – I'll probably stop having them once I stop using the Internet. The deal was for three months and there was a verbal contract for three months, which I probably will honor – unless I can get out of the third month. From my experience with this person, maybe I should.

There are a few reasons for the difficulty. I sent an email to the magazine and probably confused the people at the magazine. The second reason has to do with their publication schedule. They don't publish every month and sometimes have a dual issue, like a January / February publication. They have a March issue, an April issue and other combined ones. This may have something to do with Lent. To date, I saw my ad in two issues of the magazine as well as two debits on my Visa card. This means I have one more issue with my ad and one more debit.

I actually got two emails that really made me wonder what I had done. The first email had, among others, these words: "We are working on the May issue. If I do not receive a reply, I will be running your ad, as contracted." I sent back an email – I probably used too many two-syllable words – and then got back an email the same day that indicated that either my email wasn't received or not read. At this point, I figured I had a chance to get out of the contract so I responded with the words, "Don't run the ad for May and don't bill me for it. Thanks."

There's too much craziness here. I agreed to three months, so then why was this email necessary? According to our contract, they are supposed to run the ad for three months and debit my credit card three times. If I received an email saying I signed on for three issues – months isn't quite right, as I pointed out – and they're running the ad, why did they inquire about this and give me an option which I couldn't exercise? On the other hand, if they agree to my last email, I'll be quite happy.

There are some organizations you shouldn't work with. As I write this, I have yet to have the third month's ad run or billed.

3. Words, daffynitions, oxymorons and names

You should be familiar with oxymorons and pleonasms, but if not, the former consist of two or more words that seem to be contradictory, such as my all-time favorite, *military intelligence* – I need not remind you what this book is about. A pleonasm is nothing more than a redundancy, or making a point by using more words than necessary, such as *frozen ice*. I came across the term *daffynition* many years ago and it can only be described as an alternate meaning for a word or group of words that should bring a smile to the face of the reader.

Without words, this book wouldn't have a chance. I mentioned the features of our language that give me so much material for books of this nature. There are rules of the language, the confusing exceptions, the clichés, the separate languages of groups within our society and finally the new words that come up each year.

The year 2007 had its own word of the year, which you could see in this headline on December 12th:

Merriam-Webster's word of '07': 'w00t'

*Is that with two zeros in the middle, and shouldn't there be slashes through them? As it turns out, the first answer is "yes" and the second you have to decide for yourself. The "word" consists of letters and numbers and is used by gamers, meaning **an exclamation of happiness or triumph**. I don't think Mr. Webster would be thrilled.*

Appropriately enough, I begin with words and expressions that should be tossed into the trash bin, and should never be recycled. The reason has to do with misuse as well as the fact that they're boring and cliched. Here are a few that I especially despise.

hopefully – if you read the meaning of this word in any dictionary, it says, *brimming with hope*.

you know

If I know what you're talking about, why am I listening to you?

no problem – I heard these words more than once when I called technical support for my printer when it was misbehaving

If there wasn't a problem, I wouldn't have called this person in a far off land in the first place.

sooner rather than later

If you want the stuff now, say so; otherwise, you'll get it when I feel like sending it. Maybe you never heard the term, ASAP.

it may or may not be

*There aren't any other possibilities, just like **being with us** or **against us**. All right, that's a bad comparison. Is the speaker getting paid by the number of words he uses?*

our records indicate

From what I have seen from my experience, your records can't be trusted.

to tell you the truth & to be perfectly honest with you

Think about the implications of either of these phrases. Do they mean that in this case, I need not wear my boots?

I took care of it

Somehow the third word seems out of place here. It sounds like that was the last thing that was exercised.

and more

*Don't we have the acronym ETC for that, described in my 2008 book, **wake up – it's time for your sleeping pill?***

All right, so the following aren't normal combinations, but you may have come up with them yourself. They're all done for a few laughs.

Jack Bunny – not as prolific as the original, but still capable of some hair-raising tales

intaxication – a feeling that overcomes people around the middle of April each year

newt gangrene – probably wouldn't have happened if this amphibian of the Salamandridae family hadn't gotten those frozen appendages

zamboni – number one dessert of players in the National Hockey League, probably because it provides a nice, fine finish

walk out basement – part of a house that gets disgusted and leaves, causing the entire house to collapse

American Idle – former Monty Python member who leaves England, moves to the United States and becomes a citizen there

tanjello – I'm not sure what it tastes like, but I know what color it is

intacksicated – though not painful but normal, many carpets still complain

free gift – there is no such thing as a free lunch, and if some company offers you a free gift, you can be sure that you will be bombarded with offers of all kinds by phone, email and the post office; you may even be

forced to buy a years subscription to *Bizarre Times*; on the other hand, you might feel that these two words are a pleonasm because every gift you receive at Christmas or for your birthday, doesn't have to be paid for – the point being that *free gift* on a personal consideration is a pleonasm, but an oxymoron when dealt with on a business level

judicial complex – having to do with someone who despises the courts and does all he can to miss jury duty

Jack Benny and the Jets – comedian who decided on action since the Sharks were getting out of hand

Uncle Reamus – storyteller who never seems to have run out of paper

Al Placibo – not the real actor – think of *Dog Day Afternoon* – but most people react the same way

gingivitis chicken – really delicious but a bit gummy

inTexicated – feeling that overcomes a delusional, beer-chugging cowboy

Jack Benny and the Jets – comedian who predicted an upstart football team would upset a powerhouse in the late 1960s

Castrodamus – bearded prophet who delighted in lighting up a good cigar

Jane Honda – she's still demonstrating against the war, but now comes in a hybrid model

gnu improved – probably a reference in a foreign language since the noun precedes the adjective, referring to an animal that should be healthier

Bubonics – the language spoken during the plague even as people were dying

intuxicated and intoxicated – two feelings felt by prom goers, one expected and the other not recommended

pneumonikas – used by Bill and Ms. Lewinsky a few years ago

anisesthesia – patients waking up afterward sometimes have cravings for licorice

emaul – an electronic correspondence that sends a virus or two and really messes up your PC

Newman and Associates – Cliff Claven and the other postal carriers; I don't believe that Alfred E. is part of this group – he has too much intelligence

mess email – an electronic delivery – usually to a group of people – that those who receive it would rather not receive; also known as spam

Saturday Night Live – new television program that features comedy along with mythology

Newt improved – of course, he introduced the bill

Spatula Clark – Food Network host who sings songs written by Tony Hatch

Mitzi Half-Gaynor – actress who spent time diving before she finally made it big; it certainly paid off to make her a great dancer

Jack Benny and the Jets – comic and violinist who didn't own a Concorde, but always made the gig in plenty of time

inticksicated – people living in Connecticut and Westchester County have been spotted with this deer-carrying, citrus disease

ordinary rendition – version of a song done the most familiar way

extraordinary rendition – same as the above except that Egypt, Morocco and Syria may be involved in the process

I need to include a few *oxymorons*, since they're everywhere. Notice the small word that the last six letters of the word in italics give us.

new and improved – if it's *new*, how can it be *improved*? On the other hand, something that's *improved* isn't *new*, nor can it ever be

pure decadence – I described the key lime pie I delighted in at Uncle Bubba's Oyster House in Savannah on Thursday, January 24, 2008 with these two words

government worker – I apologize to all those dedicated individuals who give their all in local, state or federal government jobs

power nap – if you're asleep, where does the energy come from?

dry cleaning – what do they use to get the stains out, dry ice?
Won't that burn the material?

gentle dentistry – On Saturday, February 23, 2008 on the way to dinner, I saw this label on a business on Main Street in East Aurora.

There is no such thing, even with novocain.

perfectly honest – ponder this one for a while

Pleonasms are everywhere, so I have included a few here.

past experience

I know an individual who has had future experiences, but I try to avoid him as much as possible. I don't believe he's from our planet.

slam dunk

Referring to basketball, these words are a pleonasm. In politics, it shouldn't be used.

digging deeper

Once again, there are more words here than needed. I'm not sure what the story is when the digger gets to the center of the earth and he keeps going.

slimy businessman

He or she doesn't have to own an oil well, either.

bad politician

Their approval rating paints a precise picture.

email problems

My mother doesn't have any of those things, but she doesn't have a PC.

What's in a name?

All the obits written about Saddam Hussein were incomplete. They left out the complete listing of all his surviving sons and daughters. The corrected obituary follows.

He was predeceased by two sons, Uday and Qusay, and is survived by fifteen sons: Sooflay, a restaurateur; Guday, who lives in Australia; Huray, a sports fanatic; Sashay, who is gay; Kuntay and Kintay, twins living in Africa; Sayhay, a baseball player; Ojay, a stalker and murderer; Gulay, a singer and entertainer; Ebay, an Internet entrepreneur; Biliray, a country music star; Ecksray, a radiologist; Puray, a manufacturer of kitchen blenders; Raygay, who lives in Jamaica; Tupay, who is bald. He is survived by seven daughters: Lattay, a coffee-shop owner; Bufay, a big eater; Dushay, owner of a feminine-care products company; Phayray, an actress; Sapheway, a grocery store owner; Ollay, who lives in Mexico; and Gudlay, a prostitute.

There is reportedly another surviving son, Oyvay, but he had been disowned by the family.

I mentioned Gilda Radner in another of my books. Her portrayal of Roseanne Roseannadonna and Emily Litella were hysterical. As far as I know, the following pieces were never on the show:

Emily: What's all this fuss about Gobel warming? I thought he died years ago. If they buried him, being six feet under isn't exactly warm. Maybe he was buried too

close to the center of the earth and that could explain it. On the other hand, if he was cremated, there was a great deal of heat, but by now things should have cooled down.

Jane: You mean global warming, as in the earth is heating up, not Gobel warming.

Emily: Oh, that's very different. Nevermind!

Emily: What's all this fuss about sidewalk sales? If someone bought one – a sidewalk, that is – how would they get it inside their car? They'd have to rent a truck. But wouldn't that wreck the suspension system and wouldn't you get a hernia? Besides, since the sidewalk is used, wouldn't it be crumbling and probably in need of repair?

Jane: You can't buy a sidewalk at those sales. The name refers to a yard sale or flea market.

Emily: Oh, that's very different. Nevermind!

As a way of leading into the next chapter, I close this one with a few acronyms. If you are blessed with a PC that utilizes a well-known word processor, the last should not come as a surprise.

PDF – Putrid, Disgusting Fluff

*For the full impact, you'll have to read about the marshmallow stuff in **wake up – it's time for your sleeping pill**.*

CYA – Create Your Assessments

*You probably thought the first word was **cover** and the last one had only three letters. As you can see, the one you may have had in mind for the last word can be found in the third word.*

WORD – Without Oversight, Research or Debugging

4. Technical difficulties – please sit by

I'm sure you've faced these situations or similar ones having to do with all the advances thrust upon us. I even wrote a book about it, *Press 1 for Pig Latin*. It was published in 2008 and it highlighted many problems. Because of the great possibilities that we should take advantage of, I also pointed out solutions. This chapter covers some of my more frustrating days and will try to get you to laugh.

One of my email providers – one is actually too many – has a screen for deleted messages. If the note is deleted, why is it still visible on my monitor?

My former PC printer was a Canon, but it was shot so I unloaded it.
I was expecting something of a higher caliber.

I never thought it would happen, but I ran out of passwords.
I'll have to borrow one from my neighbor. I hope he didn't run out of them along with the sugar.

On Monday, February 25, 2008, I got an email with the subject:

Your military service earned you great benefits
This is utterly amazing. I can't believe that two years of ROTC would be of such a benefit. I never was drafted or enlisted.

I got an email in the first week of October 2007 that said:

I don't usually like these heartwarming stories. . .
What kind of stories does he or she like? Maybe I should block email from this dude.

On the Saturday of the same week one of my emails was rejected, with this message:

68.178.27.180 does not like recipient

That poor guy (or gal) has an image problem, as he (she) doesn't like himself (herself). After all, I was the sender.

In the spring of 2008, my PC monitor was graced with this message, **Something bad happened in the application.**

I believe it's called Microsoft.

In August 2007, a friend delivered a computer to a student in Kenya whose education I had helped support. *She didn't get a mouse as there was concern that it might terrify the elephants.*

If you go to the control panel on your computer and try to remove a program, you'll see these words: **Please wait while the list is being populated.**

Will this cause problems for the food supply and add even more to the problem of global warming?

Just before checking one of my utility bills online, I got this message from an email: "We have increased the security of our web site by requiring a stronger password."

*I hope **Popeye** and **Superman** won't get rejected when I use either as a password.*

This happened on Saturday, December 22, 2007. Apparently it's my Christmas present from the world of technology – one I can do without. It really started a long time ago when I decided to create some photo DVDs and I bought some Roxio software that I thought would do that. Well, it didn't, and I even downloaded some other software from three different companies. In each case I wasn't

satisfied – maybe that’s why there was a trial period, so at least I didn’t burn any bucks, needlessly. I eventually removed those programs from my PC.

I was talking to my friend Barb that day and she mentioned PowerPoint for doing what I wanted. In the past I haven’t had much luck with that software, but on a whim – while still on the phone with her – I tried to download a free sample of it. I was really starting to get my spirits up, since I figured maybe I finally found the answer, when I had to fill out some information before the download proceeded. I had been through this rigmarole before, but I went ahead anyway. Some people never learn!

I filled in my email address – probably my biggest mistake – and then entered my first name, last name and the rest of the stuff. I pressed the submit key, but some of the fields were incorrectly filled out in my haste. Eventually, I made the changes, but there was another problem – the screen didn’t like my name. I’m quite happy with it, so I replaced “Bob” with “Robert.” Apparently the creator of the software is very formal. That didn’t matter, as that too was rejected, so I had to try again. I had no clue how to get around this, but for no good reason, put in *Bubba* and advanced to the next screen. I thus figured out what part of the country the designer comes from.

I proceeded, but then had to take the survey – the one that ends any chance of actually even beginning to do a download. It seemed to take forever, so I exited the site. It looks like I need another option. A day later, *Bubba* got spammed!

I have no doubt in my mind that I gave this book on brain deficiencies the correct title.

I mentioned my backup fiasco at The Carrier Corporation in *Press 1 for Pig Latin*. I also talked briefly about that Syracuse assignment in *Tick Tock, Don’t Stop*. I had two bosses there, who I shall refer to as Tom and Jerry.

The former was a computer programmer while Jerry was a salesman. Their business involved selling local companies a computer as well as the software, which the programming staff, of which I was a part, had to develop. Jerry would sell his mother if he could make a profit, but Tom also had to entice buyers for their product.

I left the company in 1985 and shortly thereafter, the business folded. One of the problems was that each of the partners took on the role of the other, that is, Tom thought he was a salesman and Jerry felt he was a programming guru. In fact this was not true. Another problem had to do with greed, as Tom and Jerry wanted the business of as many establishments in town as possible – not really a bad strategy, but bordering on greed. Unfortunately, they sold the machine and then just about gave away the software. There were times when Jerry mentioned that the programs that the about-to-be-client needed was on the system at our office. Actually, the programming staff had to scramble to develop the needed system. It got so bad that the software group was considered to be a liability when, in fact, it should have brought in most of the dough.

In high school and college, because of my last name, friends chose to give me the nickname of *Swi*. It could have been worse as they could have called me *Butthead* or *Doofus*. This practice continued in the business world and at this time my coworkers would use that same appellation for me. On one occasion, Jerry and I were at a client's site discussing what they needed. He could have called me Bob but instead chose something that I really didn't expect. It may not have been the right choice in this instance. Without further adon't – I wish I could have advised him not to do it – he referred to me as *Sly*.

I really wanted to throw the family stone at him.

I had the pleasure of two Internet encounters in January 2008, which I have to relate. Don't worry – I wasn't

abducted. Over the course of a week, I sent three emails to the *Vegetarian Times* (VT) – I’m not one of those people, but close – and in each instance, it never got to the intended person. Finally, I called this individual, got a different email address, sent the same email, and it arrived where it was intended. A day later, I noticed that one of those first three emails was in my mailbox, and my email address was posted as the sender and the VT email address listed as the receiver. Not long after that, just before trying to log on and get my email, I saw a message stating I had one email awaiting me. When I got to my inbox, it was empty – perhaps not unlike the brains of the designers of the software.

Where is all this stuff going? I wish the spam would go to that same place. You probably have a good idea why my email provider is called Yahoo!

Many people who own Macs – not Big Macs, but that thing that Apple doesn’t call a PC, but it is a computer and very personal, or so I’ve heard – don’t always get the email I send and vice versa. My monster is a Dell with Microsoft software. Perhaps the problem is that we’re trying to mix apples and oranges.

From my experience, I think it’s more like rotten apples and lemons.

On Friday, January 4, 2008, I was notified through another email account I have, which I don’t check very often, that my First Federal Credit Union Account was suspended.

That’s incredible since I don’t have any such account. Why not – without even telling me – just close it out completely? Do you still think that email is so great?

The craziness continues as I got an email in my bulk folder the next day that implored me to act soon in applying for a MasterCard before Christmas.

Since it was only January, it appears as though I have some time to do this.

I wasn't going to write about this bonehead encounter, as I planned to have it elsewhere. Since it involves technology, there's no reason not to include it here. I will spare the guilty party the embarrassment. I need not worry about litigation since I don't think this organization has the resources to pursue that. I hope you'll excuse me for being vague. If this story helps with people proofreading emails and thinking before sending them, it will have served its purpose. It can also be applied to other encounters.

On the weekend of March 7, we were getting pounded with white stuff from the heavens, and the prediction was for no letup until sometime Sunday. I was supposed to attend an event on Saturday, but when I gazed out the window that day, I saw no cars on my street. I decided that intelligent people stayed inside and hoped for the best on Sunday, so that's exactly what I did.

I got an email that was sent on March 7th announcing a call for people to assist on March 4th and March 6th – and that wasn't for the following year, I don't believe. The correspondence also mentioned that the same event I was going to be a part of was still on, no matter what. My thoughts could only conclude that there probably would have been fewer people to watch the parade than those in it, if you know what I mean.

Sad to say, I wouldn't have received this note had I not been a member of this same organization. Maybe I should think of leaving it.

I figured out why the word “burn” is used when you create CDs on your PC. By the time you get the result you desire, thanks to technology, you will be “burned out.”

Staying with that same concept of computers and burning, we somehow have a certain mindset because of the former. I was folding laundry one day and thought that the t-shirt was inside out, so I reversed it. I soon realized it was fine as is, and just had to be folded. I was looking for an “undo” button.

For all you computer illiterates, you may need to ask someone for an explanation. Calling the help desk probably isn't a good idea!

On May 22, 2007, I said goodbye to a dial-up Internet connection and had Road Runner installed.

I thought about street runner, but my mom probably wouldn't have been happy.

Author's note: You may be wondering why you weren't told to stand by in the title of the chapter. You know how long it takes to solve technical problems. In addition, perhaps I should have told you to get a sandwich.

5. Signs and other tax deductions

If you've read *for seeing eye dogs only*, you are aware of the fact that I find a great deal of humor as well as missing intelligence in signs of all sorts. Obviously, you might need to think about them for a while, but many are quite funny. Temporary brain deficiencies are everywhere, and they are not limited to the richest of the citizens or the poorest. Brain bypasses are not monopolized by any region of the United States or by any nation for that matter. However, I find that some of my greatest suppliers are found in government jobs, specifically the United States Post Office and the Internal Revenue Service.

This chapter is dedicated to that last group of government individuals since I have been audited a few times and have found them to be considerate, understanding, trustworthy and kind. Perhaps at one time they were members of the Boy or Girl Scouts. Maybe I should have invited these folks over to my home for dinner, but I seem to have lost their phone numbers. Nonetheless, this chapter will be documentation in the event of any future audit, since as a self-employed person, I get to write off expenses that others can't.

My trip in June 2007 was only for a weekend to Binghamton, but I saw a few things that made me laugh. I saw this bumper sticker on the back of a car – it wouldn't fit on the back of a bicycle:

Bush Knew

I'm still trying to figure out what.

There is an entire section later on those stickers.

A car passed me with the vanity plate, **Burns**. A few cars later another passed me with the plate of **Allen**. *Apparently the lead car wanted to lose the other and succeeded. You youngsters have to ask your parents to explain this one.*

A road that passes over the New York State Thruway a few miles east of Buffalo has a sign, **Bank St. Road**. Which is it, a street or a road? *Perhaps the **St.** represents **Saint** not **Street**, but I didn't think lending institutions had that moniker. After some consideration, it appears that these corporations do: It's **St. Principia**.*

In January 2008, I made a trip to Savannah and Jacksonville. Here are a few things I caught sight of and some observations.

I mentioned this sign in the state of Pennsylvania before, but it's worth repeating for another reason:

Buckle up next million miles

If I planned to go that far, it would be better to get into a rocket. Even so, that would be my last choice of transportation.

In the same state you can find these words of advice:

Slow down – save a life

Wouldn't not heeding this warning result in the eventual elimination of all the bad drivers?

I really question if some of these signs are necessary, such as:

Keep alert

Does that mean that I won't be able to take a power nap while I'm driving?

I saw this sign in Florida, but that's not the only state where you can find it:

Drive safely

Just before the sign I noticed an individual who crossed over two lanes of traffic right in front of a large truck in order to exit. There was no collision, but that sign was specifically for that driver.

A rather large trailer passed me carrying a vehicle inside, maybe two. The sign on the back of the vehicle said:

Rethink joyride

I sincerely hope that the person who takes this advice to heart on his joyous adventure doesn't mess up other travelers' journeys.

There was another trailer hauling a small vehicle that had a label on the back stating:

Boozer express

If I ride this contraption, I want to be sure to drive.

While in both Georgia and Florida, I saw some concrete barriers along the highway with the words:

No shoulder

From seeing some of the driving habits of those on the road, maybe this was necessary. You could probably drive through this heavy cement creation, but you wouldn't have a shoulder – to cry on and otherwise. And you would be weeping.

Leaving Buffalo found the roads in New York clear and dry, but Pennsylvania had a bit of snow. It was enough to slow everyone down – well, most people. I had to put up with this for over an hour and just about the time when the highway got better, I saw the sign:

Caution: winter conditions

No kidding.

Most states have reduced speed limits for construction zones, which seem to be everywhere you drive. Pennsylvania has this sign:

Lights on: construction zone – it’s the law

I didn’t turn mine on despite the warning. I saw people along the side of the road, but they weren’t working.

Another common bit of advice that you see in most states is:

Buckle up – it’s the law

What if you still wanted to have the feeling of motion even after the car stopped due to an accident?

I can’t recall which state had this sign, but I believe it was either Florida or Georgia:

End enhanced penalty zone

Did I just pass Guantanamo?

I saw a truck advertising its welding business with the sign:

We make it happen

This seems a bit lackluster to me. Wouldn’t the following be more appropriate?

We make the connection

At some point of the trip, I heard this story of a prank that went wrong. I had to include it because it relates to a temporary brain deficiency. Someone ordered three pizzas from Pizza Hut but gave an address other than his own. He then proceeded to that location and mugged the delivery agent, thus avoiding paying for them. He was apprehended a short time later.

It may have been a better idea not to phone from his residence.

While at the hotel, I unfortunately couldn't miss an ad that stated: **Eat all you want and still lose weight.**
If this works – I really have my doubts – the laws of energy and gravity are in serious trouble.

On the other hand, I believe it may be possible to be in two places at one time. I say this because heading to Savannah I was on I-79 going south and on I-81 going north simultaneously. I was also doing the reverse thing returning home.
Maybe this bingeing and losing thing is possible.

This was the longest journey I made with my Prius. There was information that the hybrid would see a decrease in gas mileage during the winter. I figured this bit of advice really applied to the weather rather than the season so I thought that driving into the 60 and 70 degree temperatures would bring the numbers up a bit – thus fooling my Toyota.
I guess it was a good thought, but only that. As far as the gauges, screens – screams may be a better word – and the bells and whistles on my car, I can assure you that whoever worked on them won't be designing any other technology for me.

On that same journey, I saw this bumper sticker:

<p>Eat rice – potatoes make your butt big</p>
--

Just before arriving home from this wonderful trip, I heard that an individual who proposed a bill in Congress actually failed to vote for it.
I only report the news and did mention an approval rating earlier!

In late February of 2007, I took a trip down south to escape the cold and snow in Buffalo. It was really a business

trip for quite a few reasons. First, I visited an author friend, John and his wife Jeanne in Mississippi for advice on getting published through royalty companies and the former was quite helpful in the hours that we spent together. Because of the encounter, I canned my agent since I felt that working with her was like working with Congress. I don't think I need worry about litigation since I didn't mention any specific name in this case.

The second reason for deductibility of much of the trip had to do with promotions, as I left information as well as each of my books at the *Atlantis Gift Shop* in St. Augustine, with the hope that they will soon carry at least one of them. I have yet to hear from them even after writing, so perhaps they were swept up by the ocean.

I also stopped in to meet one of the owners of Gift World in Savannah, Georgia as well as participate in a book signing there. Unfortunately the only people in the store at the time were affiliated with it, as the tourists had yet to arrive in full force. However, I was supposed to be returning in May to carry out the same mission. You can read the details of my Savannah adventure in *I Don't Want to be a Pirate*, published in early 2008.

During that wonderful time away from the snow of the north, I also handed out a few books in order to have the recipients spread the word about them. This idea of marketing can also be achieved by my bumper stickers, which advertise my web site and my latest book. Lastly, as should be obvious, when I get into my car or even leave my home for that matter, I am always on the lookout for ideas, funny signs and inspiration, which I always seem to find. The rest of the chapter chronicles some of my thoughts and encounters during those eleven days after I left New York and returned there after driving through a dozen states.

In Pennsylvania I saw a sign for O'Brien Street.
What about the one for Murphy?

In that same state, I saw a sign advertising fireworks, knives and swords.

Does the Department of Defense know about this place?

Before leaving for warmer weather, I got some maps from Microsoft Streets and Maps. They were right most of the time, but not always.

If I got some strip maps from MapQuest, would they have listed the places for adult entertainment?

As I drove through Ohio, I passed the Cuyahoga River and I am happy to report that it wasn't on fire.

You'll have to find another place to roast your marshmallows.

Later on, in a state which is much further south but I forget which one, I noticed fires burning on the other side of the road – four of them all in a row – and they were blazing.

Apparently the people who started them aren't aware of the pollution that these conflagrations are causing as well as the fact that there were few trees close by that could easily go up in flames.

One of the states – I'm not sure which – had the sign, **BOTH SHOULDER CLOSED.**

*Shouldn't that be **BOAT SHOULDER CLOSED** or maybe **BAT SHOULDER CLOSED**?*

I saw one of those trucks for **Yellow Trucking**, but it was orange.

Maybe it's just me as they say most men are color blind.

I crossed over into Kentucky and after about thirty miles, I saw the sign, **Kentucky Speedway – 14 Miles.**

The way people were passing me, I thought I entered it quite some time before.

On any trip down south you are bound to see the sign for **Adult toys and videos**.

Anyone who enters the store and makes a purchase has a long way to go before becoming an adult.

In the same trashy vein, I witnessed a sign, **Erotic dancers**.

*Obviously, these individuals didn't classify as **exotic**!*

There was another sign for a store whose name I won't mention. It was: **We bare all – adult toy's**.

When the flesh is the top priority, the mind or brain is not a concern.

I also saw an eating establishment for something that seems to be coming back, **Comfort food**.

These two words seem to me to be a pleonasm since if the latter won't satisfy you and make you feel better, you should visit another restaurant.

Staying with food, there was a sign, **Steaks – killer ribs**.

With mad cow disease and concerns about meat safety these days, this sign may not be that good an idea.

There was also another pleonasm in the sign I saw, **Buffet – all you can eat**.

I actually went to a restaurant in Massachusetts in the 1980s for a buffet where they ran out of food. They should have used the same sign but left off the last four words.

After my friend Dan and I went to the Aquarium in Atlanta, we headed out for some food at a seafood place.

I was just kidding. I added that because Dan suggested that I do so.

Some state had the sign, **Possible water on road**.
Was it virtual H₂O? I wonder if it's like dry ice. It might not have helped douse those fires I described earlier.

In Florida, I saw a sign for **Uncle Leo College**.
All right, it was St. Leo College, but it's hard to get Seinfeld out of my mind, even on vacation.

The word **Unforgettable** was on another advertisement in the south.
I can't recall what they were advertising.

There was a sign for **Wateree Lake** in South Carolina.
What did you expect it to be? What do you think these bodies of water consist of? All right, if it were in New York or Pennsylvania, it wouldn't be watery all the time.

I kept hearing these advertisements on the radio for incurred debt. It went something like, "Are you tired of getting all those calls from the credit card companies to pay off at least your minimum balance. Call us at 1 (800) GET-HELP and we can solve your problem."
Why not an offer to climb walls of ice, skydiving or bungee jumping – make sure the chord is too long. Any of these options could solve your problem – permanently. You won't be hearing the phone ring anymore.

I saw a few instances of people cleaning up refuse on the highway. These individuals were obviously from penal institutions, so it wasn't necessary to see on their uniforms the word, **inmate** – but it was there.
*A truck passed me with the name, **Halliburton**, on the side, but it didn't say on the bumper, **future inmate**.*

The name of a business not far from where my mother lives is **Poplar Pizza**.
I'll get my pizza elsewhere as I don't want any made from any softwood trees.

There's a handicapped parking space not far from the apartment of my mom.

Unfortunately it's not in front of the unit – that's where it should be - but on the side of the parking lot away from the building.

In **for seeing eye dogs only**, I mentioned a sign in Corfu, New York which talked about “virtual clearance.” I believe that should have been, “virtuous clearance.”
Of course, only good drivers could go under.

The February 27, 2007 edition of USA Today had the headline, **Forever stamp may insure against hikes**. Soon there will be a postal increase, with the new rate being 41 cents. The new stamp has the name “liberty stamp.” The good news is that consumers can take action against the postage hike, since this new stamp can be used for the initial increase as well as any raise of rates in the future. The government says, “We're trying to print enough to meet and exceed demand.” This is a great opportunity for the customer but there is bad news, too. The “liberty stamp” will be sold in limited quantities!

The state of Pennsylvania had the sign along the road in a few places, **Keep PA beautiful**.
It didn't add, send your garbage to Yucca flats – they'd prefer it to what is being sent.

They also had the obvious signs, **Do not tailgate** and **Allow a safe distance between vehicles**. Are these really necessary? Still, I have always felt that truckers are the best

drivers on the road, but some of them need a few lessons. One tailgated me when he could so easily have pulled into another lane to pass.

*The sign on his truck was **Robert Transportation**, which offended me more since that happens to be my name.*

In Sharon, PA, you can find the **largest shoe store in the world**, or at least that was what one sign said.

I wonder if Imelda was aware of this place.

On my way to meet my mom, sister and niece for lunch on Presidents' Day in 2007, I noticed a traffic light on Harlem Road that was both red and green at the same time.

I thought that was what the yellow light was for.

I saw a sign at the Galleria mall in Buffalo for **Ice cream of the future**.

I wanted it at that moment and thought about asking the woman behind the counter when it would be ready. Tomorrow may be too soon.

I saw an ad in the Sunday paper of a local supermarket for **Good Wives Appetizer**.

I'm not going to comment on this one.

During the season of Easter, the supermarkets push various kinds of sweets. While on line checking out at one of the local stores in Buffalo, I saw the sign, **just born peeps**.

I wonder whom the father is and if the mother had a normal delivery.

The great state of Pennsylvania has this sign, **Jim Thorpe: Use exit 74**.

From my experience in the state, I didn't think they allowed people that old on the highway.

There's another sign in the Keystone state advertising an **Adult outlet**.

Is that what people use to plug in their PC to download porn?

I'm sure you have seen these two words on the back end of a P. T. Cruiser, "**Limited edition**."

Yeah, they only produced three million of them!

Speaking of cars, you can find some great bumper stickers if you keep your eyes open. Here are a few.

If you're born again, do you
have two belly buttons?

Born OK
the first time

Religion is what keeps the
poor from murdering the rich

Come the rapture, we'll have
the earth to ourselves

Come the rapture,
can I have your car?

I bet Jesus would have
used His turn signals

Jesus is coming
look busy

I didn't think He was in management. I assumed that was the Father's job. I believe the Holy Spirit has something to do with the union.

Religions are just cults
with more members

God wants spiritual fruits
not religious nuts

What about flakes?

Even people who believe everything is
predestined look before they cross the street

A rind is a terrible thing
to waste – Compost

People are more violently opposed to fur
than leather because it's easier to harass
rich women than motorcycle gangs

We're in big trouble when our
bombs are smarter than our president

*By the time you read this, it should be obsolete – at least
that's what I hope for.*

Buckle Up: it makes it harder for the
aliens to suck you out of your car

I'm diagonally parked
in a parallel universe

If conservatives are so patriotic, why do
they keep sending our jobs overseas?

Liberals keep treating dogs like people
while Conservatives treat people like dogs

Maybe I should change my name to Spot.

Politicians and diapers need to be
changed often for the same reasons

The media are only as liberal as the conservative businesses that own them

If evolution is outlawed
only outlaws will evolve

People never lie so much as after fishing,
during a war and before an election

Artificial intelligence is no
match for natural stupidity

It certainly gives me plenty of material.

Where are we going? And
why am I in this handbasket?

It's hard to convince people that
you're killing them for their own good

Stop mad
cowboy disease

Congress gave huge tax breaks to the rich and all
I got was this lousy bumpersticker

If ignorance is bliss, why
aren't more people happy?

Stop talking while
I'm interrupting

Witches parking –
all others will be toad

Unmarked police car

Hang up and drive

I'm marching to a
different accordion

Don't believe
everything you think

It's clear that our technology
has surpassed our humanity

Oh, no – not another
learning experience

It's a scientific fact:
scum always rise to the top

You don't even have to make soup to see it.

If you can't operate your turn
signals, what makes you think
you can operate the rest of the car?

*It's really a challenge when one hand is applying make-up
and the other is holding the cell phone. You need to train the
free foot.*

Jesus called; He wants
His religion back

*Unfortunately, the message got lost. Email wouldn't have
been any better.*

Our national health plan:
don't get sick

*It's ironic that this thought is serious while the health care
system doesn't provide for preventive care.*

Stop repeat offenders:
don't re-elect them

If we don't change directions,
we'll wind up where we're going

Isn't it strange that in the Age of
Information the truth is so hard to find?

Don't believe anything
until it is officially denied

I think, therefore I don't
listen to Rush Limbaugh

That type of radio is just that – talk and no action.

Evolution is just a theory
– kind of like gravity!

January 20, 2009:
The end of an error

If we don't protect freedom of speech, how
will we know who the iceholes are?

I changed this one slightly to protect little children.

America needs an oil change

Was Columbus a terrorist
or an illegal alien?

Didn't someone not that long ago give us only two choices?

Staying with that same thought, you may not find this one on the back of a car, but I like it anyway.

The opposite of good
is not evil, but apathy

The next dozen or so are not bumper stickers either, but will be before long.

Minimum wage for politicians

Ask me about the conspiracy

Until lions write books, history
will always glorify the hunter

Jesus never rode an elephant

My boxer is smarter
than your honor student

The rapture is not
an exit strategy

Badges? We don't need
no stinkin' badges

Why does your vision of
freedom look like a police state?

Why are so many pro-lifers
for the death penalty?

It's as bad as you think and
they're out to get you

We've got to get
back to the garden

A woman's place is in the
House, Senate and Oval Office

Concerned about CO₂?
You're getting warmer.

Justice
not just US

Had enough yet?

I believe this next one is a bumper sticker.

I used up all my sick days,
so I called in dead

Chances are this person's boss said, "I hope you feel better tomorrow. Take an extra day if you need it."

Having turned 65 in September 2007, it appears as though these bumper stickers may be for me.

I asked my wife if old men wear
boxers or briefs. She said Depends.

The only trouble with retirement
. . . you never get a dam day off.

Is this in reference to Hoover or Boulder?

Goodbye tension.
Hello pension.

That *snap crackle pop* in the morning
ain't my freaking *Rice Krispies*.

You know you're getting old when you throw a
party and the neighbors don't even realize it.

I always invite my neighbors.

Sometimes I wake up Grumpy
. . . and some days I let him sleep.

What about Dopey?

Senior Campbell's – New
large type alphabet soup

I have to be able to spell now, too?

The secret of staying young is to live
honestly, eat slowly and lie about our age.

And hang out with really old people.

I must be getting older – all the names
in my phone book end with M. D.

At least the person saying this isn't DOA.

Be nice to your children. They
will choose your nursing home.

One good thing about Alzheimers:
you get to meet new people every day.

I'm not sure if this was included before.

Support Bingo – keep
grandma off the streets.

When did my wild oats
turn to fruit and bran?

You're the one who wanted the fiber.

Insufficient memory
at this time

Upgrading your PC probably won't help.

One good thing about Alzheimers:
you can hide your own Easter eggs.

Once you found them, I wouldn't advise eating them.

Never do anything you wouldn't
want to explain to the paramedics.

In *for seeing eye dogs only*, I asked the question, “Why is material put on ships called *cargo* while stuff that gets placed on highway vehicles are called *shipments*?”
I think I found the answer: The car just won't go and the ship is meant for cruises.

6. Look to the children

I'm sure you've been at musical performances that began quite late. I was at a Gregg Allman concert in Syracuse in the mid 1980s that was scheduled to start at 10:30, but he didn't appear on stage until 11:30. The show was good, but it was on a weeknight. I probably should have arranged in advance to have the next day off from work.

On May 15, 1971, my friends and I were fortunate to be at the Auditorium Theatre in Rochester, New York for a midnight Chuck Mangione happening, *Together*. It featured the renowned musician with his brother Gap, Bat McGrath, Don Potter, Esther Satterfield and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. One of the numbers we heard that night was *Look to the Children*, a beautiful duet with Esther and Don that was enhanced by a great solo by trumpeter, Al Porcino. Part of the lyrics of the song was, "Look to the children – they know more than we."

In each of my two previous books on temporary brain abandonments, I have an entire chapter on "Young intelligence," since our youth come up with some gems. They certainly bring a great deal of laughter to all of us and Art Linkletter confirmed that when he used the phrase, "Kids say the darndest things!" Of course, they are to be excused because they are learning. Nonetheless, if you compare what they say to what comes forth from the mouth of politicians and businessmen, you have to agree, the former *know more*.

Three Little Pigs

This story proves just how fascinating the mind of a six-year old is. They think so logically. A teacher was reading the story of the Three Little Pigs to her class. She came to the part of the story where the first pig was trying to gather the building materials for his home. The pig went up to the man with the wheelbarrow full of straw and said:

“Pardon me sir, but may I have some of that straw to build my house?”

The teacher paused, then asked the class, “And what do you think the man said?”

One little boy raised his hand and said very matter-of-factly, “I think the man would have said, ‘Well, I’ll be damned - a talking pig!’”

The teacher had to leave the room.

Little Davie watched, fascinated, as his mother smoothed cold cream on her face. “Why do you do that, mommy?” he asked.

“To make myself beautiful,” said his mother, who then began removing the cream with a tissue.

“What’s the matter?” asked Little Davie. “Giving up?”

A new teacher was trying to make use of her psychology courses. She started her class by saying, “Everyone who thinks they’re stupid, stand up.”

After a few seconds, Little Davie stood up. The teacher said, “Do you think you’re stupid, Little Davie?”

“No, ma’am, but I hate to see you standing there all by yourself!”

I hope he brought an apple for the teacher – without a worm inside.

The math teacher saw that little Davie wasn’t paying attention in class. She called on him and said, “Davie! What are 2 and 4 and 28 and 44?”

Little Davie quickly replied, “NBC, CBS, HBO and the Cartoon Network!”

Perhaps that applies to your cable, but not mine.

Little Davie’s kindergarten class was on a field trip to their local police station where they saw pictures tacked to a

bulletin board of the ten most wanted criminals. One of the youngsters pointed to a picture and asked if it really was the photo of a wanted person.

“Yes,” said the policeman. “The detectives want very badly to capture him.”

Little Davie asked, “Why didn’t you keep him when you took his picture?”

Little Davie attended a horse auction with his father. He watched as his father moved from horse to horse, running his hands up and down the horse’s legs, rump, and chest. After a few minutes, Davie asked, “Dad, why are you doing that?”

His father replied, “Because when I’m buying horses, I have to make sure that they are healthy and in good shape before I buy.”

Davie, looking worried, said, “Dad, I think the UPS guy wants to buy Mom.”

Reese: “Our Father, Who does art in heaven, Harold is His name. Amen.”

This interpretation probably came after Reese sang, “Hark, the Harold Angels Sing.”

A little boy was overheard praying: “Lord, if you can’t make me a better boy, don’t worry about it. I’m having a real good time like I am.”

After the christening of his baby brother in church, Jason sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times what was wrong. Finally, the boy replied, “That preacher said he wanted us brought up in a Christian home, and I wanted to stay with you guys.”
He must have heard about the neo-Conservatives.

One particular four-year-old prayed, “And forgive us our trash baskets as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets.”

I hope they plan to recycle.

A Sunday school teacher asked her children as they were on the way to church service, “And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?”

One bright little girl replied, “Because people are sleeping.”

Let us pray that these snoring individuals don't include the ushers.

A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin 5, and Ryan 3. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. “If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, ‘Let my brother have the first pancake, I can wait.’”

Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, “Ryan, you be Jesus!”

But I can't walk on water!

A father was at the beach with his children when his four-year-old son ran up to him, grabbed his hand, and led him to the shore where a seagull lay dead in the sand.

“Daddy, what happened to him?” the son asked.

“He died and went to Heaven,” the Dad replied.

The boy thought a moment and then said, “Did God throw him back down?”

The following comes from the minds of children regarding the explanation of God.

One of God's main jobs is making people. He makes them to replace the ones that die, so there will be enough people to take care of things on earth. He doesn't

make grownups, just babies I think because they are smaller and easier to make. That way he doesn't have to take up his valuable time teaching them to talk and walk. He can just leave that to mothers and fathers.

God's second most important job is listening to prayers. An awful lot of this goes on, since some people, like preachers and things, pray at times besides bedtime. God doesn't have time to listen to the radio or TV because of this. Because he hears everything, there must be a terrible lot of noise in his ears, unless he has thought of a way to turn it off.

God sees everything and hears everything and is everywhere, which keeps Him pretty busy. So you shouldn't go wasting his time by going over your mom and dad's head asking for something they said you couldn't have.

Atheists are people who don't believe in God. I don't think there are any in Chula Vista. At least there aren't any who come to our church.

Jesus is God's Son. He used to do all the hard work, like walking on water and performing miracles and trying to teach the people who didn't want to learn about God. They finally got tired of him preaching to them and they crucified him. But he was good and kind, like his father, and he told his father that they didn't know what they were doing and to forgive them and God said O.K.

His dad (God) appreciated everything that he had done and all his hard work on earth so he told him he didn't have to go out on the road anymore. He could stay in heaven. So he did. And now he helps his dad out by listening to prayers and seeing things which are important for God to take care of and which ones he can take care of himself

without having to bother God. Like a secretary, only more important.

You can pray anytime you want and they are sure to help you because they got it worked out so one of them is on duty all the time.

You should always go to church on Sunday because it makes God happy, and if there's anybody you want to make happy, it's God!

Don't skip church to do something you think will be more fun like going to the beach. This is wrong. And besides the sun doesn't come out at the beach until noon anyway.

If you don't believe in God, besides being an atheist, you will be very lonely, because your parents can't go everywhere with you, like to camp, but God can. It is good to know He's around you when you're scared, in the dark or when you can't swim and you get thrown into real deep water by big kids.

These are some letters that Ann Landers printed concerning interpretations about words in the Lord's Prayer and a few other misconceptions.

When my twin daughters were young, I taught them to say this prayer before going to bed. As I listened outside their door, I could hear them say, "Give us this steak and daily bread, and forgive us our mattresses."

I'm not sure of the origin of this letter, but it's probably from Philadelphia, although they forgot about the cheese.

From San Francisco comes this: When I was a child, I learned this prayer as "Our Father, who are in

Heaven, Howard be thy name.” I always thought that was God’s real name.

*It’s George, not Howard. Apparently this person never saw the movie, **Oh, God.***

A writer from Groton, Massachusetts sends this:
My mother spent her early childhood saying, “Hail Mary, full of grapes.”

This must have been after her son turned the water into wine.

This comes from Missoula, Montana. My son, who is in nursery school, said, “Our Father, who art in Heaven, how didja know my name?”

He knows if you’ve been bad or good, so what did you expect? Oh, no, that’s another guy.

A resident of Uniontown, Ohio sent: I remember thinking this prayer was “Give us this day our jelly bread.”

That’s a great deal healthier than butter or margarine.

Someone from Covina, California offers this thought. I recall reading something years ago about the Pledge of Allegiance. Some child thought it began, “I led the pigeons to the flag.”

These pigeons are obviously with the president.

Cleveland, Ohio was the source of this feeling. When I was little, I often wondered who Richard Stands was. You know: “I pledge allegiance to the flag and to the republic for Richard Stands.”

I think the confusion resulted because Richard actually stands during this ritual.

A citizen of another city that I resided in for a short time – Tampa, Florida – sent this: When my husband was six years old, he thought a certain prayer was, “He suffered

under a bunch of violets.” Of course, the real words were “under Pontius Pilate,” but at that age, he didn’t know better. To this day, we still *snicker* in church whenever that prayer is read.

Personally, I’d rather have a Baby Ruth, but not in church.

My home state of New York sent this one from Schenectady: I once knew a child whose favorite Sunday school song was, “Gladly, the Cross-Eyed Bear.”

I never got that close to notice.

When I was a little girl, we sang a song in Sunday school about Noah. Part of the chorus was, “And the rains came down, and the floods came up.” We lived next door to a couple of charming little girls who always sang this song while playing in their garden. Their words were, “And the rains came down, and the spuds came up.” – Lake Forest Park, Washington

I would have thought someone from Idaho would have sent this. Oh well, it’s only one state over.

Someone from Oak Harbor, Washington sent this: When my older brother was very young, he always walked up to the church altar with my mother when she took communion. On one occasion, he tugged at her arm and asked, “What does the priest say when he gives you the bread?”

Mom whispered something in his ear. Imagine his shock many years later when he learned that the priest doesn’t say, “Be quiet until you get to your seat.”

So that was the translation from the Latin.

When I was younger, I believed the line was, “Lead a snot into temptation.” I thought I was praying for my little sister to get into trouble. – Grand Junction, Colorado

I think this was only uttered during flu season.

I close the chapter with a contribution of my classmate Tom Gworek via email.

The value of a Catholic education and a #2 pencil contributes to this tale. You don't even have to be Catholic to appreciate this one.

Little Mary Margaret was not the best student in Catholic School. Usually she slept through the class. One day, her teacher – a nun, as you might expect – called on her while she was sleeping.

“Tell me Mary Margaret, who created the universe?”

When Mary Margaret didn't stir, little Johnny, who was her friend sitting behind her, took his pencil and jabbed her in the rear.

“God Almighty!” shouted Mary Margaret.

The nun said, “Very good,” and continued teaching her class.

A little later the nun asked Mary Margaret, “Who is Our Lord and Savior?”

But Mary didn't stir from her slumber. Once again, Johnny came to her rescue and stuck Mary Margaret in the butt.

“Jesus Christ!” shouted Mary Margaret.

The nun once again said, “Very good,” and Mary Margaret fell back asleep.

The nun asked her a third question, “What did Eve say to Adam after she had her twenty-third child?”

Again, Johnny came to the rescue. This time Mary Margaret jumped up and shouted, “If you stick that damn thing in me one more time, I'll break it in half!”

The nun fainted!

I can't top that!

7. Useless facts

I believe the majority of what follows was emailed to me. In general, these so-called facts – I plan to write a book soon about just that issue, truth – aren't that funny but you might learn something. That assumes that they're nothing more than el toro crappo. As you can guess, they need spicing up, so I added a few thoughts.

The real reason ostriches stick their heads in the sand is to search for water.

Unfortunately there are a lot of people who aren't much different in appearance but they aren't searching for any liquid.

The only two animals that can see behind themselves without turning their heads are the rabbit and the parrot.

What about the orangutan with the mirror?

In most television commercials advertising milk, a mixture of white paint and a little thinner is used in place of the milk.

At least the drinker need not worry about the fat in the drink, but I wouldn't do the commercial.

The first Harley Davidson motorcycle built in 1903 used a tomato can for a carburetor.

You won't believe what was used for an exhaust pipe.

American car horns beep in the tone of F.

That's the first letter of a word that represents a hand signal used by road ragers.

You burn more calories sleeping than you do watching television.

Does this imply that dead people burn more calories than anyone watching the tube?

Donkeys kill more people annually than plane crashes.
I'm not getting on that donkey.

One in every four Americans has appeared on television.
I hate to say what most of them have made of themselves.

A Boeing 747's wingspan is longer than the Wright brother's first flight.

This sounds like a comparison of apples and oranges – whoever came up with this should be congratulated for making it into this book. That's nothing to be proud of.

Venus is the only planet that rotates clockwise.
No wonder I keep losing my balance.

The 57 on the Heinz ketchup bottle represents the number of varieties of pickles the company once had.

That may also be the IQ of those who compiled some of these useless facts.

The plastic things on the end of shoelaces are called aglets.
Uglets is the name for some of the vehicles on the highway today.

The first owner of the Marlboro Company died of lung cancer.

Who said there's no justice in the world?

Barbie's full name is Barbara Millicent Roberts.
I'm sure you really care.

Reno, Nevada is west of Los Angeles, California.
It won't be after the Big One!

Grabatology is the collecting of ties.
You can have mine – send me your address.

Adolf Hitler's mother seriously considered having an abortion but was talked out of it by her doctor.

What a difference one decision can make.

The shortest poem in the world is, "Fleas."

I'm not into poetry – now you know why – although I have been called a poet.

Conception occurs more often in December than any other month.

I can vouch for that.

In 1982, Englishman William Hall committed suicide by drilling holes into his head with a power drill – it took eight holes.

That would be nowhere near enough to kill a lawyer.

There is no single word given to describe the back of the knee.

I'll come up with one before I finish this book.

The very first bomb dropped by the Allies on Berlin in World War II killed the only elephant in the Berlin zoo.

Until recently, that was the largest case of collateral damage.

On average, one hundred people choke to death on ball-point pens every year.

Thank God, I'm writing this on my PC.

In ten minutes, a hurricane releases more energy than all the world's nuclear weapons combined.

I still prefer the hurricane, as long as I'm not nearby.

Elephants can't jump. Every other mammal can.

Does someone plan on drafting the former for the NBA?

Five Jell-O flavors that flopped: celery, coffee, cola, apple, and chocolate.

What about cappuccino?

There are coffee-flavored PEZ.

What about donkey doo-doo?

Studies show that if a cat falls off the seventh floor of a building it has about thirty percent less chance of surviving than a cat that falls off the twentieth floor. It supposedly takes about eight floors for the cat to realize what is occurring, relax and correct itself.

The truth is he has longer to get his parachute open.

The Atlantic Ocean is saltier than the Pacific Ocean.

That explains why my cholesterol is so high.

In medieval England, beer was often served with breakfast.

If you tasted their food in general, you'd realize why.

The right lung takes in more air than the left.

I think this has something to do with Democrats and Republicans.

At ninety degrees below zero Fahrenheit, your breath will freeze in midair and fall to the ground.

If you're outside at that temperature, you deserve it.

Research indicates that mosquitoes are attracted to people who have recently eaten bananas, but only female mosquitoes bite.

What will bite me if I eat plantains?

Seven percent of Americans will eat McDonalds today.

I don't call that eating.

There are more stars in the universe than grains of sand on all the beaches in the world.

This counting thing sounds like a job my former boss would have given me.

Every day more money is printed for monopoly than for the US Treasury.

It's worth more, too.

Polar bears are left-handed.

However, most of them bat right-handed.

The world's youngest parents were eight and nine and lived in China.

They were grandparents even as teenagers.

The youngest pope was eleven years old.

He married the Chinese couple above. No one else would.

Pilgrims ate popcorn at the first Thanksgiving.

Where did they find the microwave?

Scientists say the average person eats about two pounds of bugs a year. That's mostly because insects accidentally get ground up in foods like peanut butter, strawberry jelly, and spaghetti sauce. They won't hurt you since they're actually full of protein.

There aren't any recipes for barbecued bug in my cookbook.

If an insect flies in your ear, shine a light in your ear, chances are it will crawl or fly back out.

I rely on the wax to finish him.

According to Genesis 1:20-22, the chicken came before the egg.

He obviously never came out of his shell.

While performing her duties as queen, Cleopatra sometimes wore a fake beard.

Apparently, there were other times when it wasn't fake.

It takes three thousand cows to supply the NFL with enough leather for a year's supply of footballs.

They're still called pigskins – beam me up, Scotty.

Thirty-five percent of the people who use personal ads for dating are already married.

That might turn into a problem.

The three most valuable brand names on earth: Marlboro, Coca-Cola, and Budweiser, in that order.

Who said legal drugs couldn't be profitable.

Pound for pound, hamburgers can cost more than a new car.

I don't plan to eat a three thousand pound hamburger.

Ten percent of the Russian government's income comes from the sale of vodka.

Is that all?

The only fifteen letter word that can be spelled without repeating a letter is *uncopyrightable*.

Ahhh, c'mon. Get the other eleven letters in there somehow, and then you have something.

Only one person in two billion will live to be 116 or older.

It'll probably be a boomer.

In Cleveland, Ohio, it's illegal to catch mice without a hunting license.

If I live there and use a mousetrap, I'm not telling the authorities.

The reason firehouses have circular stairways is from the days of yore when the engines were pulled by horses. The horses were stabled on the ground floor and figured out how to walk up straight staircases.

This also kept them from the beer.

Clans of long ago that wanted to get rid of their unwanted people without killing them used to burn their houses down – hence the expression “to get fired.”

Didn't that kill them?

The longest recorded flight of a chicken is thirteen seconds.

Once again, people need to get some different hobbies.

The Pentagon, in Arlington, Virginia, has twice as many bathrooms as is necessary.

Of course – that because of all the “el toro crappo!”

Nutmeg is extremely poisonous if injected intravenously.

I can inject a turkey with it and not only have some flavor, I won't have to kill the animal.

Every Swiss citizen is required by law to have a bomb shelter or access to a bomb shelter.

Is that because of the bad jokes?

The fingerprints of koala bears are virtually indistinguishable from those of humans, so much so that they could be confused at a crime scene.

Now we know who killed J. R.

On an American one-dollar bill, there is an owl in the upper left-hand corner of the “1” encased in the “shield” and a spider hidden in the front upper right-hand corner.

If you look real closely, you may be able to detect the head of Donald Rumsfeld on the lower left hand corner.

The national anthem of Greece has 158 verses.
That's why it took so long for the first Olympics to finish.

Los Angeles's full name is "El Pueblo de Nuestra Senora la Reina de los Angeles de Porciuncula."
I still love to visit, but I wouldn't want to live there.

The only real person to be a Pez head was Betsy Ross.
That could change soon as I have a few suggestions for politicians who I think belong there.

In England, the Speaker of the House is not allowed to speak.
The Speaker of the House's spouse is thrilled!

There are 336 dimples on a regulation golf ball.
If yours has more, that's because it isn't regulation.

It is physically impossible for pigs to look up into the sky.
Not even if Superman is coming?

More than fifty percent of the people in the world have never made or received a telephone call.
They need a different long distance service.

Rats and horses can't vomit.
Tell that to those that we took with us in college on binges.

Rats multiply so quickly that in eighteen months, two rats could have over a million descendants.
This may explain the preponderance of lobbyists.

The electric chair was invented by a dentist.
It was probably Tim Whatley.

In ancient Egypt, priests plucked every hair from their bodies, including their eyebrows and eyelashes.

And they Nair uttered a complaint.

Cat's urine glows under a black-light.

Fortunately, you'll only have to worry about that at the discos.

In a recent survey, Americans revealed that banana was their favorite smell.

That is not even in my top ten favorites.

Forty percent of all people who come to a party in your home, snoop in your medicine cabinet.

I either lock mine or keep guests out of the bathroom.

8. Hemorrhoids and some ideas

I have written about telemarketers, the post office and banks and other fine organizations in so many books – because of the missing intelligence – and it has occurred to me that they do things just to keep people on their toes. They certainly don't make our lives any easier. Being a teacher for eight years and continuing in that capacity as a writer, it's time for a quiz – actually, just one question.

Which of the following has more intelligence than some individuals – notice I didn't say all – working in a bank?

- a. a rutabaga
- b. a butter bean
- c. a New England Patriot fan
- d. a stalk of broccoli
- e. London Bridge

The answer will be found at the end of the book. After reading what follows, I'm sure you will agree with the choice.

By writing of this happening, maybe I'll get to feel better. On Thursday, December 13, 2007 – I should have had an inkling that this might happen because of the unlucky part of the date – I checked the monthly statement from my mom's checking account. The name of the bank is not important as any bank is capable of pulling off what follows. Before proceeding, you will need a bit of background.

I handle this account for my mom, as she'd rather not be bothered with it. Thus I have an ATM card with that glorious password that I use to deposit checks occasionally and also get cash out for her, which I do quite often. I assumed that this card was a debit card since it certainly isn't a credit card. When I withdraw bucks from the account, it appears to be a debit. I can't think of what else you would call it. All right, when I infrequently make a deposit the

process certainly isn't a debit but I couldn't do that with a credit card. Obviously the card is an ATM card but I always felt that it was a debit card as well.

Taking money from an account at the ATM at a bank of the account usually results in no fee and withdrawals from this bank never cost this account a cent – until a few days ago. The statement had a one-dollar charge for using the ATM on December 11, 2007. Not to ignore this, I called the bank and was told that this debit was levied – the people who experienced Katrina won't care for that word – because the withdrawal was not done with a debit card. I shamefully admit I lost it when talking to a bank representative. I didn't curse anyone out specifically when I was on the phone, but one of the words I used I wouldn't utter in church. Nonetheless, I was furious to say the least.

There is some good news though. I did apologize for my behavior, I got the fee waved and any subsequent fees – I hope, but will have to keep verifying – and the bank will be sending me a debit card. I'm not really sure what that piece of plastic I used on the 11th for a cash withdrawal was, but I will shred it.

In the early part of March 2008, I was overwhelmed by multiple bank bimbo bunglers. The first had to do with an online payment from my checking account to pay my Visa card. In February 2008, my bank closed and was bought out by another. After talking to a representative, I was informed that there would be a smooth transition and all scheduled monthly payments and deposits would require no action on my part. After a few days, I made a payment and soon received a letter that there was problem with moving money electronically to pay my credit card. I called and was told to contact the bank, which I did. Nothing got resolved, so a few days later I went online and from all indications, the transfer appeared to go through. To be sure, I called the credit card

people and after some discussion, that was indeed the case. What a waste of my time.

The second hemorrhoid concerned my mom's checking account. I monitor it frequently and one day noticed a fifteen-dollar maintenance fee. For the most part, I'm the one doing that, so why the charge? I called and the person at the bank looked into it and quickly wiped out the transaction. All I can figure is that for some reason the bank changed the rules – without telling any of the customers – and decided on a surcharge, based on a balance. My guess is that the threshold was set at five thousand dollars, but perhaps it was as low as only two grand. Since my mom has two certificates of deposit with that bank, above either limit, the representative did me the favor.

Some day – but don't count on it – I may like banks.

On June 15, 2007, I overheard one teller utter the words, "Change is good."

I wanted to say that it is, but only if accompanied by progress, but I didn't.

A few moments later, it was my turn with another teller, so I handed her a few checks to make a deposit. That was done and then I asked her if she had any fifties, and she replied in the affirmative so I gave her three twenties. She took them and asked, "How many?" I said, "Two." She only gave me one fifty and a ten, saying, "I didn't see that you only gave me three twenties, at first.

Had she looked at what I handed her before speaking, she wouldn't have asked that really dumb question. I heard people say that there are no dumb questions, but this instance should dispute that point. Perhaps we should have a bit more fun with stupid people by giving really dumb answers to dumb questions!

On September 26, 2007, I got an email that my Bank of America account was suspended.

That's good news because I don't have any such account – maybe now they will stop emailing me.

It doesn't get any better, as the events of early February 2008 would point out. In the year before, I co-signed a loan for my niece, Elizabeth. She has been carrying out her duty to make monthly payments in such a fine fashion that I hope credit card bureaus give her the highest rating – if she doesn't deserve it, no one does. I instructed her to put a few bucks extra into the monthly offering and she heeded my request.

This loan is with Greater Buffalo Savings Bank, the same bank that handles my checking account. The president of the bank, Andrew Dorn, was almost one of my students. He was at St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute at the same time I was teaching. I do most of my banking online and my account as well as the loan can be viewed when I log on to the bank's web site. At the beginning of the month in question, I noticed that loan information on my screen pointed out that the next payment date was January 31st. This seemed to indicate that my niece had missed a payment. Well, she didn't as a payment was made in the middle of the month, which I saw when I clicked on account details.

I figured she might be penalized for paying too soon – could this actually happen? I called the branch, but it was after business hours and decided to call on the following Monday. I did this and took care of the matter and then the next day checked to see that everything was in order. What I found was that her balance was higher on February 4th than it had been after she made the payment, two weeks before.

This wasn't reasonable, but you need remember whom I was dealing with, so I called the bank. I talked to one individual – wasn't pleased – so I talked to her supervisor with the same result. Nothing changed and I was

furious, although none of my words had different off-colors of the spectrum in them. Eventually I told this supervisor that I would be calling the president of the bank, she couldn't help me, good-bye and I hung up the phone – something that may not have been a bad idea for these two people.

The explanation I was given is as follows: The payment was credited incorrectly, that is, in the amounts of principle and interest. As a result, because of this error, it was adjusted and that's why the balance was higher on the 4th of February. In other words, because of the bank's screw-up, my niece would have a higher balance. Had I not called originally and reported the January due date problem, the new balance would still have been higher.

I did as I promised and called Mr. Dorn and he took care of the matter. I had talked to him in 2007 and asked if he was in any of my classes. He replied, "No, I'd still be there." Apparently my teaching efforts way back then paid some dividends by osmosis. I'm happy to report that not all people who work at lending institutions are missing intelligence. I thought about calling the bank again and asking for the names of those two individuals so I could add them to this tale, but decided not to do that.

You can see why I titled this chapter the way I did. There are a host of people and companies and groups that make our lives a living hell. Maybe it's their job, so it's time to fight back. What I suggest is to enjoy the ride and get involved and have a good time while doing that. What follows are some fun things that can be done. Some of these even involve hemorrhoids. You are welcome to try these suggestions to break up the monotony of everyday life as well. Unfortunately, the author will not help spring those incarcerated or provide the cost of an attorney for their actions.

At lunchtime, sit in your car with sunglasses on and point a hair dryer at passing cars. See if they slow down.

Page yourself over the intercom, but don't disguise your voice.

Every time someone asks you to do something, ask if they want fries with that.

Put your garbage can on your desk and label it "In."

In the memo field of all your checks, write "For smuggling diamonds."

Finish all your sentences with "In accordance with the prophecy."

Order a diet water whenever you go out to eat, with a serious face.

When your money comes out of the ATM, scream, "I won! I won!"

When leaving the zoo, start running toward the parking lot yelling, "RUN FOR YOUR LIVES; THEY'RE LOOSE!"

Tell your children over dinner, "Due to the economy, we are going to have to let one of you go."

When someone says something that you find hard to believe, that is, it's nothing more than el toro crappo, look into his or her face and say, "Just as I thought, your eyeballs are brown."

When you call a business – especially one that you aren't quite happy with – they'll probably put you on hold, and you will hear some background music while you're waiting – in some cases it's a very long time. The sounds you are forced to hear could even be quite wretched. You can counteract this by putting on your own music. This works quite well if you are in front of your PC. Why not play a CD of punk or rap and leave it on, making sure that it drowns out what is being offered you by the business. Once the representative comes on the line, there is no need to turn off your music. Why spoil their listening pleasure? You'll just have to tune it out and concentrate on the person on the other end of the line.

You can even have a better time when the service person asks you for an account number or logon ID. Tell them to hold on and turn up the volume a bit on the music until you retrieve what they want. Also, there's really no need to hurry in finding the information.

The music is a nice touch, or if you prefer, why not play a recording of someone screaming. You should be able to find some good sound effects at the public library.

You can also call 800 numbers at random and most likely will be put on hold for a time. You can leave the phone to do something more productive and return after a few minutes and then hang up.

They're paying for the call.

I mentioned a few fun ideas to combat telemarketers in **wake up – it's time for your sleeping pill**. There's nothing like perfecting techniques since driving these annoying individuals crazy is not a bad idea. Of course, it would be even better to drive them off the face of the planet. When one of these mutants dials your phone and asks for you, don't let them know who you are. You can be vague and just say you'll check to see if she's around. Put down the phone

and take your time – our world is in too much of a hurry, as is. After all, you want to check all the rooms, and that takes time.

Another suggestion to get even with telemarketers and others who bother you at dinnertime is to leave this message on your answering machine:

We're sorry, but the number you are trying to reach has been disconnected. You're up the creek without a paddle.

You could add another word in that last sentence and may want to tell your friends and family to wait for the beep and leave a message.

You probably will land up under arrest, but this is something that I would love to see done. You've seen those signs on the highway that say, "merge right," or "merge left," as the lane will soon be gone. This will only work on a two-lane divided highway, but get one of each of these and put one sign up and then a few yards later, the other.

Here's a great idea for a few laughs. If you happen to discover who was responsible for the font, **wing dings**, get on your PC and compose a letter to him / her. It really is not that important how long it is or what you say. When you're done, spell check it and then convert the font to wing dings. Address the letter in a readable font and you really don't need a return address. Add the stamp and let the USPS do the rest. You could do the same bit with an email, but spam filters may deprive the recipient of this communication.

If you find out who this innovator is, let me know. I'd like to get in on this, too. You can tell others as well since this person probably likes to read what comes in his mail box.

Not everyone can do this, but the clergy need to have fun just like the rest of us. If you happen to fit that class of

people, why not call in sick on the weekend when you have to be in the church or temple. That way, you can head out to a party or have dinner with friends. You won't need a doctor's excuse.

My experiences with the health care profession has led me to believe that perhaps we should call it, ***Health-Could-Care-Less***. It needs a great deal of improvement, but I need not convince you of that. I close the chapter with a few things that you can do to get even.

You are supposed to fast before some procedures at the hospital or in the doctor's office. That could mean that you have to cease stuffing your face at midnight if you have a morning appointment. However, there are no restrictions on what you can put into your body before that cutoff point. The day before one of these ventures, since you have to make a few sacrifices, on the previous night, why not have a dinner of *Aglia Et Olio* – spaghetti with oil and garlic. Be generous with the garlic. Let the nurses and doctors have a good time too.

A word of warning: since the doctor has the last say that day, maybe this isn't such a great idea.

Whenever I'm scheduled for medical tests, a few days before I eat as many as beets as possible – and not the yellow ones.

I want to make sure the testing procedure is really working.

You can also eat plenty of poppy seed rolls and pastries with that tiny spice – the more the better – before having to take a drug test.

You may not want to try this if you just landed a job and this is necessary before you begin working at the company.

This next suggestion was offered by Andy Rooney – or so I’m told. To get rid of a great deal of unwanted junk mail – that combination of words is a pleonasm – consider a couple possibilities. You may be able to just put the words, “Return to sender” on the envelope without opening it and put it back in the mail. This won’t work on some mailings that get the bulk rate since those letters just get returned to the post office, which could care less.

Instead, open the envelope – I know it’s more effort, but it might make a difference – and see if there is a pre-paid envelope inside. If so, you are in luck. There’s no sense wasting it, so why not return it without having to place a stamp on it. At the same time, before you seal that carrier, put back into it as much of what was in the original envelope – including that envelope itself, which will fit if you fold it enough times – as you can.

Don’t limit yourself. Corporations talk about diversifying, and you can do the same by loading more material from other sources inside that envelope, since there is plenty of room. Mix and match, and don’t forget that it’s acceptable to use a bit of scotch tape to guarantee the letter won’t come unglued. One word of advice that you may want to heed is not to put toxic substances or chemicals inside.

When you get “ads” enclosed with your phone or utility bill, return these “ads” with your payment. Let the sending companies throw away their own junk mail. When you get those “pre-approved” letters for everything from credit cards to second mortgages and similar type trash, save the return envelope, since the people who sent them want them back. Do your civic duty and return them. Remember you can find plenty to send back. Why not send an ad for your local septic cleaner to Chase Bank. Send a pizza coupon to Citibank. If you didn’t get anything else that day, then just send them their blank application back! You probably want to cross out your name on any correspondence and not place a return address on the envelope. That’s not to

say you can't go to the phone book and find one there. Personally, I think it's a great idea to use the address of a politician. You can find those on the congress web site. CONGRESS.ORG. Take your pick.

9. Newman lives

Because of what happened on February 1, 2008 – you can read about it later – I decided to include an entire chapter on the United States Post Office (USPS). You may recall there was one on the government in *for seeing eye dogs only*, so it's time to renew the deliverance. I'll start with a particularly annoying incident dealing with the government by way of the USPS – they really seem to be annoying lately – that occurred just after publication of *This Page Intentionally Left Blank* in the latter part of 2007.

I sent out two copies of the book to a magazine in San Francisco – one for the person I had worked with for a few months and the other to be reviewed. Sometimes I track mailings through the USPS and at other times I just email and ask if it was received. In this instance, I emailed but after more than two weeks, the books had not been located. After further checking, they still couldn't be found. As a result, I wasn't in too good a mood when I went to the post office and mailed two more copies to the same address.

I figured out why the books didn't make it to their destination. I addressed it to *Mother Jones* instead of *Mother Jones Magazine* and the carrier figured she left the earth so the books went into the dead mail category. Leave it to the good ole post office. Because I was quite frustrated and it came out at the mailing place – I didn't go postal or even curse at them, and my picture won't be gracing the walls there – there's a good chance I'll have to use United Parcel Service or at least never go back to that same branch of the USPS, which I think stands for U Send Parcels Slowly – very slowly!

Indeed, the second shipment made it to the west coast and its intended recipient.

The adventures continue, because I went to the post office to mail a copy of *This Page Intentionally Left Blank*

on December 17, 2007. It had the right amount of postage, including the cost of delivery confirmation and I even filled out that piece of paper. The clerk verified that everything was in order but she did mention that I was just at the limit for the weight of the package. As it turns out, using my scale, it could have been three more ounces at the same media mail rate.

Since there was no need for any further money changing hands, I'm really not sure why she printed out a receipt for \$0.00 as well as a postage do-hickey for that very same null amount. Maybe, she is in cahoots with the paper companies. That will certainly help the planet.

That made it the second package I had to track since December 12, 2007. I mailed two of my books to a gentleman I met at a book signing the day after Thanksgiving. I prepared the package and walked into the post office, deciding to use media mail to get it to its destination. The package had a small sticker I added indicating, "Media mail" and \$3 worth of postage. I figured that with delivery confirmation, it would cost me another twenty-two cents. This calculation was correct since I have a small scale at home. The clerk took the envelope, I told her I needed the confirmation and then she asked if I wanted it shipped by media mail.

Perhaps I should have used bigger print for those two words – like eight inches or more. I wanted media mail, she saw the sticker – maybe not – and knew I wanted it shipped that way, so then why did she ask me that question?

I checked this December 12th mailing on a few occasions but the package hadn't yet arrived, even when I looked five days later. When I mailed it, the clerk mentioned that it could arrive at its destination the next day – not too surprising since that point was only about ten miles away. I did do some further tracking and was quite dismayed to see

that the books somehow got to the state of Maryland. It was sent from Buffalo to another Buffalo address.

And we trust these people with our packages. I probably shouldn't complain as my package was delivered on December 20th, more than a week after it was sent. It did get to Warrendale, PA from points south, over 200 miles from here – but it should be considered that the distance from the post office to its destination is less than a dozen miles. I could have walked it over in less than four hours – although my feet wouldn't have been too happy. Still, I'm thankful the books got there before Christmas, and more so when I saw this headline just before checking my email on December 18, 2007:

A Christmas postcard mailed in 1914 arrives in Kansas

Newman's father, grandfather, maybe his great grandfather and even Cliff Claven probably had something to do with this.

Some days are better than others, but for me, Friday February 1, 2008 was more than I could handle, especially my postal encounter. It began about 1:30 in the afternoon when my buzzer rang. I should have known better and not answered it, but that would have meant no mail delivery or pickup that day since the person trying to enter our complex was a US postal worker. No junk mail – all right!

The second mistake I made was opening my door, which wasn't really necessary when I realized who was there. I would have saved a great deal of time and aggravation. I talked to this substitute postal carrier and she asked how the normal deliverer entered the premises. I told her he had a master key, which she found hard to believe. I got my mail – which I didn't open until the next day – and waited to be sure she took my three outgoing pieces of correspondence. There have been occasions when mail wasn't picked up.

She then proceeded to tell me that the two packages I had couldn't be delivered because of insufficient postage. I had delivered the exact same thing the day before – my latest book – and on many other occasions by media mail, so I knew that she was off the mark. She called her supervisor, but that phone call changed nothing. Her boss probably went to Postal U. with her – not to be confused with Coastal Carolina. She said that what I had weighed over thirteen ounces and that was the problem – she could tell. Did she have a scale embedded in her hand? I didn't see one. I mentioned that these two books were to be shipped by media mail and a document from the post office clearly states that anything under one pound could be shipped that way for \$2.13. I had delivery confirmation as well, which I accounted for in both packages. I then took the two packages and told her to wait, as I would weigh them. Sure enough, they each weighed less than thirteen ounces or exactly that much.

When I returned, she was gone with the wind. I decided to head over to the post office since I needed stamps anyway and had to mail another letter. On the way to my car I saw this demon and handed her the letter, which she took and I tried to reason with her. She seemed in a rush and appeared to be overworked, (not possible since she was a government employee) underpaid (I doubt that) and underfed (not from what I saw). I did what I should have done a long time ago and stopped the discussion and headed over to the post office.

Once there, I asked the clerk if I had enough postage and she said yes. I bought some stamps and headed home. I realized at that moment that next to this carrier, Newman would be postal employee of the year. I also learned a lesson, perfectly encompassed in this bumper sticker:

My silence could mean you are not worth the argument

This carrier must have spoken to the people behind the counter, because on Tuesday, February 5, 2008, I went online to check the status of a book I mailed to Oakland, California the previous week. The report in front of me indicated the package was *missent*. Oh, joy! More of the message is included here:

Your item was misrouted. The error has been corrected and every effort is being made to deliver it as soon as possible.

Thanks to the post office and banks, this manuscript may be done sooner than I expected. A day later, I went to the USPS web site to track the book and found it left the Warrendale, Pennsylvania facility. That city is close to Pittsburgh so I'm happy to report it's heading in the right direction.

Apparently, UPS – they have most of the same letters as the USPS, but they shouldn't be confused with the government agency – is following in the footsteps of the Post Office. A few days after Christmas 2007, I dropped off a return of a gadget that would convert slides to digital, since it appeared to be defective. I wanted another so this went to Fairfield, Ohio from my home in Buffalo. I checked on the shipment a day or two after, but it was nowhere near its destination, but at least it was in the system. On January 2, 2008, I tried to locate the goods again. Unfortunately, the system had a few bugs because it couldn't find it, at least not with the tracking number I supplied. I did check the accuracy of what I entered more than once, still with no luck.

On January 3, 2008, I figured I would try again and lo and behold, had better luck – almost. The last town listed was Sharonville, Ohio at 4 am on that very same day. The bad news is that this location is close to Cincinnati, over a hundred miles southwest of its intended destination.

I wonder if it's on its way to someplace warmer. It appears as though packages see different parts of the country depending on the method of shipment.

I suggested a few possibilities of fun things to do in the previous chapter, and here's something we should all try, especially after you read my February 1, 2008 fiasco with that wonderful carrier. I'm sure this can work.

Rather than worrying about buying a scale to see what the postage will be or going to the post office, you can save money – for gas and that helps the planet – and your own time by applying stamps of random denominations. You may want to be sure not to get carried away and add more than you need. Thus, if all you have are the old thirty-nine cent stamps, don't worry – place them on the envelope. If you're short of the twenty-six cent variety for a postcard, but have a ten-cent stamp, use that. You'll never need to buy a forever stamp.

10. Email chuckles

I get too much email each day – mostly spam. Some of the other stuff isn't much better, but at times people do send me material for books on intellectual follies. From time to time, friends email me with a link.

Unfortunately, it's not the missing one.

Here is some other stuff that I received and felt it had potential for laughs. I made a few changes that shouldn't affect the laughter.

Here's a question from the new driver's license test.

You are driving in a car at a constant speed. On your left side is a 'drop off' – the ground is 18-20 inches below the level you are traveling on – and on your right side is a fire engine traveling at the same speed as you. In front of you is a galloping horse that is the same size as your car and you cannot overtake it. Behind you is another galloping horse. Both horses are also traveling at the same speed as you. What must you do to safely get out of this highly dangerous situation?

Get off of the merry-go-round.

A cowboy named Bud was overseeing his herd in a remote mountainous pasture in California when suddenly a brand-new BMW advanced out of a dust cloud towards him. The driver, a young man in a Brioni suit, Gucci shoes, RayBan sunglasses and YSL tie, leans out the window and asks the cowboy, "If I tell you exactly how many cows and calves you have in your herd, will you give me a calf?" Bud looks at the man, obviously a yuppie, then looks at his peacefully grazing herd and calmly answers, "Sure, Why not?"

The yuppie parks his car, whips out his Dell notebook computer, connects it to his Cingular RAZR V3 cell phone, and surfs to a NASA page on the Internet, where he calls up a GPS satellite to get an exact fix on his location which he then feeds to another NASA satellite that scans the area in an ultra-high-resolution photo. The young man then opens the digital photo in Adobe Photoshop and exports it to an image processing facility in Hamburg, Germany. Within seconds, he receives an email on his Palm Pilot that the image has been processed and the data stored. He then accesses a MS-SQL database through an ODBC connected Excel spreadsheet with email on his Blackberry and, after a few minutes, receives a response. Finally, he prints out a full-color, 150-page report on his hi-tech, miniaturized HP LaserJet printer and turns to the cowboy and says, "You have exactly 1,586 cows and calves."

"That's right. Well, I guess you can take one of my calves," says Bud. He watches the young man select one of the animals and looks on amused as the young man stuffs it into the trunk of his car.

Then Bud says to the young man, "Hey, if I can tell you exactly what your business is, will you give me back my calf?" The young man thinks about it for a second and then says, "Okay, why not?"

"You're a Congressman for the U.S. Government," says Bud.

"Wow! That's correct," says the yuppie, "but how did you guess that?"

"No guessing required," answered the cowboy. "You showed up here even though nobody called you; you want to get paid for an answer I already knew to a question I never asked. You tried to show me how much smarter than me you are; and you don't know a thing about cows – this is a herd of sheep. Now give me back my dog."

George Bush was out jogging one morning along the parkway when he tripped, fell over the bridge railing and landed in the creek below. Before the Secret Service guys could get to him, three kids, who were fishing, pulled him out of the water. He was so grateful he offered the kids whatever they wanted.

The first kid said, "I sure would like to go to Disneyland."

George said, "No problem. I'll take you there on Air Force One."

The second kid said, "I really need a new pair of Nike Air Jordan's."

George said, "I'll get them for you and even have Michael sign them!"

The third kid said, "I want a motorized wheelchair with a built-in TV and stereo headset!"

George Bush is a little perplexed by this and says, "But you don't look like you are handicapped."

The kid says, "I will be after my dad finds out I saved your butt from drowning!"

Subject: The Flight - An early Irish bit of levity

A pompous Presbyterian Minister was seated next to an Irishman on a flight to Dublin. After the plane was airborne, drink orders were taken. The Irishman asked for a whiskey and soda, which was brought and placed before him. The flight attendant then asked the Minister if he would like a drink.

He replied in disgust, "I'd rather be savagely raped by a dozen brazen whores than let liquor touch my lips."

The Irishman then handed his drink back to the attendant and said, "I didn't know we had a choice".

Old people have problems that you haven't even considered yet! An 85-year-old man was requested by his doctor for a sperm count as part of his physical exam. The doctor gave the man a jar and said, "Take this jar home and bring back a semen sample tomorrow." The next day the man reappeared at the doctor's office and gave him the jar, which was as clean and empty as on the previous day.

The doctor asked what happened and the man explained, "Well, doc, it's like this: first I tried with my right hand, but nothing. Then I tried with my left hand, but still nothing. Then I asked my wife for help. She tried with her right hand, then with her left, still nothing. She tried with her mouth, first with the teeth in, then with her teeth out, still nothing. We even called up Arleen, the lady next door and she tried too, first with both hands, then an armpit, and she even tried squeezin' it between her knees, but still nothing."

The doctor was shocked! "You asked your neighbor?"

The old man replied, "Yep, none of us could get the jar open."

Those were the days, my friend. These gems come from the Original Hollywood Squares TV show. They're from the days when game show responses were spontaneous and not scripted like they are now.

Q: If you're going to make a parachute jump, you should be at least how high?

A: Charley Weaver: Three days of steady drinking should do it.

Q: True or false: A pea can last as long as 5,000 years.

A: George Gobel: Boy it sure seems that way sometimes.

Q: According to Cosmo, if you meet a stranger at a party and you think he's really attractive, is it okay to come out directly and ask him if he's married?

A: Rose Marie: No, wait until morning.

Q: Which of your five senses tends to diminish as you get older?

A: Charley Weaver: My sense of decency.

Q: In Hawaiian, does it take more than three words to say "I love you"?

A: Vincent Price: No, you can say it with a pineapple and a twenty.

Q: What are "Do It", "I Can Help" and "Can't Get Enough"?

A: George Gobel: I don't know but it's coming from the next apartment.

Q: Paul, why do Hell's Angels wear leather?

A: Paul Lynde: Because chiffon wrinkles too easily.

Q: In bowling, what's a perfect score?

A: Rose Marie: Ralph, the pin boy.

Q: During a tornado, are you safer in the bedroom or in the closet?

A: Rose Marie: Unfortunately, Peter, I'm always safe in the bedroom.

Q: Can boys join the Camp Fire Girls?

A: Marty Allen: Only after lights out.

Q: When you pat a dog on its head he will usually wag his tail. What will a goose do?

A: Paul Lynde: Make him bark.

Q: If you were pregnant for two years, what would you give birth to?

A: Paul Lynde: Whatever it is, it would never be afraid of the dark.

Q: According to Ann Landers, is there anything wrong with getting into the habit of kissing a lot of people?

A: Charley Weaver: It got me out of the army!

Q: While visiting China, your tour guide starts shouting "Poo! Poo! Poo!" What does that mean?

A: George Goebel: Cattle crossing.

Q: Back in the old days, when Great Grandpa put horseradish on his head, what was he trying to do?

A: George Gobel: Get it in his mouth.

Q: Who stays pregnant for a longer period of time, your wife or your elephant?

A: Paul Lynde: Who told you about my elephant?

Q: Jackie Gleason recently revealed that he firmly believes in them and has actually seen them on at least two occasions. What are they?

A: Charley Weaver: His feet.

Q: Do female frogs croak?

A: Paul Lynde: If you hold their little heads under water long enough.

Q: Imagine you are a child in your mother's womb. Can you detect light?

A: Paul Lynde: Only during ballet practice.

This next one is from the mind of Henny Youngman.

Bernie took Louise to the doctor for her annual checkup. After an extensive examination, the doctor said, “Bernie, I’m sorry to inform you that your wife’s mind is completely gone!”

Bernie replied, “Doc, to tell you the truth, I’m not surprised. Really, it’s amazing that it lasted this long. She’s been giving me a piece of it every day for the past twelve years!”

An 85-year-old woman decided to take up sky diving. After she attended instruction classes, the great day came for her first jump. Strapping on a parachute, she stood awaiting her turn to leap out of the plane. But when she looked at the ground below, paralyzed with fear, she just couldn’t make the jump.

Finally, she reached into her pocket, pulled out a small hand-held radio and called her instructor on the ground, “Help! I’ve gotten up, and I can’t fall down!”

Why do blonde nurses bring red magic markers to work?
In case they have to draw blood.

What do you call a camel with no humps?
Humphrey

Saturday, I was having a “special time”, lunch with my ten-year-old son, when the waitress greeted us and asked if we wanted a drink.

“I’ll have a decapitated coffee,” my son said with a grin. The waitress smiled and poured him a cup.

Later she returned with the coffeepot and said, “So, can I put a head on that for you?”

He: Your body is like a temple.

She: Sorry, there are no services today.

An elderly Jewish couple won twenty million dollars in the Florida Lottery. They immediately set out to begin a life of luxury. They bought a magnificent mansion in Boca Raton and surrounded themselves with all the material wealth imaginable.

They decided to hire a butler. They found the perfect butler through an agency, very proper and very British, and brought him back to their home. The day after his arrival, he was instructed to set up the dining room table for four, as they were inviting the Cohens to lunch. The couple then left the house to do some shopping.

When they returned, they found the table set for eight. They asked the butler why eight, when they had specifically instructed him to set the table for four.

The butler replied, "The Cohens telephoned and said they were bringing the Blintzes and the Knishes."

A group of Americans were traveling by tour bus through Holland. As they stopped at a cheese farm, a young guide led them through a process of cheese making, explaining that goats' milk was used.

She showed the group a lively hillside where many goats were grazing. These, she explained, were the older goats put out to pasture when they no longer produced. She then asked, "What do you do in America with your old goats?"

A spry old gentleman answered, "They send us on bus tours."

Muldoon lived alone in the Irish countryside with only his dog for company. One day the dog died, so

Muldoon went to the parish priest and asked, "Father, my dog is dead. Could ye be sayin' a mass for de poor creature?"

Father Patrick replied, "I'm afraid not. We cannot have services for an animal in the church. But there is a new denomination down the lane, and there's no tellin' what they believe. Maybe they'll do something for the creature."

Muldoon replied, "I'll go right away, Father. Do ye think \$5,000 is enough to donate for the service?"

Father Patrick exclaimed, "Sweet Mary, Mother of Jesus! Why din't ye tell me the dog was Catholic?"

While visiting England, George Bush is invited to tea with the Queen. He asks her what her leadership philosophy is. She says that it is to surround herself with intelligent people. He asks how she knows if they're intelligent.

"I do so by asking them the right questions," says the Queen. "Allow me to demonstrate." She phones Tony Blair and says, "Mr. Prime Minister, please answer this question: Your mother has a child, and your father has a child, and this child is not your brother or sister. Who is it?"

Tony Blair responds, "It's me, ma'am."

"Correct. Thank you and good-bye, sir," says the Queen. She hangs up and says, "Did you get that, Mr. Bush?"

"Yes ma'am. Thanks a lot. I'll definitely be using that!"

Upon returning to Washington, he decides he'd better put the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to the test. He summons Jesse Helms to the White House and says, "Senator Helms, I wonder if you can answer a question for me."

"Why, of course, sir. What's on your mind?"

"Uhh, your mother has a child, and your father has a child, and this child is not your brother or your sister. Who is it?"

Helms hems and haws and finally asks, “Can I think about it and get back to you?” Bush agrees, and Helms leaves. Helms immediately calls a meeting of other senior Republican senators, and they puzzle over the question for several hours, but nobody can come up with an answer.

Finally, in desperation, Helms calls Colin Powell at the State Department and explains his problem. “Now lookee here, son, your mother has a child, and your father has a child, and this child is not your brother or your sister. Who is it?”

Powell answers immediately, “It’s me, of course, you dumb cracker.”

Much relieved, Helms rushes back to the White House and exclaims, “I know the answer, sir! I know who it is! It’s Colin Powell!”

And Bush replies in disgust, “Wrong, it’s Tony Blair.”

The local bar was so sure that its bartender was the strongest man around that they offered a standing \$1000 bet. The bartender would squeeze a lemon until all the juice ran into a glass, and hand the lemon to a patron. Anyone who could squeeze one more drop of juice out would win the money. Many people had tried over time – weightlifters, longshoremen, etc., but nobody could do it.

One day a scrawny little man came in wearing thick glasses and a polyester suit, and said in a tiny, squeaky voice, “I’d like to try the bet.” After the laughter had died down, the bartender said okay, grabbed a lemon, and squeezed away. He then handed the wrinkled remains of the rind to the little man.

The crowd’s laughter turned to total silence as the man clenched his fist around the lemon and six more drops of juice fell into the glass. As the crowd cheered, the bartender paid him the \$1000, and asked the little man,

“What do you do for a living? Are you a lumberjack, a weight lifter, or what?”

The man replied, “I work for the IRS.”

The tavern should have had either a bouncer or a cover charge, maybe both.

An elderly Polish man lay dying in his bed. While suffering the agonies of impending death, he suddenly smelled the aroma of his favorite pierogi with fried onions wafting up the stairs.

He gathered his remaining strength, and lifted himself from the bed. Gripping the railing with both hands, he crawled downstairs. Downstairs, he leaned against the door frame, gazing into the kitchen, where if not for death’s agony, he would have thought himself already in heaven, for there, spread out upon waxed paper on the kitchen table were hundreds of his favorite pierogi.

Was it heaven? Or was it one final act of love from his wife of sixty years, seeing to it that he left this world a happy man?

He threw himself towards the table, landing on his knees in a crumpled posture. His parched lips parted, the wondrous taste of the pierogi was already in his mouth. With a trembling hand he reached up to the edge of the table, when suddenly he was smacked with a wooden spoon by his wife.

“Back off, Stasiu,” she said. “Dose are for da funeral.”

How to speak and be politically correct:

She is not “easy,” but rather “horizontally accessible.”

She is not a “dumb blonde;” she is a “light-haired detour off the information superhighway.”

She does not “nag” you, but rather she becomes “verbally repetitive.”

He does not have a “beer gut. He has developed a “liquid grain storage facility.”

He is not a “bad dancer” – he is “overly Caucasian.”

He doesn’t “get lost all the time. He “investigates alternative destinations.”

He is not “balding;” he is in “follicle regression.”

It appears that a really abused animal when it comes to procuring laughs is the goat. Someone sent this tale a short time ago.

Two Congressmen are out hunting, and as they are walking along they come upon a huge hole in the ground. They approach it and are amazed by the size of it. The first one says, “Wow, that’s some hole, I can’t even see the bottom, I wonder how deep it is?”

The second one says, “I don’t know, let’s throw something down and listen and see how long it takes to hit bottom.”

The first Congressman says, “There’s this old transmission here; give me a hand and we’ll throw it in and see.”

So they pick it up and carry it over, and count one, two and three, and throw it in the hole. They are standing there listening and looking over the edge and they hear a rustling in the brush behind them. As they turn around they see a goat come crashing through the brush, run up to the hole with no hesitation, and jump in headfirst.

While they’re standing there looking at each other, looking in the hole, and trying to figure out what that was all about, an old farmer walks up. “Say there,” says the farmer,

“you fellers didn’t happen to see my goat around here anywhere, did you?”

The first hunter says, “Funny you should ask, but we were just standing here a minute ago and a goat came running out of the bushes doing about a hundred miles an hour and jumped headfirst into this hole here!”

And the old farmer said, “Why that’s impossible, I had him chained to a transmission!”

A friend sent the next batch. In *for seeing eye dogs only*, I had a few examples of proof reading not being done by those in charge of church bulletins. Some of these are included here, but I changed my reaction.

The Fasting and Prayer Conference includes meals.

Obviously it’s not during lent.

The sermon this morning: **Jesus Walks on the Water**. The sermon tonight: **Searching for Jesus**.

Have they tried dredging the lake? Don’t worry, God has a sense of humor.

Miss Karen Kuntz sang **I will not pass this way again**, giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

The latter experienced even more joy when they heard she and her husband were moving to Utah.

For those of you who have children and don’t know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

Apparently they missed the pre-Cana conference.

A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.

It may not be a bad idea to bring tuning forks, cotton and nose plugs.

Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.

It happens to the best of us.

Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.

Some people will do anything to get out of paying for a casket.

Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 PM – prayer and medication to follow.

This can be remedied by getting some new parishioners who can cook.

The ladies of the Church have cast-off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.

If you know of anyone who plays the bass drum, let us know.

This evening, at 7 PM, there will be a hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

Father George will be hearing confessions afterwards.

Low self-esteem support group will meet Thursday at 7 PM. Please use the back door.

You may want to tell them to have someone drive them to and from the meeting.

The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the church basement Friday at 7 PM. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.

They should have chosen something by Neil Simon.

Ladies Bible Study will be held Thursday morning at 10 AM. All ladies are invited to lunch in the Fellowship Hall after the B. S. is done.

People who write for the church bulletin may want to avoid acronyms at times.

The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the Congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday.

Can I get one of those at Williams-Sonoma? I have no idea what it can do.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the First Baptist Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

Refreshments to follow.

Don't let worry kill you off – let the Church help.

That's why they have all those conferences and support groups.

The Associate Minister unveiled the church's new campaign slogan last Sunday: "I Upped My Pledge – Up Yours."

He better get his bags packed.

An old, tired-looking dog wandered into the yard. I could tell from his collar and well-fed belly that he had a home. He followed me into the house, down the hall, and fell asleep in a corner. An hour later, he went to the door, and I let him out.

The next day he was back, resumed his position in the hall, and slept for an hour. This continued for several weeks. Curious, I pinned a note to his collar: "Every afternoon your dog comes to my house for a nap." The next day he arrived with a different note pinned to his collar: "He

lives in a home with ten children – he’s trying to catch up on his sleep. Can I come with him tomorrow?”

I’m sure you’ve heard of Murphy’s Law, but probably not his lesser known laws.

1. Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
2. He who laughs last, thinks slowest.
3. Those who live by the sword get shot by those who don’t.
4. Nothing is foolproof to a sufficiently talented fool.
5. The 50-50-90 rule: Anytime you have a 50-50 chance of getting something right, there’s a ninety percent probability you’ll get it wrong.
6. The things that come to those who wait will be the things left by those who got there first.
7. The shin bone is a device for finding furniture in a dark room.
8. A fine is a tax for doing wrong. A tax is a fine for doing well.
9. When you go into court, you are putting yourself in the hands of twelve people who weren’t smart enough to get out of jury duty.

A man was leaving a convenience store with his morning coffee when he noticed a most unusual funeral procession approaching the nearby cemetery. A long, black hearse was followed by a second long, black hearse about fifty feet behind the first one. Behind the second hearse was a solitary man walking a dog on a leash. Behind him, a short distance back, were about 200 men walking single file.

The man couldn’t stand the curiosity. He respectfully approached the man walking the dog and said, “I am so sorry

for your loss, and I know now is a bad time to disturb you, but I've never seen a funeral like this. Whose funeral is it?"

"My wife's."

"What happened to her?"

The man replied, "My dog attacked and killed her."

He inquired further, "But who is in the second hearse?"

The man answered, "My mother-in-law. She was trying to help my wife when the dog turned on her."

A poignant and thoughtful moment of silence passed between the two men.

"Can I borrow the dog?"

"Get in line."

If you are wondering how corporations decide where to properly place new employees, someone sent this bit of help.

1. Put four hundred bricks in a closed room.
2. Put your new hires in the room and close the door.
3. Leave them alone and come back after six hours.
4. Then analyze the situation:
 - If they are counting the bricks, put them in the Accounting Department.
 - If they are recounting them, put them in Auditing.
 - If they have messed up the whole place with the bricks, put them in Engineering.
 - If they are arranging the bricks in some strange order, put them in Planning.
 - If they are throwing the bricks at each other, put them in Operations.
 - If they are sleeping, put them in Security.
 - If they have broken the bricks into pieces, put them in Information Technology.
 - If they are sitting idle, put them in Human Resources.

If they say they have tried different combinations, they are looking for more, yet not a brick has been moved, put them in Sales.

If they have already left for the day, put them in Management.

If they are staring out of the window, put them in Strategic Planning.

If they are talking to each other, and not a single brick has been moved, congratulate them and put them in Top Management.

Finally, if they have surrounded themselves with bricks in such a way that they can neither be seen nor heard from, put them in Congress.

The following are said to be actual statements found in insurance forms where Newfoundland car drivers attempted to summarize the details of an accident in the fewest words.

Coming home, I drove into the wrong house and collided with a tree I don't have. The other car collided with mine without giving warning of its intention.

Was the other car coming out of that house?

I thought my window was down, but I found out it was up when I put my head through it.

*A couple had this same problem with the window and wound up with a Darwin award a few years ago, which I mentioned in **for seeing eye dogs only**.*

I collided with a stationary truck coming the other way.

This driver wasn't at fault. The stationary truck shouldn't have been moving. Only stationery trucks wind up in motion.

A truck backed through my windshield into my wife's face.

How did it miss the driver's?

A pedestrian hit me and went under my car.

I thought Superman was dead!

The guy was all over the road; I had to swerve a number of times before I hit him.

*This driver shouldn't have swerved – or should have been home watching **Wheel of Fortune**.*

I pulled away from the side of the road, glanced at my mother-in-law, and headed over the embankment.

His mistake was not leaping out of the car on time. Just kidding – some of my best friends have mother-in-laws.

I attempted to kill a fly, and I drove into a telephone pole.

This person doesn't indicate whether the fly survived.

I had been shopping for plants all day, and was on my way home. As I reached the intersection, a hedge sprang up obscuring my vision and I did not see the other car.

They probably used too much Miracle-Gro.

I had been driving for forty years, when I fell asleep at the wheel and had an accident.

She should have pulled over to rest after fifteen years.

I was on my way to the doctor with rear end trouble and my universal joint gave way, causing me to have an accident.

It's not clear where the trouble was – in the driver or the vehicle.

As I approached the intersection, a sign suddenly appeared in a place where no sign had ever appeared before. I was unable to stop in time to avoid the accident.
There's a lot of that going around.

To avoid hitting the bumper of the car in front, I struck the pedestrian.
Did the driver thank you?

My car was legally parked as it backed into the other vehicle.
This could be a scientific breakthrough.

An invisible car came out of nowhere, struck my car and vanished.
You didn't expect to see this vehicle did you? It's probably the devil.

I told the police that I was not injured, but on removing my hat, found that I had a fractured skull.
The problem is you removed your hat!

I was sure the old fellow would never make it to the other side of the road when I struck him.
You should have given him a head start.

The telephone pole was approaching. I was attempting to swerve out of its way when it struck my front end.
We need more telephone pole legislation.

An indirect cause of the accident was a little guy in a small car with a big mouth.
I think I know the direct cause.

The pedestrian had no idea which direction to run, so I ran over him.

Remind me not to go walking when you're out on the road.

I was thrown from the car as it left the road. I was later found in a ditch by some stray dogs.

That may explain your panting and chasing after rabbits.

I saw a slow-moving, sad-faced old gentleman as he bounced off the hood of my car.

I'd be more than sad!

Three Things to Ponder:

1. Cows

Is it just me, or does anyone else find it amazing that during the mad cow epidemic our government could track a single cow, born in Canada almost three years ago, right to the stall where she slept in the state of Washington? And, they tracked her calves to their stalls. But they are unable to locate 11 million illegal aliens wandering around our country. Maybe we should give each of them a cow.

2. The Constitution

They keep talking about drafting a Constitution for Iraq. Why don't we just give them ours? It was written by a lot of really smart guys, it has worked for over 200 years, and we're not using it anymore.

3. The Ten Commandments

The real reason that we can't have the Ten Commandments posted in a courthouse is this: You cannot post "Thou shalt not steal," "Thou shalt not commit adultery," and "Thou shall not lie" in a

building full of lawyers, judges and politicians – it creates a hostile work environment.

Bob, a handsome dude, walked into a sports bar around 9:58 PM. He sat down next to a neo-Conservative at the bar and stared up at the TV. The 10:00 PM news was coming on. The news crew was covering a story of a man on a ledge of a large building preparing to jump. The neo-Conservative looked at Bob and said, “Do you think he’ll jump?”

Bob says, “You know, I bet he’ll jump.”

The neo-Conservative replied, “Well, I bet he won’t.”

Bob placed a \$20 bill on the bar and said, “You’re on!” Just as the neo-Conservative placed his money on the bar, the guy on the ledge did a swan dive off the building, falling to his death.

The neo-Conservative was very upset, but willingly handed his \$20 to Bob, saying, “Fair’s fair. Here’s your money.”

Bob replied, “I can’t take your money, I saw this earlier on the 5 PM news and so I knew he would jump.”

The neo-Conservative replied, “I did too; but I didn’t think he’d do it again.” Bob took the money.

These next few would make Henny and Rodney smile – maybe even sue!

One day, a man came home and was greeted by his wife dressed in a very sexy nightgown. “Tie me up,” she purred, “and you can do anything you want.” So he tied her up and went golfing.

A woman came home, screeching her car into the driveway, and ran into the house. She slammed the door and shouted at the top of her lungs, “Honey, pack your bags. I won the lottery!”

The husband said, “Oh my God! What should I pack, beach stuff or mountain stuff?”

“Doesn’t matter,” she said. “Just get out.”

Marriage is a relationship in which one person is always right, and the other is a husband.

A Polish immigrant went to the DMV to apply for a driver’s license. First, of course, he had to take an eyesight test. The optician showed him a card with the letters: C Z W I X N O S T A C Z.

“Can you read this?” the optician asked.

“Read it?” the Polish guy replied, “I know the guy.”

Fifty-one years ago, Herman James, a North Carolina mountain man, was drafted by the Army. On his first day in basic training, the Army issued him a comb. That afternoon the Army barber sheared off all his hair. On his second day, the Army issued Herman a toothbrush. That afternoon the Army dentist yanked seven of his teeth. On the third day, the Army issued him underwear.

The Army still hasn’t found Herman after all these years.

I’ll probably be excommunicated for this next one.

Mother Superior called all the nuns together and said to them, “I must tell you all something. We have a case of gonorrhoea in the convent.”

“Thank God,” said an elderly nun at the back. “I’m so tired of chardonnay.”

Over The Cuckoo's Nest

Jim and Mary were both patients in a Mental Hospital. One day while they were walking past the hospital swimming pool, Jim suddenly jumped into the deep end. He sank to the bottom and stayed there. Mary promptly jumped in to save him. She swam to the bottom and pulled Jim out.

When the medical director became aware of Mary's heroic act he immediately ordered her to be discharged from the hospital as he now considered her to be mentally stable. When he went to tell Mary the news he said, "Mary, I have good news and bad news. The good news is you're being discharged because since you were able to jump in and save the life of another patient, I think you've regained your senses. The bad news is Jim, the patient you saved, hung himself with his bathrobe belt in the bathroom. I am so sorry, but he's dead."

Mary replied, "He didn't hang himself, I put him there to dry."

Apparently she won't be discharged.

Learn Chinese in 5 minutes

Chinese phrase	English translation
Sum Ting Wong	That's not right
Hu Yu Hai Ding	Are you harboring a fugitive?
Kum Hia Nao	See me ASAP
Tai Ni Po Ni	Small Horse
Wai Yu So Tan	Did you go to the beach?
Chin Tu Fat	I think you need a face lift
Wai So Dim	It's very dark in here
Wai Yu Mun Ching	I thought you were on a diet
No Pah King	This is a tow away zone
Wai Yu Kum Nao	Our meeting is next week
Lei Ying Lo	Staying out of sight
Wa Shing Ka	He's cleaning his automobile

This probably never happened but it's still a good laugh.

Subject: The Wrong Email Address – A lesson to be learned from typing the wrong email address!

A Minneapolis couple decided to go to Florida to thaw out during a particularly icy winter. They planned to stay at the same hotel where they had spent their honeymoon twenty years earlier. However, due to both keeping hectic schedules, it was difficult to coordinate their travel plans.

So, the husband left Minnesota and flew to Florida on Thursday, with his wife flying down the following day. The husband checked into the hotel. There was a computer in his room, so he decided to send an email to his wife. Unfortunately, he left out one letter in her email address, and without realizing his error, sent the email. Meanwhile, somewhere in Houston, a widow had just returned home from her husband's funeral. He was a minister who was called home to glory following a heart attack. The widow decided to check her email expecting messages from relatives and friends. After reading the first message, she screamed and fainted.

The widow's son rushed into the room, found his mother on the floor, and saw the computer screen which read:

To: My Loving Wife

Subject: I've Arrived

Date: July 23, 2007

I know you're surprised to hear from me. They have computers here now and you are allowed to send emails to your loved ones. I've just arrived and have been checked in. I see that everything has been prepared for your arrival tomorrow. Looking forward to seeing you then! Hope your journey is as uneventful as mine was.

Your Loving Husband

P.S. Sure is freaking hot down here.

Whatever you do, don't report me to the SPCA.

A firefighter was working on the engine outside the station when he noticed a little girl nearby in a little red wagon with little ladders hung off the sides and a garden hose tightly coiled in the middle. The girl was wearing a firefighter's helmet. The wagon was being pulled by her dog and her cat. The firefighter walked over to take a closer look.

"That sure is a nice fire truck," the firefighter said with admiration.

"Thanks," the girl replied.

The firefighter looked a little closer and noticed the girl had tied the wagon to her dog's collar and to the cat's testicles.

"Little partner," the firefighter said. "I don't want to tell you how to run your rig, but if you were to tie that rope around the cat's collar, I think you could go faster."

The little girl replied thoughtfully, "You're probably right, but then I wouldn't have a siren."

If you haven't caught Chris Rock's sitcom, *Everybody Hates Chris*, I highly recommend it for some great laughs. I'm not sure what year this refers to but this is his "Quote of the Year."

"You know the world is going crazy when the best rapper is a white guy, the best golfer is a black guy, the tallest guy in the NBA is Chinese, the Swiss hold the America's Cup, France is accusing the U.S. of arrogance and Germany doesn't want to go to war. Need I say more?"

You may have heard of Professor Backwards. He took certain words and phrases and described the result when you turned it around. One of his gems was the realization that *motel* spelled backwards is *letom*. Unfortunately, he died after being mugged. No one heard his cries of *pleh, pleh*.

What follows is an email that the professor would have delighted in. I received it quite a while ago, but decided to include it here. It only points out the fact that some people have too much free time, shouldn't have retired or if they are still employed, shouldn't be allowed the use of email.

before

after

GEORGE BUSH

HE BUGS GORE

DORMITORY

DIRTY ROOM

EVANGELIST

EVIL'S AGENT

PRESBYTERIAN

BEST IN PRAYER

DESPERATION

A ROPE ENDS IT

THE MORSE CODE

HERE COME DOTS

SLOT MACHINES

CASH LOST IN ME

ANIMOSITY

IS NO AMITY

MOTHER-IN-LAW

WOMAN HITLER

SNOOZE ALARMS

ALAS! NO MORE Zs

A DECIMAL POINT

I'M A DOT IN PLACE

THE EARTHQUAKES

THAT QUEER SHAKE

ELEVEN PLUS TWO

TWELVE PLUS ONE

Joe Smith started the day early having set his alarm clock (made in Japan) for 6 am. While his coffeepot (made

in China) was perking, he shaved with his electric razor (made in Hong Kong). He put on a dress shirt (made in Sri Lanka), designer jeans (made in Singapore) and tennis shoes (made in Korea). After cooking his breakfast in his new electric skillet (made in India), he sat down with his calculator (made in Mexico) to see how much he could spend that day. After setting his watch (made in Taiwan) to the radio (made in India), he got in his car (made in Germany), filled it with gas from Saudi Arabia and continued his search for a good paying American job. At the end of yet another discouraging, fruitless day checking his computer (made in Malaysia), Joe decided to relax for a while. He put on his sandals (made in Brazil), poured himself a glass of French wine and turned on his TV (made in Indonesia), and then wondered why he can't find a good paying job in America.

*The words of the song by Sister Sledge truly ring out here:
We are family.*

11. A few observations

What follows in this chapter are random thoughts, ideas and things I have witnessed over the last few months. I hope you find them humorous, but in any case, don't report me to the *funny farm*, which by the way is one of my favorite movies.

I think I figured out why work isn't getting done in corporate America. People are too busy eating.
All I hear are comments about what is on their plate and about stuff on the back burner. These people need to get back to work and stop obsessing about food.

A watched pot never boils. An unwatched one will mess up the stove.

I'm not a rocket scientist. Thank God for that.
I'm scared of heights and I have common sense.

My drugstore is Wrong Aid.
There's no pressure for competency.

Some drugs are so bad they have front, back and *side* effects.

It seems to me that a devil's advocate is still a devil.

I sometimes buy stuff at Best Buy – Worst Service.
You've got to visit the store to appreciate my feelings.

I was thinking about a job in health care. I have circus experience.
Well, not quite, but having worked in the business world, I think that qualifies. My apologies go out to the lion tamers and clowns – in the circus.

On Monday, April 21, 2008, while on my daily walk on the Ellicott Creek Trailway, I saw a lady in high heels, something I hadn't observed there in over four years. *She may have just got back from a job interview. Since she was walking, there was another possibility, but this is a trail and not a street and it was in the morning.*

Around the end of October 2007, I checked my calendar to see when I had to change my clocks. The calendar in my kitchen said this had to be done on the last Saturday in October. However, my calendar in the hallway indicated this should be done the first weekend of November. *I decided to turn the clock back both weekends. That way, I'd get two extra hours.*

The clock in my car is always a few minutes late. *I'm not on time for anything.*

Not long ago, I bought a five-pound bag of some purpose flour.

I got a flier in the mail from a car place and one of the sale items is an *oil change package*. *It sounds like you have to change the oil yourself – the oil change is extra.*

One Friday, I called a restaurant in Buffalo to see if they took reservations. I was told – not on Friday. From that response, I assumed that they took them for the other nights. However, for those evenings you probably don't need a reservation, whereas Friday is the day you need one. *I love corporate America!*

While I was a student in high school, there was an underclassman with the name of Jerome Zwierzchacewski. He ran cross country, and I believe the coach put him on the team to get even with the press.

His name probably was too long for a scrabble game. Moreover, you wouldn't have enough letters since you only picked eight at a time.

There is a street in Tennessee called Heil Quaker Boulevard.

In my mind, those two words seem to be an oxymoron.

I figured out who should be singing the song, **Call me irresponsible.**

Sadly, there happens to be more than one person – more like an Army.

I know a singer who was so bad that one of the notes this person sang was unnatural.

I use the word, “was” because I hope he / she learned to play the piano.

They say you shouldn't bite the hand that feeds you but on some occasions I think dental impressions are necessary. Face it: by now you should be able to feed yourself.

Obviously, I'm not an anti-dentite.

The first step to losing weight is to begin an exercise program. You can eat anything, but not everything.

Some of my friends mentioned that there was a bit of stubble on my face and that I looked like Richard Nixon. I was dismayed because not long before that I had shaved.

I guess from now on I can't use a RAZR.

I figured out why not many of my books get sold at bookstores. The place “stores” them rather than selling them.

In filling out a copyright form for one of my books, I saw the words, “Handwritten signature.”

*Will it be acceptable if I sign the document with my nose?
How could the recipients find out what part of my body I
used anyway?*

I decided to file for an extension to pay my taxes. Do you think I can get one for twenty years?

It will take that long for me to decipher the instructions.

I could never be an acting president for any organization.

I’ve never been crazy about going on stage.

In early January 2008, my Christmas cactus was in full bloom.

I wonder if the Three Kings had anything to do with this delay.

I plan to invite my friends Ted and Carol over for dinner soon. I’m not sure if Alice will join us.

The United States should impeach George W. Bush. We know he’s impaired.

I bought a Toyota Prius in April 2007 that has more intelligence than the entire administration.

If Al Gore runs for president in 2008 and wins and then gets re-elected, he would have been elected president three times.

I don’t trust anyone who says, “I am not a crook.”

You may have heard that Gordon Gekko is coming back – and not for GEICO!
*The rumor I heard is they're making a sequel to the movie **Wall Street**.*

Dollar General is resigning, or at least going AWOL – they didn't pay him enough.

Some people are reborn, but from what I have seen, it doesn't make a difference.
You may have seen this concept in an earlier section on bumper stickers.

I bought some invisible tape but I don't remember where I put it. I can't see it anywhere.

I don't go to pot luck parties anymore. The last time, the cops raided the place, found the pot and I wasn't so lucky.

I returned to the house of my childhood to see what it had become. I asked the people if I could come inside and have a look, but my mom and dad refused me entry.

There are some of my friends that I can't call because my phone doesn't have a "5" on it.
I got it from the back of a truck. Perhaps I should have spent a few more dollars on this device.

I worked on a software contract where the meetings were so long that they didn't read the minutes. They read the hours.

I won't buy an HD TV until I have to, since with the high definition comes lower intelligence.

On the Ellicott Creek Trailway on March 9, 2007, I saw a red fox.

The classification was probably right since he was using off-color language.

In the summer of that same year, while beginning my daily walk, on this same trail I saw a gentleman and his dog with a stick in the latter's mouth. It was at least six-foot long and about an inch and a half in diameter. It was one visual that I wish I could have captured on film.

When it comes to fetching commands, that's one tough master.

I had some blood work done, recommended by my family doctor. After looking at the results, he wants me to see an apologist.

I eat right and exercise. I must have been saying a lot of things that people don't want to hear.

I believe in showing courtesy to others, but why do people thank others if the latter haven't done anything? If you call and need some information but don't get any, or ask for some kind of consideration that is not offered, I don't feel it is right to utter the words, "Thank you." Instead, maybe you should utter, "Go to the theatre."

I'm sure you have heard an individual who has called a company looking for someone say, "Is Mr. Whiplash in, please?" Is the caller really wishing and praying the dude will be there, or perhaps the question should have been, "Could you please tell me if Mr. Whiplash is there?" I was driving on the road and trying to move over to the left lane, but the person behind me just wouldn't let me get in. He finally passed me and then I got over. At that point I hand signaled him – all five fingers – to pass along my thanks.

On the highway I notice SUVs with names such as *Envoy*, *Explorer* and *Expedition*. Are there any named *Earth*, *Earthy*, *Environment* or *Environmental*?
Only if Honda or Toyota makes them.

My sister Pat and her husband, Lou, have a beagle named Annie. She is a loving dog but because pets are not much different from humans, she goes through certain times in the cycle. People in Buffalo travel to Canada quite frequently since the International Peace Bridge is just up the road. I myself have made the crossing a few times while journeying to Minnesota and Maine over the last few years. All I can say is that the Canadian authorities at the border have so much more on the ball than their American counterparts.

Lou and Annie, who had on a diaper, were returning from Canada to Buffalo, in the summer of 2007 and greeted at the border by a young lady. She asked about this piece of apparel and Lou mentioned that Annie was in heat, to which a reply came, “Dogs go through that, too?”
Storks can only handle so many animals.

I watched the flick, *Kinsey*, recently and like all movies, there was a disclaimer that no animal was harmed in the making of the movie.
Nothing was stated about the number of births from the actions of the creatures shown in the credits, though.

I saw a movie in July 2007 and the rating warning used the words, *quirky situations*.
At least they're using different words – it's good to be creative.

Regarding programs on National Public Radio, due to time limitations, I don't feel all things should be considered.

On December 26, 2007, I was asked for proof at the supermarket.

Who said people can't get younger? I became a senior citizen a few years ago so the problem here is management. I talked to the clerk at the register and she said she could get fired if she didn't ask, even if I had been born in the nineteenth century. She related that these instructions came about in training. Apparently the higher-ups can't trust these employees' judgment – another fine example of missing intelligence.

12. This chapter intentionally left blank

This chapter has almost nothing in it for two reasons. The first is to once again insist that people who put similar words on a piece of paper use some common sense. I hope you know what I mean. If not, read my book that almost starts with these same five words. Second, many hotels don't have a thirteenth floor so this is a chance to even matters out. As you can tell, this book has a thirteenth but no twelfth chapter (almost.)

13. Questions

You may not have heard of the 1970s musical group, *Seatrain*, but they had a hit song called *Thirteen Questions*. This chapter has nothing to do with music, that song or that group. I just thought I'd spread some knowledge. As in my two previous books on intelligence fiascos, what follow are questions that you probably never thought of asking.

Before getting into these things, I think I have an answer for another question. You may recall that the Rascals, a musical group of the 1960s, sang a song with the name and question, *How Can I be Sure?* *I believe the answer can be found in a television commercial. I'm not sure if it's still being aired. Talk about a host of puns.*

If a guy had his whole left side cut off, would he be all right now?

He was probably sent to Iraq by the neo-conservatives.

If my mother remarries a really good dancer, would the groom be my two-step father?

If someone only takes off two days to get married, is that a honey half-moon?

If a river overflows its banks, can I float a loan?

Only for a houseboat!

If I invite people to a party and they don't respond, but show up anyway, are these people, "pop-ins?"

Not that long ago, Mary was a popular choice for baby girls and I've known a few women with that name. If any of these individuals with that appellation did the same no RSVP / arrival thing, they would be "Mary Poppins."

Were the first illegal aliens at Roswell, New Mexico?
Would it have made a difference if they came with green cards?

Would the U. S. military forces have been better off in Iraq if they used surge protectors?

Will General David Petraeus betray us?
I came up with this one way before the media did.

Can I test the waters if I can't swim?
It shouldn't be a problem in any case with a life vest.

Do perverts use flash drives?

Instead of writing a check for my mortgage payment, will the bank accept 100,000 balloons?

Wouldn't it benefit all mankind to send all telemarketers directly to jail?

If corporations have the rights of individual citizens, can we then send them to prison for violations of the law?

Why do businesses not mind walk-ins, but aren't too happy about walk-outs?
*I don't believe there was a song, **Walk Right Out or Walk Right Off.***

When your loan is approved and you have to be at the bank, why do they call it a closing?
You are about to begin making payments if you want to keep your house or car.

Can you feed baby carrots to a new-born infant?

Do devil's advocates have horns?
From what I have seen, it seems so.

Is a bum steer an animal raised on a ranch by a hobo?

Why do the people who are Conservatives get the worst gas mileage?

Why are there so many hair shampoos that have the scent of raspberry, kiwi / strawberry or lime but none of the aroma of goat?

Can you get a peach or apple cobbler from someone who mends shoes?
Someone always told me to diversify.

If an infant needs to have his internal organs checked out, does he have a kitty scan?

When a patient is rendered immobile and not caring about anything before surgery or a medical procedure, why don't they call it amnesia?

What effect will Velcro have on hot button issues?
That's truly a sticky subject.

If I photograph a person who weighs 450 pounds or more, do I need to use the landscape setting?
This person is not too heavy, merely too short for his weight.

Do barefooted people get a bum deal when it comes to holiday stocking stuffers?
Maybe virtual socks would be the gift for them.

Is there any significance that the first three letters of the legislative body of government are "Con?"

Is it a coincidence that in the words, “corporate Amerika,” you have all the letters in the word, “crook?”

Should I enlist the services of a marketer named Penny to spread the word on my books, or would I get short-changed? *Considering inflation, Dollar Brand may be a better choice, but he only does music.*

Why are books published for “dummies,” when they can’t read?
I wonder who is dumber, the publisher, writer or the reader.

If kids in Australia misbehave, are they acting down?

If W writes a book after being exiled from office, will it have words of more than one sillabull in it?
Eye sertainli won’t bye it. (This probably won’t get past the censors but I will put it on the DVD.)

If Ron Paul III becomes president, won’t that demolish the separation of Church and State?

Could Pontius Pilate fly a plane or was he just adept with his palm?

Can Deacon Jones preach and distribute communion at Mass?

Is St. John Bosco the patron saint of chocolate?

Why does a writer begin with a sentence and wind up with a book, while someone accused of a crime is first booked and then sentenced?
*In some cases, there wasn’t one **word** from the defense attorney at the trial, since he was asleep.*

If I'm on a cruise in the middle of the Atlantic, do they serve continental breakfasts?

Would it be European or American?

When will the next Harry Pothead book be coming out?

I'm sure it will be smoking.

Is it true that a car manufacturer will soon be coming out with a car for the clergy with the name of *Celibacy*?

Do rock musicians continually say to the audience the words, "I can't hear you," because they've gone deaf from the high levels of amplification on stage?

When I see *(sic)* in a book, why can't they just correct the error, leave out the *(sic)* and not have me try to figure out what's wrong?

My impression was that (sic) indicated either a spelling or grammatical error in the word or words before it. On the other hand, the Merriam-Webster Dictionary describes the usage as "intentionally so written; used after a printed word or passage to indicate that it exactly produces an original." But isn't that why the phrase usually is in quotes?

Why eat salt and vinegar chips if they aren't cooked in bacon grease?

That's to go along with the Diet Coke.

Can you get melanoma from eating cantaloupe?

Do we really need the sign I saw on September 10, 2007 outside a supermarket – I'm sure it's around others places as well – that says, **Stop for pedestrians**?

Would Alan Greenspan have been Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve without a “green” in his name?

If I buy an accent table and it talks, will I be able to understand it?

Can I quench my thirst with some saltwater taffy?

Do they tell you how to make wine at a pre-Cana conference?

Was the musical group, *The Three Degrees*, named after Fahrenheit, Celsius and Kelvin?

Does a congregation ever sing hymn #666 while worshipping?

*Only the Church of St. Lucifer – that designation, **Saint** may not be quite right.*

Are all of 007’s investments in bonds?

I was under the impression that he had an interest in gold, which he liked to run his fingers through.

Do people in umbrella groups have fewer concerns about rain?

Lightning still bothers them.

Should I buy something from a truck that plays music from **The Sting**?

Not if it’s moving.

Can horses from Hollywood be shipped in theatrical trailers?

That’s where the Silver screen came in.

Why do I have to be at the airport three hours before my flight departs?

Maybe they need help with sheet rocking.

If a hippie married a freak, would they throw wild rice at the wedding?

If you have a job as a fabricator, does that mean that you're a politician?

Why do we find the title "Honorable" before Senators and those from the House of Representatives?

Is the Cow Industrial Index (CIA) exclusively a bull market?

Is an editor who has been at it a long time more at risk for colon cancer?

I heard that period cancer is only half as bad as colon cancer.

Since some medical procedures are non-invasive, when I come out of anesthesia after surgery, could I say that I have been invaded?

If it's administered in the rear, it's called anusthesia.

If a soldier has stomach problems, will they schedule an upper GI Joe Series for him?

In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, why is there no reference to leather?

Did Christ ever work at a redemption center?

He didn't have to – the wine at Cana didn't come in a bottle.

What disease did ham have before it was cured?

I know some individuals who need remediation.

Will a thief who stole a calendar get twelve months?

He just May.

Would Buckshot Cheney have served the people better if he had married a woman named Ruth?

Why do we have to be tested for mercury but not for Pluto?

That's because the latter is not a planet, or are you referring to Mickey's friend?

If I eat too much candy, do I have to be tested for Mars?

If a thief fell and broke his leg in wet cement, would he become a hardened criminal?

He was probably arrested on concrete evidence.

Could thieves who steal corn from a garden be charged with stalking?

If I get the answering service when I call a business, why can't they answer my questions?

Seeing Michael Vick in a spiffy suit and tie at the press conference in the summer of 2007, was he successful at the job interview afterwards?

Are Orangemen guys who overdosed on vitamin A?

I lived in the Syracuse area for over four years.

Will waterboarding ever be an Olympic sport?

I think x-treme – as in x-tremely dumb - sport is more like it, and that's a stretch.

Is a hybrid SUV any more sensible than *fighting for peace*?

Is Ground Zero in Celsius or Fahrenheit?

Perhaps it's in Kelvin.

If I want the tax deduction for a turbo-charged vehicle, do I have to use turbo-tax when filing?

Wouldn't every book on the life of Henry Ford be an autobiography?

Doesn't the expression, "I could care less" mean the same as "I couldn't care less"?

Do you still think the English language makes sense?

Do I need to play an instrument to get on the bandwagon?

If I fall off, will they pawn my guitar?

If only two of the group, The Village People, show up for a concert, will they sing YM?

If you take a laptop computer for a run, could it jog your memory?

It's probably healthier than taking your disk for a drive.

You may think I'm picking on him, but what would happen if Dick Cheney went hunting with Dan Quayle?

If there's a one percent chance that Bush and Cheney, in the time after January 2009, decide to lead another country, shouldn't pre-emptive action be taken?

Is there a Ground Absolute Zero in the Arctic?

Not since the coming of global warming.

Is it true that most of the Santa Clauses live in Ho-Ho-kus, New Jersey?

I think that name was changed in late 2007 to Ha-Ha-Kus.

If a leader wasn't such a good egg, could he be impeached?

Some people complain about global warming, but won't it get rid of all the iceholes?

*If you're not smiling at this question, watch the movie **Short Circuit** for some insight.*

If a guy fell onto an upholstery machine, would he be fully recovered?

What was the attitude of the Catholic Church towards vegetarians before the Friday meat laws were relaxed?

Sometimes people really fish to get laughs.

Do Atheists have to capitalize "bibles?"

What happens when a professor discovers that her theory of earthquakes is on shaky ground?

If a woman with red hair is a redhead, is one with black hair a blackhead?

You've heard of *mankind* and *humankind*, but does *womankind* have something to do with Hugh Hefner?

If I drive a Pinto, Corvair or Yugo, will I make a turn for the worse?

It's probably a good idea to let someone else drive and get into a different car.

If my family doctor doesn't care for the term, "practicing," since he likes to execute procedures to the best of his ability, would he be called an "executioner?"

Maybe that only applies to Kevokian.

If someone is a sports addict who you can't get away from the television and all he does is talk about hockey, baseball, football and basketball, does he have a *sports complex*?

Does a woman in Australia who wants to beautify herself go to get a *makeunder*?

Do turtles use snail mail since they probably can't get email or do they have their own kind of really slow communication?

Do we have to launch PC and Web software because it was created by rocket scientists?

Can you get a wake-up call if you don't have a phone?
I don't think you want to rely on the post office.

Is there a reason why the first four letters of the word *democracy* result in the word, *demo*?

Why is there a sequel to the movie, **The Neverending Story**?

This book probably will have a sequel too, even though this is the third one on missing intelligence.

If you're driving on the interstate and an emergency rescue vehicle flies by you at an outrageous speed, do you wonder who will take care of those in the truck in the event of an accident?

Fortunately, they have most of the equipment on board to handle this situation, but there may not be anyone to administer what's needed.

If I get amputated from the neck up, won't I still have to pay a cover charge at the club if they ask for \$5 a head?

Do musicians in their dying minutes in Hospice or in the hospital become unplugged?

What kind of music can you play on a conundrum?

Perhaps it's something that a con artist could master.

Was there a Caesarian Section of the stands at the Olympics in Ancient Times?

One of their cheers was, "Push on to victory."

Did the Buffalo Bills fail to win the championship when OJ was playing for them because he didn't have the killer instinct, just yet?

Can I get burned on hot-button issues?

That isn't a concern in the Arctic.

Is there a toll on the bridge to nowhere?

Only on the return trip, and you won't have to pay it if you don't make it back.

If people agree to disagree, does anything at all get accomplished?

If someone's head is spinning, does Linda Blair collect a royalty?

Only if it happens to the queen or one of her relatives.

If I go to a party that serves *killer food*, will it be my last meal?

Maybe, this is what Jeffrey Dahmer had at his house.

Has anyone ever been to a potluck dinner where someone brought porridge?

Do pastors ever have monsignor moments?

Is that your crown Victoria?

I can't believe it – my editor and proofreaders missed that needed comma before the last word.

As promised, I mentioned in *wake up – it's time for your sleeping pill* that there would be an answer to the question having to do with Canadian money. When I wrote that other book, the Canadian dollar was worth less than the American, but as of the beginning of November 2007, the former was equal to about one dollar and three cents American. I haven't tried using Canadian quarters for my laundry, but my guess is that they wouldn't work anyway. I did get a Canadian twenty-dollar bill and tried to deposit it in my checking account. The bank teller said I'd have to do the exchange at a larger commercial institution, like M&T or Key Bank. I figured on going to the latter, but guessed that they would only give me the equivalent in American money. On actually trying to do that, I was told that because of the exchange, I would only get a bit over nineteen dollars. Well, I was having none of that and demanded my twenty back. After all, banks are corporations and the latter are criminals. That logically follows that banks are crooks, as this instance verifies.

There is a bit of hope, though. Just on a whim, on November 8, 2007, I went to the other bank mentioned above and the teller handed me \$20.94 in American dollars for my Canadian twenty. Kudos to M & T Bank!

Amazingly enough, despite the behavior of the above bank, the answer to the question in chapter 8 about banks is all of the above.

I close with answers to questions posed in the last chapter of *for seeing eye dogs only*, concerning why we park in the driveway and drive on the parkway. Both driving on the driveway and parking on the parkway have limits.