

## Editor's notes:

Pearls, the only birthstones created by living organisms, were symbols of wealth, power, and longevity in ancient China. The ancient Greeks believed wearing pearls would lead to marital bliss. Pearls were so rare and so valuable that, according to one tale, Cleopatra crushed one, dissolved it in wine, and drank the mixture to demonstrate her vast wealth to Marc Antony. In the 13th century, wearing a strand of pearls was believed to cure mental illness and heartbreak.

Pearls are formed when a mollusc coats a bit of grit or other irritant with layers of nacre, the creamy iridescent coating that lines their shells. In the late 19th century, the Japanese invented the art of culturing pearls by introducing irritants into oysters, making this treasured gem widely available.

Even if you're not getting a string of pearls this month, here are some dates to look forward to:

**Belmont Stakes, June 7** -- It's been 30 years since the last horse won all three races of the Triple Crown.

The Belmont Stakes, run in June each year, is the third race of the Triple Crown, which starts with the Kentucky Derby held on the first Saturday in May and then the Preakness Stakes three weeks later.

Since 1867, only 11 horses have won the Triple Crown. The most famous winner was Secretariat who easily won all three in 1973. The last horse to come first in all three was Affirmed, in 1978. We're due for a big winner and this year and all eyes will be on Big Brown.

**Friday, June 13** -- The superstitious who believe that Friday the 13th is unlucky are said to suffer from *triskaidekaphobia*. Every calendar year has at least one Friday the 13th but never more than three. This is the only Friday 13th in 2008.

**World Juggling Day, June 14** --Juggling clubs all over the world hold local festivals to demonstrate, teach and celebrate their art.

**Summer, June 21** -- The most awaited season finally begins in the Northern Hemisphere with the summer solstice. The first day of summer marks the longest day of the year, meaning that in the area between the equator and the Arctic Circle, the sun rises and sets farthest north on the horizon for the year. Daylight hours last from 12 hours, eight minutes at the equator to 24 hours at the Arctic Circle.

**Father's Day, June 15** -- An estimated \$1 billion is spent each year for Father's Day gifts. Dads sometimes miss out on being the fathers they would like to be. A survey by *Fortune* magazine found that 75 percent of fathers said they would trade career advancement for more time with their families.

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## Does this sound familiar?

What my Dad Taught Me About . . .

**RELIGION:** "You better pray that comes out of the carpet."

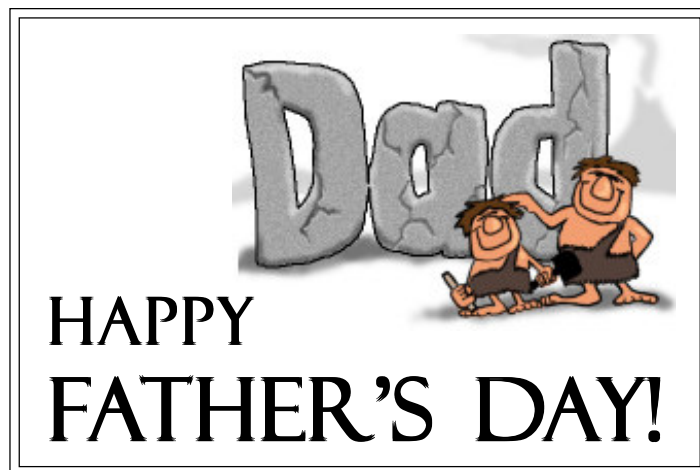
**TIME TRAVEL:** "Straighten up or I'll knock you into the middle of next week."

**LOGIC:** "Because I said so, that's why."

**STAMINA:** "You'll sit here till all that spinach is finished."

**METEOROLOGY:** "It looks like a tornado hit your room."

**THE CIRCLE OF LIFE:** "I brought you into this world, and I can take you out."



## The Origins of Words and Phrases

**Gung Ho**, reflecting a "can do" attitude, comes from the Chinese words, "Gongye Hezhoushe," which meant a small industrial cooperative. The Chinese shortened the words to "gung ho" and used them to mean "working together."

An officer in the U.S. Marines picked up the expression in China during the 1930s and eventually used it as his battalion's motto during World War II. By 1942, "gung ho" became an unofficial slogan of the Marine Corps.

**Bigwig**, an important person refers to the powdered wigs men wore in the 1700s. The richer and more powerful the man, the larger the wig.

**Cut to the chase**, or "get to the point," originated in Hollywood in the 1920s, where it literally meant to move from a dramatic scene to an action scene.

**Glitch**, or a malfunction, comes from the Yiddish word "gletshn," which means "to slip."

## This month's Hall of Famer: Jacques Cousteau

Oceanographer Jacques Cousteau was born near Bordeaux, France, on June 11, 1910. As a young man, he attended the naval academy in Brest and became a gunnery officer for the French Navy. While training to become a pilot, Cousteau was seriously injured in a car accident and began swimming regularly in the Mediterranean to regain the strength in his injured arms. A fellow officer gave him a pair of pearl fisherman's goggles to keep the saltwater from stinging his eyes.

The fantastic underwater world he saw through those goggles changed the focus of his life from the skies to the oceans. In 1943, Cousteau and colleague Emile Gagnan invented the aqualung, the first commercially successful scuba diving gear. While still a naval officer, Cousteau explored sea wrecks, convinced the French Navy to build him a diving capsule, and generally advance the state of the art in undersea exploration.

Cousteau retired from the Navy in 1957 but continued his deep-sea explorations in a research vessel named Calypso. He developed improved underwater filming techniques and hosted the internationally successful television series *The Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau* for eight years. Critics praised Cousteau's ability to describe complex theories and issues in simple terms.

In 1974, he founded the Cousteau Society to raise public awareness about oceanic pollution. He wrote several books and produced numerous films on his explorations on and under the seas, including three that won Academy Awards. In 1985, Cousteau received the U.S. Presidential medal of Freedom. Two years later, he was inducted into the Television Academy's Hall of Fame, and in 1988, the National Geographic Society honoured him with its Centennial Award. Cousteau died in 1997 at 87.

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### Advice from a father to his son

I'm an old guy (62, as I write this) but I have a young son, fifteen. Like any father, I want him to grow up well. Several years ago, I wrote him a letter, some of which is excerpted below:

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*Life is complicated. You know that already. It will get more complicated as you get older. If you want to make it through life without even more complications than will arise all on their own, here are a few tips from your dad:*

- *If you don't want to be at the mercy of chance, make sure you have as much control over your own life as possible. Think before you act and always have a plan 'B.'*
- *If you associate with fools, you yourself will become foolish.*
- *In any contentious situation, don't say the first thing that pops into your mind. It is likely to come back and haunt you.*
- *Be polite and gracious at all times. It costs you nothing, but pays big dividends.*
- *If you wish to be respected, be respectful to others and to yourself. Self-esteem is not something that can somehow be granted to you by others, you can only develop it in yourself. You earn it one step at a time, by doing things of which you can be proud, and by avoiding behaviour which will bring you shame.*
- *If you expect the worst of any situation, or of any person, your expectations will be met. If you expect the best, you will at least occasionally be correct.*
- *Always be on time. Being late shows how little you value the time of others. It is disrespectful and crass.*
- *Be your own man, but when you need advice, remember that your old dad isn't completely clueless, and that he sometimes knows what he is talking about.*

Daddy (Sieg Pedde, President, Helix Courier Limited)

### The ONLY Puzzler

1. What is the only mammal that cannot jump? It is also the only animal with four knees.
2. Name the only bird that "drops" its upper eyelid to wink.
3. Name the only North American rodent that barks like a dog.
4. Name the only insect that creates a form of food for human consumption.
5. Name the only insect that produces a fibre used for cloth?
6. Name the only bird that can fly backwards.
7. Name the only animal whose evidence is ruled admissible in an American court of law.
8. Name the only winged mammal that can fly.
9. Name the only animal on land or sea that can turn its stomach inside-out.
10. What is the only sea animal with a prehensile tail?
11. What is the only animal besides a human being that can develop sunburn?
12. Name the only female animal with antlers.

1. The elephant  
2. The owl  
3. The prairie dog  
4. The honeybee  
5. The silkworm  
6. The hummingbird  
7. The bloodhound  
8. The bat  
9. The starfish  
10. The seahorse  
11. The pig  
12. The reindeer

Answers:

You don't have to deserve your mother's love. You have to deserve your father's.

-- Robert Frost