

The Box City Bulletin

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Your poetry, or any interesting submission will be considered for publication. . . .Send it!!

Always remember, this is your Bulletin. If you disagree with any editorial content, we welcome opposing points of view as well as comments on public issues.

We have opinions, . . .but no agenda and will print all opposing points of view concerning any issue we editorialize.

April Fool!

The History of April Fool's Day

April Fool's

Day is the 1st day in April. It is celebrated in the United States, England, France, Scotland, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, Germany and Norway.



The custom of shouting "April Fool" was brought to the United States by English settlers in the early 1600s.

In 1708 a correspondent wrote to the British *Apollo* magazine to ask, "Whence proceeds the custom of making April Fools? The question is one that many people are still asking today.

The puzzle that April Fool's Day presents to cultural historians is that it was only during the 18th century that references to it began to appear. But at that time, the custom was already well established throughout northern Europe and was regarded as being of great antiquity.

References to April Fool's Day can be found as early as the 1500s. However these references were infrequent and tended to be vague and ambiguous.

Many theories have been put forward about how the tradition began. Unfortunately, none of them are very compelling. So the origin of the custom of making April Fools remains as much a mystery to us as it was back in 1708.

In the old calendar, New Year's Day was celebrated around the time of the Vernal Equinox in late March. However, because this occasionally came too close to Easter, church officials moved New Year's Day to April 1st. When the Gregorian calendar was adopted in 1582, New Year's Day changed from April 1st to January 1. Some people were slow to accept the change and continued to observe April 1. Others made mock visits to friends and neighbors on April 1, and shouted "April Fool!" to those who took them seriously.

A Box City Video !

At the end of March we made a video at one of our Box City stores.

The video, a 70 second commercial, is narrated by yours truly and shows all facets of our store. It is a colorful presentation and will be accessible through the AT&T yellow pages, as well as <http://boxcity.com>. We will also include the link to our video in all emails sent by Box City so you can view it when you receive your Box City Bulletin via email.

It is not ready for installation at the time this Bulletin is being prepared. Hopefully it will be by the time you receive it.

The Box City Science Page

About Bees

By Howard Suer

I have always had a fondness for insects, particularly the ones that give us direct benefits such as spiders, ladybugs, preying mantis', butterflies and bees.

One day, several years ago, I observed a colony of wasps building a nest at eye level, on the underside of a 2 x 4 in my greenhouse. Whenever I approached, they would stop what they were doing and all of them would turn to face me.

As I moved about the area they continued to turn in my direction. I knew they didn't trust me, yet I wanted to continue observing their progress without getting stung. As I approached their nest I would speak gently to them. *"It's okay little guys, I won't bother you"*, I would say.

Over the next year the nest grew in size and population. They became more accustomed to me and we lost our fear of one another. I was no longer a threat and we lived harmoniously until one day, they unexpectedly abandoned their home in my greenhouse.



About two years ago I noticed some bees up near the eaves of the roof in my backyard. I watched them increase in number as the swarm searched for a suitable place for their hive.

Much to my surprise, they found a tiny crevice between the stucco wall and the roof. I watched them crawl through that little crevice with interest. Workers came and went all day. They were busy visiting every flower in my yard, (and I'm sure every neighbor's yard as well). Often I

would focus on a particular bee. He would drift from flower to flower until he had enough pollen or nectar and then buzz right up to the roof where he would crawl through that tiny space into the hive.



This went on for two years, until one day, about a week ago a friend came to visit me, accompanied by an associate. The associate was in the construction business, and after observing my bees, advised me that it was not a good idea to leave them there. He explained that as long as they are there they fan the hive with their wings to keep the honey cool. If they were to leave, the honey would melt, oozing down inside the wall where it would attract cockroaches, rats, etc. And further, that the honey would seep through damaging the drywall.

The next day I called a bee catcher named Steve, who verified what he had said. He explained that he would have to make a hole in my wall, remove the bees alive, and patch the wall. I agreed and we set a date for him to do the job. Steve arrived on time and advised me to stay indoors while he worked because the bees would be quite upset at his intrusion and probably sting anyone in the area. I locked the dogs in the house, and the two rabbits who live in the back yard as well.

The bee catcher worked all day. He discovered that the bees were not in the wall, but in the space between the ceiling and the roof. He had to remove a number of shingles and make several holes in the roof.

Sure enough, the bees were furious about this invasion of their sanctuary, and of course their dedication to protecting the queen caused swarms of angry bees to

attack the bee catcher. Fortunately, he was wearing a helmet with a strong net covering his head and neck. Still he was stung several times through his clothing.



Steve worked through the day, and as evening approached he called me to the back door. He was still wearing his helmet and bees were still swarming around him. He was almost finished and said he would give me several honeycombs of the best tasting honey he had ever experienced.

Steve removed 85 pounds of honey from under my roof. It saddened me over the next few days to see the remaining bees flying hopelessly around their former opening, not knowing what to do.



Bees are social insects with an "intelligence" (most scientists call it instinct) that makes a hive work as a living organism. It contains workers, drones, a queen, and a nursery. And everyone who lives there works for the betterment of the community.

Hmmm? Perhaps if we paid more attention to the insects, man could learn how to get along with one another in this world.

The Box City Poetry Corner

The Train of Life

Author Unknown

Some folks ride the train of life
Looking out the rear,
Watching miles of life roll by,
And marking every year.

They sit in sad remembrance,
Of Wasted days gone by,
And curse their life for what it was,
And hang their head and cry.

But I don't concern myself with that,
I took a different vent,
Look forward to what life holds,
And not what has been spent.

So strap me to the engine,
As securely as can be.
I want to be out on the front,
To see what I can see.

I want to feel the winds of change,
Blowing in my face,
I want to see what life unfolds,
As I move from place to place.



I want to see what's coming up,
Not looking at the past,
Life's too short for yesterdays,
It moves along too fast.

So if the ride gets bumpy,
While you are looking back.
Go up front and you may find,
Your life has jumped the track.

It's all right to remember,
That's part of history,
But up front's where it's happening,
There's so much mystery.

The enjoyment of living,
Is not where we have been,
It's looking ever forward,
To another year and ten.

It's searching all the byways,
Never should you refrain,
For if you want to live your life,
You gotta drive the train.



Box City Furry Tales

Jasmine

In 2003, police in Warwickshire, England, opened a garden shed and found a whimpering, cowering dog. It had been locked in the shed and abandoned. It was dirty and malnourished, and had clearly been abused.

In an act of kindness, the police took the dog, which was a greyhound female, to the nearby Nuneaton and Warwickshire Wildlife Sanctuary, run by a man named Geoff Grewcock and known as a willing haven for animals abandoned, orphaned or otherwise in need.

Geoff Grewcock and the other sanctuary staff went to work with two aims: to restore the dog to full health, and to win her trust. It took several weeks, but eventually both goals were achieved.



They named her Jasmine, and they started to think about finding her an adoptive home.

But, the dog had other ideas. No one remembers now how it be-

gan, but Jasmine started welcoming all animal arrivals at the sanctuary. It wouldn't matter if it was a puppy, a fox cub, or a rabbit, Jasmine would peer into the box or cage and, where possible, deliver a welcoming lick.

Geoff Grewcock relates one of the earlier incidents. "We had two puppies that had been abandoned by a nearby railway line. One was a Lakeland Terrier cross and the other was a Jack Russell Doberman cross. They were tiny when they arrived at the center and Jasmine approached them and grabbed one by the scruff of the neck in her mouth and put him on the settee. Then she fetched the other one and sat down with them, cuddling them."

"But she was like that with all of our animals, even the rabbits. She takes all the stress out of them and it helps them to not only feel close to her but to settle into their new surroundings."



"She has done the same with the fox and badger cubs, she licks the rabbits and guinea pigs and even

lets the birds perch on the bridge of her nose."

Jasmine, the timid abused, deserted waif, became the animal sanctuary's resident surrogate mother, a role for which she might have been born. The list of orphaned and abandoned youngsters she has cared for comprises five fox cubs, four badger cubs, 15 chicks, eight guinea pigs, two stray puppies and 15 rabbits.



There came a roe deer fawn. Tiny Bramble, 11 weeks old, was found semi-conscious in a field. Upon arrival at the sanctuary, Jasmine cuddled up to her to keep her warm, and then went into the full foster mum role. Jasmine the greyhound showers Bramble the roe deer with affection and makes sure she is well groomed religiously.

"They are inseparable," says Geoff Grewcock. "Bramble walks between her legs and they keep kissing each other. They walk round the sanctuary, it's a real treat to see them,"

Jasmine will continue to care for Bramble until she is old enough to be returned to woodland life. When that happens, Jasmine will not be lonely. She will be too busy showering love and affection on the next orphan or victim of abuse.

Interesting Word Origins

Serenade

When we call people *serene* we mean they are calm and unruffled. At one time *serene* meant only “fair weather”. In Roman days it was called *sereus*. It reached Italian as *sereno* meaning “open air”. A *serenata* was a piece played in the “open air”, especially a song played by a lover to his heart’s desire. The French adopted this attractive romantic word as *se’re’nade* and passed it on to us as *serenade*.



FURLONG

The term *furlong* has virtually died out except in horse racing terminology. It was originally used by our ancestors in agricultural practices. It originated as an Old English compound formed from *furh* ‘furrow’ and *lang* ‘long’ - that is, the length of a furrow ploughed across a standard sized square field of ten acres. Since the term *acre* varied somewhat in its application at different times and places, the length of a *furlong* could not be computed with great precision from it, however in practice from about the 9th century the *furlong* was pegged to the *stadium*, a measure equal to one eighth of a Roman mile.



COFFEE

The word *coffee* appeared in the 17th century probably via Italian *caffè*. It is ultimately, however, of Middle Eastern origin as *cahve*, modeled closely on Turkish *kahveh* and its source, Arabic *qahwah*. Where the Arabic word came from is not known for certain: Probably it is based on *kaffa*, the name of an area in the south Abyssinian highlands from which the coffee tree is said to originate.

From the word *coffee* comes the French *café*, from which was derived *caffeine*, while the Spanish *café* produced *cafetero* “coffee-seller” which was the source of English *cafeteria*.



The Black Death - Bubonic Plague

When bubonic plague—the black death—struck Europe in 1347, it was regarded as the greatest single disaster ever to befall mankind. Towns and cities were wiped out. About thirty million people, more than a quarter of the European population, perished. Another forty-five million died in Asia. Waves of the plague followed at intervals over the centuries. One such epidemic swept

Europe in 1664-65. The last major outbreak came in 1910, when 60,000 people died in Eastern Siberia in just 7 months.

More than fifteen years before, in 1894, a Japanese scientist, Shibasaburo Kitazato, and a French bacteriologist, Alexandre Yersin, had independently discovered that the plague was a bacterial disease carried by infected rat fleas. However it took many years before an effective

vaccine could be developed and made available worldwide.



Editorial

A House Divided Against Itself -

China and The Chinese

By Howard Suer

China today is an emerging power.

. . . And as with any powerful nation, comes the fear and suspicion of the rest of the world.

In my business and personal life, I have had many dealings with Chinese people. I am pleased to say that I have never met a Chinese person I didn't like. (I'm sure there must be some unpleasant Chinese people, but I've never met one). It's difficult to say that about any race or nationality because there are so many variances in most blended cultures, but China has a culture that is unique in itself.

Most Chinese have grown up with Taoist, Buddhist or Confucius philosophies, which are peaceful and loving cultures that teach humility and respect for others.

The Chinese calendar predates most of Western civilization by thousands of years. Emperor Huangdi invented the Chinese calendar in 2637 B.C. That was 4,642 years ago. China's civilization was based on agriculture, augmented by hunting and animal husbandry.

During the Shang dynasty (1700 B.C. —1027 B.C.), a writing system as well as the use of bronze metallurgy were developed. These accomplishments attest to a high level of civilization during those early dates in recorded history.

In 771 B.C., China was attacked by barbarians who killed the king and sacked the royal court. To fend off barbarian intrusion, fortification walls were built by the various Chinese states. Four of

those walls were connected about 2,500 years ago to make a 5,000-kilometer-long great wall. Today that wall is known as one of the seven wonders of the world.

The noted Chinese philosopher Confucius lived from 551 B.C. to 479 B.C. He taught compassion and loving others, respect for life and restraint.

His teachings pre-dated Jesus by about 500 years. Jesus's philosophies regarding mankind were somewhat similar.

Sometime around the 6th or 7th century the Chinese invented gunpowder (which at that time was used only for fireworks) and the wheelbarrow, which is an invaluable tool for homeowners, farmers and gardeners to this day. Advances in medicine, astronomy and cartography were also made by China during that period.

At the end of the 1800's, China attempted to stop the import of opium. Drug addiction was becoming a serious problem among many of China's then 450 million population. Drug importation was forbidden!

Western countries, particularly England, France and the United States dealt extensively in the opium trade with China in order to purchase prized Chinese commodities such as silk, tea and gunpowder.

The United States and France had to get their opium from Turkey, while England had the advantage of having many opium plants in India, which was, at that time, a British protectorate. To circumvent the Chinese blockade of opium traffic, the British and American opium vessels docked at an offshore island and smuggled the opium ashore covertly. After repeated requests to Parliament and Congress by the Chinese rulers to halt the drug traffic, China took matters into their own hands and seized and burned tons of opium, and destroyed British and American opium trafficking ships, (the

sort of thing we are doing today in our "war on drugs").

In response, the British drug lords appealed to Parliament for restitution, and Britain went to war with China. England defeated China in the two wars that followed. China was made to pay restitution to England for the lost opium, the ships, and the entire cost of the war.

That is how England came into possession of Hong Kong. Hong Kong was one of the spoils of the infamous Opium Wars.

In 1937, Japan launched a full scale invasion of China, seizing the ports of Shanghai and Nanking. The so-called "Rape of Nanking" has gone into the annals of history as one of the most shocking incidents in modern history. The Japanese senior officers allowed the Japanese army to ransack Nanking, murdering tens of thousands as they went. The final death toll has been put as high as 250,000.

By 1941, Japan occupied all of the strategic cities of China. In December of 1941, after attacking the United States at Pearl Harbor, Japan discovered that it had spread its armies too thin. At the time of Japan's surrender to the United States in 1945 Japan had left over 1 million troops in China.

Today, China is blossoming into a tremendously successful industrial nation. It's 9,600,000 square kilometers occupied by 1,306,000,000 people is finally prospering.

I wish them every success in finding peace and prosperity without any more world interference.

Editor's Note: This editorial appeared in the Box City Bulletin September 2005. I thought it was worth repeating. Opposing points of view are invited and will be published

Why We Say It — (Phrase Origins)

Hell Has No Fury like a Woman Scorned

This famous quotation is from *The Mourning Bride*
By William Congreve, 1772-1828

*“As you'll answer it, take heed
This Slave commit no Violence upon
Himself. I've been deceiv'd. The Publick Safety
Requires he should be more confin'd; and none,
No not the Princes self, permitted to
Confer with him. I'll quit you to the King.
Vile and ingrate! too late thou shalt repent
The base Injustice thou hast done my Love:
Yes, thou shalt know, spite of thy past Distress,
And all those Ills which thou so long hast mourn'd;
Heav'n has no Rage, like Love to Hatred turn'd,
Nor Hell a Fury, like a Woman scorn'd.”*

Not to Care a Fiddlestick

It means to be wholly unconcerned.

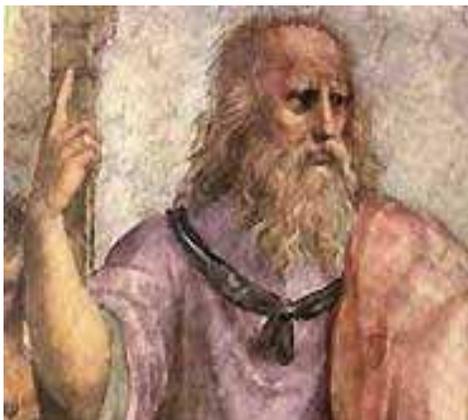
Our ancestors over three hundred years ago had a high regard for the fiddle, although they regarded the fiddlestick (without which the fiddle could not be played) was a mere trifle. In the *Classical Dictionary of the vulgar tongue* (1796) a fiddlestick's end is defined as “Nothing”. Washington Irving, in *Salma g u n d i* (1806-1807) is credited with the introduction of the phrase, *Not to care a fiddlestick*.



KETCHUP - CATSUP, ETC.

Ketchup (and its many synonyms) derives from the Chinese *ketsiap*, which became the Malay *kechap*. It was the first condiment the Dutch traders imported from the Orient. Englishmen changed the spelling of the Malay word and started making it themselves using ingredients like mushrooms, walnuts, cucumbers and oysters. It wasn't until American seamen added tomatoes from Mexico to the condiment that tomato ketchup was born. Over a billion bottles of the stuff is slopped on hamburgers, fries, etc. in America each year.

A WISE MAN TELLS YOU



EDITOR'S NOTE: Below is the “quote of the month” — (A new feature of your Box City Bulletin)

“A good government must be a wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, and which shall leave them free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread which it has earned.

—Thomas Jefferson, 1743-1826

“Death is nothing to us, since when we are, death has not come, and when death has come, we are not.”

—Epicurus, 341 BCE-170 BCE

“You can outdistance that which is running after you, but not that which is running inside you.”

—Rwandan proverb

“It is well, when judging a friend, to remember that he is judging you with the same godlike and superior impartiality.”

—Arnold Bennett, 1867-1931

“There can be no knowledge without emotion. We may be aware of a truth, yet until we have felt its force, it is not ours. To the cognition of the brain there must be added the experience of the soul.

Arnold Bennett, 1867-1931

“To give pleasure to a single heart by a single kind act is better than a thousand head-bowings in prayer.”

—Saadi, 1200-1292

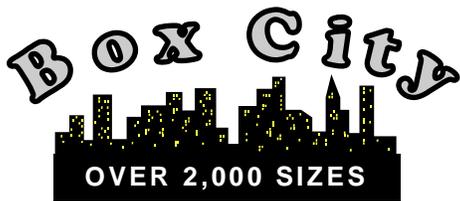
“One of the surest evidences of friendship that one individual can display to another is telling him gently of a fault. If any other can excel it, it is listening to such a disclosure with gratitude, and amending the error.”

—Edward Bulwer-Lytton, 1803-1873

“There are two things to aim at in life: first, to get what you want, and, after that, to enjoy it. Only the wisest of mankind achieve the second.”

—Logan Pearsall Smith, 1865-1946





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Cartoons of The Month

A chilling picture of a man with only seconds to live.



"Did you name it after me, like you said you would?"