IN HOG WE TRUST

Pigs are where bacon comes from. They also have curly tails and say "oink." For more complex facts, keep reading.

• Pig squeals have been recorded as loud as 130 decibels—only 10 decibels less than a supersonic jet taking off.

• According to behavioral scientists, the pig is the smartest farm animal, and one of the smartest on Earth after humans, primates, whales, dolphins, and elephants.

• World's largest pig: Big Bill. He's 8 feet long, 4 feet high, and weighs 1,600 pounds.

• Pig lingo: Females are called sows, adult males are *boars*. A pregnant pig is a *farrow*, a female that's never been pregnant is a *gilt*, and a neutered male is a *barrow*.

• Pigs have four toes on each foot, but use only two to walk, giving the appearance that they walk on their tiptoes.

• A pig's natural lifespan: 15–20 years.

• Pigs have such thick skin that fleas and ticks generally leave them alone—the insects can't get through to the pig's blood.

• Synthetics are mostly used today, but at one time paintbrush bristles were made out of pig hair.

• A litter of piglets most commonly numbers between 8 and 12. All-time record for a single litter: 37.

• Although a group of pigs is called a *herd*, pigs don't need to be herded. They come when called.

• Smallest breed of pig: the Mini Maialino. They reach a top weight of only 20 pounds.

• Myth-conception: If you "sweat like a pig," you sweat profusely. The truth: If you sweat like a pig, you don't sweat at all, because pigs don't have sweat glands. They keep cool by staying in the shade or, occasionally, rolling in mud.

• Worldwide population of domesticated pigs: around 940 million.

• Pigs have an excellent sense of smell. In India, they're used by police departments to sniff out illegal drugs.

HISTORY'S LAST STANDS

What happens when a few brave warriors refuse to quit, even when the cause seems lost? Victory...or doom.

THE BATTLE OF THERMOPYLAE

Defenders: 2,300 Greeks

Background: In 480 B.C. Persia's King Xerxes I sought to add Greece to his already enormous empire and invaded with an army of 80,000 soldiers. In a rare display of unity (and out of desperation), several Greek city-states banded together to stop them. Led by King Leonidas of Sparta, an initial force of about 5,000 soldiers awaited the Persians at a narrow mountain pass near the northern town of Thermopylae. Xerxes was informed of the size of the Greek army and sent a message to them: Surrender your weapons and you will live. Leonidas replied, "Come and get them." Xerxes sent thousands of soldiers into the pass. They were repelled and suffered heavy losses. He sent thousands more; they were stopped again. This went on repeatedly for two days...at which point a Greek local told Xerxes about another pass—one that would allow the Persians to encircle their outnumbered foes.

The Stand: When the Greeks learned of the betrayal, Leonidas ordered most of his army to retreat and gather more forces for a battle farther south. He, his 300 best Spartan fighters, and about 2,000 other Greeks remained to hold off the Persians long enough to give the retreating army time to escape. Attacked by the main force from the pass—and now by 10,000 more from the rear—the Greeks fought with spear, sword, hands, and teeth until every last one of them was dead, including Leonidas. Xerxes had his head cut off and his body raised on a stake. Despite winning, the Persians lost nearly 20,000 soldiers in the battle. A year later, they were crushed by the Greeks in the Battle of Plataea and the Greco-Persian Wars were over.

THE BATTLE OF NUMANTIA

Defenders: 6,000 Celtiberians (ancient Celtic peoples who had settled in Spain)

Background: In 135 B.C., the Roman senate sent their greatest

general, Scipio Africanus, to finish off the Celtiberian tribes in present-day Spain. Scipio decided to avoid fighting the notoriously aggressive Celts and ordered his army of 60,000 to surround their largest town, Numantia, instead. They completely cut off every possible supply route...and waited for the 6,000 people trapped inside the town to surrender.

The Stand: They waited...and waited...and waited. Six months later the surviving residents of Numantia were living on rats and dead bodies—having resorted to cannibalism—and still refused to give up. After another three months, they opened peace talks: Scipio demanded unconditional surrender, the Celtiberians refused, and most of those remaining killed themselves instead. After nine months, Scipio's 60,000 soldiers had finally taken a town of 6,000 (which he then ordered completely destroyed).

THE BATTLE OF EGER

Defenders: 2,300 Hungarians

Background: In 1520 Turkish sultan Suleiman the Magnificent sought to expand his Ottoman Empire eastward into Europe. In 1552, after more than 30 years of war and advances, a Turkish force of approximately 80,000 soldiers attacked a castle fortress in the town of Eger, one of the Kingdom of Hungary's last strongholds. Roughly 2,000 people, including 1,500 soldiers, defended it.

The Stand: The Turks had more than 150 pieces of artillery, including 15 huge cannons. They fired at the castle from every direction for days, and then for weeks...and couldn't get inside. They made repeated attempts to storm the castle, shot flaming arrows over the sides, even dug under the walls and planted bombs...and they still couldn't get inside. Finally, after 39 days, during which roughly a third of the Hungarians inside were killed, the Turks just gave up and left. The Hungarians, outnumbered almost 50 to 1, had won.

THE BATTLE OF SZIGETVÁR

Defenders: 2,300 Croatians and Hungarians

Background: In 1566 Suleiman the Magnificent was back at it. The now 72-year-old sultan himself led a force of 100,000 men against a fortress in Szigetvár, Hungary. The enormous procession

left Constantinople on May 1, 1566, and arrived on August 6.

The Stand: For a month the Turks attacked; for a month they were repelled. In September they made an offer to the leader of the Croatian defenders, Nikola Zrinski: If he agreed to surrender, they would make him ruler of Croatia. He refused. On September 7 Suleiman died, apparently of natural causes, and the following day the Turks bombarded the fortress until it was almost completely destroyed. Zrinski, now commanding just 600 men, made his last stand against tens of thousands of storming Turks. They fought until only seven Croatian soldiers were left alive, Zrinski not among them. Estimates put the Turkish losses at more than 20,000.

OTHER NOTABLE LAST STANDS

The Sicarii: In 72 A.D., in the midst of the First Jewish-Roman War, about 1,000 Jewish extremists known as the Sicarii ("dagger" in Latin) were holed up in the Masada, a massive stone fortress at the top of an isolated plateau. An army of 10,000 Roman soldiers surrounded it and spent nine months building a ramp to the top. Then they dragged up huge battering rams and slammed the 12-foot-thick walls over and over until they finally breached it. They put on their armor and prepared for battle...but found every man, woman, and child inside dead. The night before they had all committed suicide rather than be taken alive.

Admiral Yi Sunsin: On October 26, 1597, a Korean force of 13 ships met 133 Japanese warships and 200 more smaller ships in Myeongnyang Strait at the southwest tip of Korea. When the day-long battle was over, Korean admiral Yi Sunsin had masterminded one of the most successful naval stands in history, losing no ships while sinking 31 Japanese ships and damaging 92 more.

Los Niños Héroes: On September 12, 1847, an American force of 13,000 led by General Winfield Scott attacked Chapultepec Castle in Mexico City in one of the last battles of the Mexican-American War. Near the end of the following day, Mexican General Nicolás Bravo finally ordered retreat, but six military cadets—between 13 and 19 years old—refused. They stayed and faced the American onslaught, going down one by one to rifle fire or bayonet wounds. Legend says the last one wrapped himself in a Mexican flag and threw himself off the castle. Los Niños Héroes—the Boy Heroes—are among Mexico's most admired historical figures.

THE LEGO SPILL OF '97

Oil spills get all the press—but what about Legos? Sneakers? TNT? It turns out that a lot of strange things end up in our oceans.

THE SS *TOKIO EXPRESS*

Lost Cargo: Toys

What Happened: In February 1997, a rogue wave struck the *Tokio Express* off Lands End, England, knocking several cargo containers into the sea. Inside the containers: 4,756,940 Legos, including tiny frying pans, witch hats, and countless Lego scuba tanks, life preservers, rafts, spear guns, and other sea-themed Legos. Some of the toys washed up on the shores of England; others drifted all the way Florida. Those Legos are not alone: Shipping containers fall into the sea all the time. During the stormy winter season it's not uncommon for as many as 500 containers to fall off the world's ships *every month*, and many of them burst open when they hit the water. If the cargo inside is buoyant, it can float for months or even years before washing ashore somewhere in the world.

THE SS *RICHARD MONTGOMERY*

Lost Cargo: Bombs

What Happened: In August 1944, this American cargo ship ran aground and broke in two in the Thames Estuary in southeast England. It was carrying 6,127 tons of explosives—including more than 13,000 bombs weighing 250 pounds each—bound for U.S. military forces in France. About half the deadly cargo was salvaged in the weeks that followed. The rest, including more than 1,400 tons of TNT, remain on or near the wreck today, in water so shallow that parts of the ship can be seen poking out of the water.

Whether the passage of time has made the wreck more or less likely to explode is debatable. Opinions are similarly divided over whether the wreck should be cleaned up, detonated, "contained" inside a massive concrete barrier, or just left alone. When an attempt was made in 1967 to remove munitions from a similarly laden Polish ship that sank in the English Channel in 1946, the wreck exploded with a force equivalent to an earthquake measuring 4.5 on the Richter scale. If the *Richard Montgomery* ever blew

At latitude 60° south, it is possible to sail around the world without reaching land.

CHEESEY DOES IT

Random facts about the world's favorite milk product.

• Cheese is popular in most parts of the world. A notable exception: China. Invading Tatars and Mongols ate dairy products, so the Chinese associated cheese with the enemy.

• Most-consumed cheese worldwide: Cheddar.

• Six cheeses named after the European cities where they were first made: Parmesan (Parma, Italy), Romano (Rome), Gouda (Netherlands), Edam (Netherlands), Cheddar (England), and Camembert (France).

• Cheddar is naturally white. It's dyed orange with annatto seed, which comes from the tropical bixa tree.

• At cheese tastings, testers freshen and neutralize their mouths with gingerbread.

• According to the USDA, there are only 18 basic kinds of cheese: Brick, Edam, Whey, Camembert, Cheddar, Gouda, Cottage, Cream, Neufchatel, Hand, Limburger, Roquefort, Trappist, Romano, Parmesan, Swiss, Provolone, and Sapsago.

• Cheese can be made from the milk of most mammals, including reindeer, buffalo, camels, llamas, horses, donkeys, zebras, and yak.

• In 2007 a Dutch cheesemaker created the largest cheese wheel in history. It was six feet wide and weighed 1,323 pounds.

• What causes milk to harden and form into cheese: rennet, an enzyme extracted from the abomasum, the cow's fourth stomach.

• The red wax casing used on Gouda cheese in the U.S. was invented by the grandfather of 1980s pop star Huey Lewis.

• "Real" certified Brie cheese is made only in the Brie region of France and only by two companies: Brie de Meaux and Brie de Melun.

• Hard cheeses, like cheddar, have less moisture than soft cheeses, like brie. Result: Hard cheeses have more fat.

• The blue stuff in blue cheese is a mold that's actually a form of penicillin.

up, it's estimated that the blast and resulting tsunami would do $1.8 billion worth of damage to nearby coastal communities. The British government says the risk of such an explosion is "remote," but it has established a 24-hour guard to keep divers and pleasure boaters away...just in case.

THE *HANSA CARRIER*

Lost Cargo: Sneakers

What Happened: In May 1990, the freighter was traveling from South Korea to the United States when it encountered a violent storm off the Alaskan Peninsula. By the time the storm passed, 21 cargo containers had been washed off the deck and into the sea, including five containers holding an estimated 80,000 Nike sneakers and work boots. When the soggy but still wearable shoes began washing up along the coasts of Washington and Oregon, local residents used the serial numbers to match left and right shoes and created pairs that could be worn or sold. "Meet and Match" days were even organized for people to get together and swap shoes.

THE *TRICOLOR*

Lost Cargo: Automobiles

What Happened: In 2002 the Norwegian *Tricolor* sank after colliding with another cargo ship while both were trying to avoid a third ship in heavy fog. The *Tricolor* was carrying 2,862 brand new luxury cars, including BMWs, Volvos, and Saabs. Because it sank in shallow water in one of the busiest sea lanes in the world, the *Tricolor* could not be left where it was; instead, it was cut into nine sections that were recovered one by one in a salvage operation that took 15 months. The cars were recovered, too, but they had to be written off as a total loss. Estimated retail value: $105 million, making this arguably the biggest "car wreck" in history.

OTHER SPILLS O' STUFF

- **The *Hyundai Seattle* (1994):** 34,000 hockey gloves, chest protectors, and shin guards.
- **The *Hengtong 320* (1997):** 480,000 cans of Chinese beer.
- **The Diamond Knot (1946):** Seven million cans of salmon, or roughly 10% of Alaska's salmon catch for the year. Half of the cans were later "vacuumed" up from the wreck and salvaged.

THE MYSTERIOUS EEL

And we mean reely, reely, mysterious.

WHAT ARE THEY?

Eels have been one of the aquatic world's great mysteries for for more than 2,000 years. It wasn't until relatively modern times that scientists discovered that they were a type of fish—specifically members of the class *Actinopterygii*, the "ray-finned" fishes, making them relatives of herring, anchovies, salmon, and goldfish. Like all fish, eels are cold-blooded, they obtain oxygen via gills, and they have fins. Beyond that they are completely unique.

Eels make up their own fish order—the *Anguilliformes* (from "snake-shaped" in Latin). They all have long, tubular bodies, and instead of having separate fins on their backs, tails, and bellies like most other fish, they have one long, continuous fin that goes down the back, around the tail, and up the belly. Another unique characteristic: they're "naked." Almost all species of eel have no scales, and those that do have them embedded in their skin. What do they have instead of protective scales? Slime. Eels produce a thick, mucuslike substance that protects their naked skin, and, of course, makes them very slippery.

SEA EELS

There are more than 600 different eel species and a tremendous variety of shapes, color, and sizes. Most, by far, are marine—they live exclusively in saltwater oceans and seas. Some standouts:

• There are about 200 species of Moray eels living in tropical reefs in all the world's oceans. Some are small, just several inches long; some are huge. Giant Morays, for example, can reach 13 feet in length. Morays have canine-like snouts and large mouths with very sharp teeth. Bonus: They also have an extra set of jaws inside their throats that lunge forward to help swallow prey (just like the creature in the *Alien* films).

• Conger eels have pectoral fins—the pair of fins found on the sides of fishes near the head—and big puffy "lips." Giant Congers are the most massive eels, growing to more than 10 feet long and

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

weighing as much as 240 pounds. If you've ever eaten *anago* at a sushi restaurant—you've eaten Conger eel.

• Snipe eels can be found from about 1,300 to 13,000 feet deep, and they look like eel-birds. The upper part of their long, pointy, beaklike jaws curves upward and the lower part curves downward—like the beaks of the wading birds known as snipes.

RIVER EELS

There are only about 16 species of *freshwater* eels—but that's deceiving. Although they're found in lakes, rivers, and streams around the world, they're all *catadromous*: They're actually born in the oceans, spend most of their lives in freshwater, and eventually go back to the sea to spawn and die. Some standouts:

• European eels can be found throughout Europe, from Scandinavia to Greece. They grow to about 40 inches in length, and can weigh up to 20 pounds. They have been eaten, and even farmed, for millennia: The ancient Romans kept eels in elaborate garden ponds, and some even kept them for pets.

• American eels look similar to European eels (though females can grow to five feet long). They're found in the eastern Americas from northern Canada to Brazil, and as far inland as the Great Lakes. They're the only freshwater eels in the Western Hemisphere.

• American eels were a dietary staple to many Native Americans tribes: to the *Mi'kmaq* people of New England and eastern Canada they were called *kat*, and they were prepared in many different ways—from raw to steamed to stewed—and their skins were used for making belts, decorations, and even medicine.

• Japanese eels are found in freshwaters in Japan, Korea, and the Philippines. In the sushi world, they're *unagi*.

A LONG, STRANGE EEL

The life cycle of freshwater eels is one of the wonders of nature and ones of its ongoing mysteries. The first person known to study them: 4th century B.C. Greek scholar Aristotle. After being unable to find pregnant females carrying eggs, or witness eels mating, he concluded that eels do not procreate—they simply sprout up from "putrefying" mud. That was incorrect, of course, but it took more than 2,000 years to prove him wrong.

The wad of cotton on the end of a Q-tip is called the *bud*.

In 1896 several small, transparent, willow-leaf-shaped fish were discovered in the Mediterranean Sea. They were deemed a new fish species and named *leptocephalus*, meaning "small head." Then two Italian biologists captured and raised some in aquariums, and watched—in amazement—as the leptocephali slowly turned into eels. This was the first big clue that eels, even freshwater varieties, were born in the ocean. But where?

In 1905 Danish oceanographer Johannes Schmidt started searching the Atlantic for the smallest leptocephali he could find. The smaller they were, naturally, the closer he'd be to their place of birth. Fifteen years later, he finally narrowed it down to the Sargasso Sea—a 2,000-mile-long, warm section of the Atlantic Ocean, running roughly from Bermuda to the Azore Islands off Portugal.

EEL LIFE

The Sargasso Sea is where all European and American eels (and many marine species, as well) go to spawn. According to scientists, it's one of the world's most remarkable animal migrations.

• Eel eggs hatch somewhere in the Sargasso Sea.

• The young leptocephali spend about a year being carried many thousands of miles by ocean currents to estuaries and river mouths all over western Europe and the eastern Americas.

• Once near freshwater, they begin to change into young eels, or *elvers*. As they grow, they make their way up rivers and streams, some for many hundreds of miles, eventually becoming adults and making homes in muddy-bottomed streams and lakes. There they feed on prey such as insects, fish, crabs, worms, and frogs.

• After 10 to as many as 40 years, they make their way back downstream to the Atlantic and swim back to the Sargasso. There, in the depths, the females each lay millions of eggs, males fertilize them, and then both adults die. And it all starts all over again.

* * *

"If dandelions were difficult to grow, they would be welcome on any lawn."

—Andrew Mason

Sir Isaac Newton was only 23 years old when he discovered the law of universal gravitation.

AFTER THE OLYMPICS

The Olympics can turn an unknown athlete into an international star overnight. But then what? For most, there are no professional leagues to join. So what do they do?

Athlete: Mark Spitz
Event: Swimming (1972)
Story: Spitz won two gold medals in the 1968 Olympics, but going into the 1972 Games, he told a reporter he planned on winning *six more* golds. He didn't—he won *seven*, a single-Games record that stood until 2008. Not only that, but all of his winning times in those seven swimming events (100m and 200m freestyle, 100m and 200m butterfly, and three four-man relays) were new world records.
After: The 22-year-old swimmer became an overnight sensation—he appeared on magazine covers, posters, and advertisements, often striking risqué poses while clad in only his Speedo (and mustache). Then he went into show business, playing a paramedic on the medical drama *Emergency!* and reportedly making the short list to host the 1973 Academy Awards, despite the fact that he had never made a movie (or hosted a live TV show). There was even speculation that he might be the next James Bond. In 1974 Spitz decided he didn't like acting and started a successful motivational speaking company. In 1992 he attempted to make the U.S. swim team for the Olympics in Barcelona, Spain...and almost did. At age 42, his times in the trials were actually *better* than they'd been in the 1972 trials. But the level of competition had increased so much in the previous 20 years that Spitz wasn't fast enough to make the team. Still, he was the last swimmer cut.

Athlete: Bruce Jenner
Event: Decathlon (1976)
Story: Jenner played football in college, but switched to track and field because he felt that football was too physically draining. His event: the decathlon, which consists of 10 individual events: 100m, 400m, and 1500m runs, 110m hurdles, javelin, pole vault, discus, high jump, long jump, and shot put. Jenner

won the gold medal at the 1976 Olympics, setting a record high score, and as he ran a victory lap, he carried an American flag handed to him by a fan. It became one of American sports' most iconic images.

After: Completely dominating what is considered one of the most grueling and difficult sporting events made Jenner an instant celebrity. Helping matters were Jenner's movie-star good looks, which he took, naturally, to Hollywood. It didn't go so well—after turning down a chance to star in the movie version of *Superman*, he co-starred with the Village People in the musical *Can't Stop the Music* (considered by many critics to be one of the worst movies of all time) and spent half a season on the TV police drama *CHiPs* filling in for Erik Estrada, who was in a contract dispute. More recently, Jenner has become a regular on TV reality shows and game show "celebrity" editions, including *Skating with Celebrities*, *Family Feud*, *I'm a Celebrity...Get Me Out of Here*, and *The Weakest Link*. He currently co-stars on *Keeping Up With the Kardashians*, which follows Jenner, his second wife Kris Kardashian, and his children and stepchildren.

Athlete: Dick Fosbury

Event: High jump (1968)

Story: Before Fosbury, the usual method of performing the high jump was to run straight to the bar, then jump over it, with legs spread, either front-to-back or side-to-side. Fosbury found that he was too tall to successfully execute it, so he worked on a new method. When Fosbury went up, he ran to the bar at a curve, then jumped over the bar backwards, landing on his back. The curved run allowed for more power and leverage in the jump, and the backwards landing let him focus all of his energy on the jump because he didn't have to worry about a soft landing. He won the gold medal.

After: Not many athletes can say they completely revolutionized their sport. Today, his method—nicknamed the "Fosbury Flop" by a sportswriter—is the *only* way athletes attempt the high jump.

Athlete: Nadia Comaneci

Event: Gymnastics (1976)

Story: The 14-year-old Romanian was the first gymnast ever to score a perfect 10.0 from all seven judges. She won three gold

If a young Tiriki man (Kenya) offers beer to a woman and she spits some of it...

medals in 1976. (She came in second in the individual all-around in 1980, by less than one-tenth of a point.) She won golds on the beam (1976 & '80) and floor exercise (1980), for a career medal count of five gold, three silver, and one bronze.

After: Comaneci returned to Romania and trained Olympic hopefuls. But in 1989 she defected to the United States and in 1996 married gymnast Bart Conner. Comenaci now coaches gymnastics in Norman, Oklahoma, writes for *International Gymnast*, and provides commentary during gymnastics TV broadcasts.

Bonus: Comaneci was so popular that she inspired a hit song. ABC used the theme song from *The Young and the Restless* as music for showing much-repeated montages of her perfect routine. It was renamed "Nadia's Theme" and became a Top 10 hit in late 1976.

Athlete: Greg Louganis

Event: Diving (1988)

Story: Louganis first competed in the 1976 Games at age 16, winning a silver medal in 10m platform diving. The U.S. boycotted the 1980 Games (held in the communist USSR), but Louganis returned in 1984 with record-setting scores in both the 10m platform dive and 3m springboard dive. Amazingly, he won the gold medal again in both events at the 1988 Games in South Korea with even better scores than before. But what really made Louganis famous was a slipup: During a dive in a preliminary round, he leapt off the board, did a midair flip, came back down...and smashed his head on the diving board. Louganis suffered a concussion, but still won the gold medal.

After: Louganis retired from diving after the 1988 games and became a spokesman for several nonprofit groups, raising awareness of depression and domestic violence, both of which he'd suffered. In 1994 Louganis made news with the announcement that he was homosexual. The following year he wrote his autobiography, *Breaking the Surface*, a #1 bestseller for five weeks. The book created a controversy with the revelation that Louganis was HIV positive, and had been so during his Olympics accident—which had spilled some of his blood into the pool. (None of his competitors became infected as a result.) Since then, he's been a TV announcer at diving events, acted in the Broadway play *Jeffrey*, and competed with his Jack Russell Terriers in dog agility competitions.

...into his mouth, they are engaged to be married.

FAMILIAR PHRASES

Here's one of our regular features—the origins of some common phrases.

APPLE OF MY EYE

Meaning: One's beloved

Origin: "It was once believed that the pupil was a vital spot in the human anatomy. Early healers thought it was apple-shaped, and so it became known as the 'apple of the eye.' Because the pupil was considered as vital as life itself, it became customary to call the object of one's affection 'the apple of my eye.'" (From *Common Phrases and Where They Come From*, by Myron Korach)

SPITTING IMAGE

Meaning: A lookalike or exact replica

Origin: "Long ago the phrase referred to a son who looked so much like his father, it was said that the boy had been 'spit from his father's mouth.' Over time, the expression was altered and modified to 'spit and image' and then to 'spitting image.'" (From *Cat Got Your Tongue*, by Daniel J. Porter)

WHAT THE DICKENS?

Meaning: "What the heck?"

Origin: "It has nothing to do with English novelist Charles Dickens—Shakespeare had made use of the phrase much earlier in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. (Mrs. Page says of Falstaff, 'I cannot tell what the dickens his name is.') In those times the word 'dickens' was used in preference to 'devil,' which was considered impolite." (From *Everyday Phrases*, by Neil Ewart)

TONGUE IN CHEEK

Meaning: Being facetious or knowingly ironic

Origin: "A contemptuous gesture common from at least the 18th century involved poking your tongue in your cheek. But because it was impossible to understand someone who spoke with their tongue in their cheek, 'to put one's tongue' in one's cheek came to

mean 'to speak insincerely.'" (From *The Real McCoy: The True Stories Behind Our Everyday Phrases*, by Georgia Hole)

TO HAVE A CRUSH

Meaning: To be in (what at least feels like) love

Origin: "It's a distortion of the French word *crèche*, meaning 'crib.' To be 'in a *crèche*,' or to 'have one's own *crèche*,' in 17th century France, meant you were so smitten with love that you were as helpless and irresponsible as an infant, or were crib-bound." (From *The Cat's Pajamas*, by Tad Tuleja)

NO PAIN, NO GAIN

Meaning: To improve, one must work hard

Origin: "This dictum, long uttered by athletic coaches urging players to train harder, is far more ancient than most of them probably realize. Indeed, 'Without pains, no gains,' was in John Ray's proverb collection of 1670. Some versions reinforce it by adding, 'No sweat, no sweet.'" (From *Southpaws and Sunday Punches*, by Christine Ammer)

PIPE DOWN

Meaning: "Be quiet!"

Origin: "In Britain's Royal Navy, this was the last call of the day through the bosun's pipe, a ship's signaling whistle played by the bosun, or petty officer. There were numerous standard signals, and the one for lights-out and silence was called 'pipe down.' In 'navalese' the phrase became a forceful suggestion to the noisy or argumentative that they should shut up and be quiet." (From *To Coin a Phrase*, by Edwin Radford and Alan Smith)

STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

Meaning: Verifiably accurate information

Origin: "It has nothing to do with a horse speaking, of course. A horse's age can more accurately be judged by looking at its teeth (which grow according to a strict system). So, if you were buying the horse, you would do better to look at the horse's mouth than rely on any information about its age that the vendor might give you." (From *Why Do We Say…?*, by Nigel Rees)

Ammonia gets its name from the Egyptian god Amun.

PARK ON AN ANGEL

What's the difference between good and evil? Proofreading. The following are excerpts from real church bulletins.

"The church office will be closed until opening. It will remain closed after opening. It will reopen Monday."

"When parking on the north side of the church, please remember to park on an angel."

"The cost for attending the Fasting and Prayer conference includes meals."

"Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days."

"Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered."

"There is a sign-up sheet for anyone wishing to be baptized on the table in the foyer."

"Please join us as we show our support for Amy and Alan in preparing for the girth of their first child."

"The third verse of 'Blessed Assurance' will be sung without musical accomplishment."

"The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on the Water.' The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'"

"The concert held in Fellowship Hall was a great success. Special thanks are due to the minister's daughter, who labored the whole evening at the piano, which as usual fell upon her."

"The visiting monster today is Rev. Jack Bains."

"The Sunday Night Men's Glee Club will meet on Saturday at the park, unless it rains. In that case they will meet at their regular Tuesday evening time."

"The class on prophecy has been cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances."

"Jean will be leading a weight-management series Wednesday nights. She's used the program herself and has been growing like crazy!"

"Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get."

In 2004 the Russian Orthodox Church officially ruled that playing chess is not a sin.

MYTH-CONCEPTIONS

"Common knowledge" is frequently wrong. Here are some examples

MYTH: Cockroaches would survive a nuclear holocaust.
TRUTH: Some scientists say that cockroach bodies contain very little water, which might protect them from radiation damage (although their offspring would be genetically mutated). But on an episode of *MythBusters*, 50 cockroaches were exposed to post-nuclear levels of radiation...and they all died within 24 hours.

MYTH: If you think someone is an undercover cop, ask them. If they are, they have to tell you.
TRUTH: It's a common scene in movies: The criminal asks a suspicious character if he's a cop and avoids entrapment. No such law exists. Undercover cops are allowed to lie to protect themselves.

MYTH: Whatever else was said about Benito Mussolini, the fascist dictator of Italy, at least he made the trains run on time.
TRUTH: Pure propaganda. Italy's railway system was upgraded between World War I and when Mussolini took office in 1922, so whatever improvements had been made weren't his doing. Even so, the claim that the trains in Italy were always on time was an exaggeration.

MYTH: Singer-songwriter Robert Zimmerman changed his name to Bob Dylan in order to honor one of his idols, Welsh poet Dylan Thomas.
TRUTH: The name is an homage, but not to Thomas. Dylan had a favorite uncle named Dillon and was also a big fan of the TV western *Gunsmoke*, which featured a character—a U.S. Marshal—named Matt Dillon.

MYTH: When you're hungry, your stomach rumbles.
TRUTH: It's not your stomach making the noise—it's actually your small intestine. The small intestine is what's behind your belly button; most of your stomach sits behind the lower ribs.

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SACRIFICE ON THE SOFTBALL FIELD

What has three heads, five good legs, and is one of the most inspiring sports stories we've ever heard? Read on.

BATTER UP!

It was the second inning of a 2008 NCAA Division II women's softball game. The Western Oregon University Wolves were visiting the Central Washington University Wildcats. It was the last game of the season, and both teams were vying for a spot in the NCAA Tournament. Up to the plate walked WOU's 5'2" outfielder, Sara Tucholsky. Some CWU home fans were heckling her about her short stature, but Tucholsky paid them no mind—she was focused on a personal goal: Her softball career would soon be over, and she wanted to hit a home run, a feat she had never accomplished in her eight years of organized ball. In fact, Tucholsky only had three hits in 34 at-bats that season. But now, with two runners on base and no score in the game, here was her chance to redeem herself. First pitch: called strike. Undeterred, Tucholsky dug in on the second pitch and swung as hard as she could...and knew immediately that she had gotten all of it. In her excitement, as she watched the ball sail over the center field fence, she completely missed tagging first base. So a few steps into her turn toward second, she stopped and spun around to go back.

But then...*SNAP!* Her elation turned into agony.

Something had ripped inside Tucholsky's right knee and she collapsed onto the dirt. As she lay there, the umpire informed WOU Head Coach Pam Knox that Tucholsky had to touch every base in order for the home run to count—otherwise a pinch runner would have to take first base, giving her only a single. And her teammates could not assist her, or she'd be out. Seeing no other option, Coach Knox called for the pinch runner.

TOUCH 'EM ALL

That's when CWU's star player, Mallory Holtman, stepped in. The Wildcats' first baseman was the career home run leader in the

Great Northwest Athletic Conference but had never made it to the NCAA Tournament. And if her team lost, her collegiate softball career would be over. But none of that mattered as she saw her opponent writhing in agony. Holtman asked the umpire, "Excuse me, would it be OK if we carried her around and she touched each bag?" The ump said that there was no rule against someone from the other team helping her, so Holtman and Shortstop Liz Wallace ran over and gently lifted Tucholsky off the field.

Thus began one of the strangest home run trots in the history of the game. "I don't know what it looked like to observers," recalled Holtman, "but it was kind of funny because Liz and I were carrying her on both sides, and we'd get to a base and gently, barely tap her left foot." For Tucholsky's part, she doesn't remember too much—she was more focused on the pain. The only words she spoke were, "Thank you guys so much."

HOME AT LAST

When Tucholsky's left foot finally touched home plate, the crowd was giving the girls a standing ovation. Many in the stadium were in tears as Holtman and Wallace placed her in a chair. The girls' sacrifice for a player they didn't even know ended up costing their team the game—the Wolves won, 4–2. But afterward, few were talking about the final score. Said Coach Knox, "It's moments like that that you respect that it's just a game. I hope it's a lesson my players will never forget. I certainly won't."

Thanks to Tucholsky's homer, the Wolves earned a spot in the NCAA Tournament, where they came in second place. Tucholsky didn't play, though—she'd torn her ACL. Her last career at-bat turned out to be her only home run. When asked about the incident, Tucholsky maintains that Holtman and Wallace were the real heroes. And they've been pretty humble as well. "In the end," said Holtman, "it's not about winning and losing so much—it was about this girl. She hit it over the fence, and she deserved a home run."

Postscript: It turned out that the umpire was wrong: Because the ball had cleared the fence, the runner was automatically awarded all four bases, so a pinch runner *could* have come in and finished running for Tucholsky. But if the umpire *had* known the correct rule, the world would have been denied an incredible act of sportsmanship.