

POTPOURRI

“All governments lie.” --I.F. Stone



The Angel Gabriel:

In Islam-- Dictated from God, Gabriel recited the Quran, verse by verse, commanding Muhammad to memorize each line.

In Christianity--Archangel Gabriel announced the impending births: of John the Baptist to Zacharias through Elizabeth, of Jesus through Mary [The Annunciation].

In Judaism --Gabriel interacts with Daniel to interpret a vision from God, and then to predict the end of the Jews' exile in Babylon.

In Mormonism --Gabriel and Noah, who built the Ark, are actually the same person.

Gabriel means
“*Man of God.*”

Some people believe that Gabriel is a female spirit; others hold that angels have no gender.

Featured Quote:

“The statesman’s task is to hear God’s footsteps marching through history, and to try to catch on to His coattails as He marches past.”

--Otto von Bismarck

BIG Q #79

Why do we not just want to seek the truth in arguments, but defeat our enemies?

FACTOIDS:

! Cost of a Legends Suite seat on the field level behind dug-outs and homeplate at Yankee Stadium: **\$2,600 per game.** [Babe Ruth’s salary for his first season w/Boston: \$3,500.]

! 1970: **10%** of Silicon Valley engineers were **foreign-born**; Today: **Half.**

! *Latin-American* **immigrants** making over \$100,000/year have increased **three** times as fast as U.S. born workers; *Asian* immigrants have increased **seven** times as fast.

! 23 U.S. banks have **failed** so far this year and were closed by the FDIC.

! During WWII, the Red Cross was ordered to maintain **racially separate** blood banks.

!Google gives some employees **one day/week** to work on whatever project they choose.

February 22, 2006: The last time **Justice Clarence Thomas** asked a question from the Supreme Court bench.

HUMOR [?]:

Bernie Madoff’s lawyer claims all charges should be dropped, since Madoff is no longer a threat to society because there aren’t any rich people left.

--Jay Leno

from **Krishna:**

K: A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Linoleum Blownapart.

K: Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.

K: Atheism is a non-prophet organization.

Rene Descartes had a drink in a bar. The bartender asked if he wanted another. Descartes said, “I don’t think so,” and he disappeared.

KWIKWIZ:

751. Which country has the highest number of languages in the world?

752. Which culture invented wheels & axles for toys, but not for transport?

753. Is the word “cardshark” or “cardsharp”?

754. What was the real name of Redd Foxx from the TV show “Sanford And Son”?

755. Who was the leading individual living donor to charity in the U.S. last year?

“A mere castle can be created in a year, nature must have its time.” --Duke of Argyll, 1770s

Irrigation for agriculture uses 2/3 of the world’s fresh water.

Heresy is from the Greek and means *to choose*.

Why is it hotter in summer than winter when it’s still 93 million miles from the sun? *It’s the tilt of the earth.*

In the late 1940s, Cajun music was strongly influenced by blues and jazz, and a new style --**zydeco**--was born. In the mid 1950s, "the king of zydeco," Clifton Chenier, recorded the song "*Les haricots sont pas salés*" (the green beans ain't salty). The title was a comment on hard economic times when there was no salted meat to add to the beans. It is also the origin of the word **zydeco**. "*Les haricots*" is real-ly *lay za ree ko*. Now, drop the "lay" because that is just the article (the) and not really part of the word. Now we've got ZA ree ko. Change the *r* to a *d* (a normal change for an intervocalic r), diphthongize the stressed vowel, and reduce the others (that's what English likes to do), and--*voilà*: **zydeco**.

Happy Spring from **Alan**:
www.greatdanepromilitary.com/Life/index.htm

Who bought the first fax machine, and why? [There was no one to fax to.]

The average **horsepower** of a new car is **70% higher** than in the mid 1980s. --*Auto Institute*

little q: Why do rock stars die before 27?

The Perfect Picture Frame



The arms of a starfish, the spiral of a conch, and the petals of a rose have a commonality with the Parthenon in Athens and the Pyramids of Giza: **The Golden Ratio**. It is also called **phi** [φ] after the Greek sculptor *Phidias*. Two line segments are in Golden proportion if the ratio of the shorter line, S, to the longer, L, equals the ratio of the longer line to the sum of both lines:

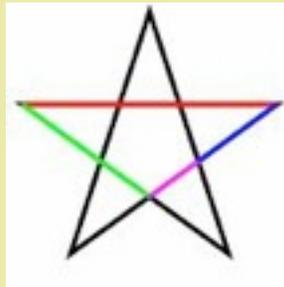
$$S/L = L/(L+S)$$

Solving for L we find:

$$L = [(1 + \sqrt{5})/2] \cdot S = \phi \cdot S = 1.618 \cdot S$$

Actually phi is an irrational [unending] number:
1.618033988...

The L & W of Mona Lisa’s face are in golden proportion, and the human body is riddled with golden ratios. The upper and lower portions of the main stem of the Christian cross are in the golden ratio.



A pentagram colored to distinguish its line segments of different lengths. The four lengths are in **golden ratio** to one another.

One of the seven Roman hills is the *Palatine* where the emperor’s and other luxury houses were built; this has given us our word: **palace**.

“Language is the archives of history.” --Emerson

Bias v. Talent: *from Ken*
www.youtube.com/watch?v=9lp0IWv8QZY

“If not for **lawyers**, none of these abuses [*Abu Ghrab/Guantanamo/water-boarding/extraordinary rendition*] would have ever occurred.”
--*Philippe Sands*

Harvard Class of ‘07: 58% of men and 43% of women took jobs in finance and consulting. --*Harvard Crimson*

Last year, over half the **engineering** graduates at **Penn** did, too. --*Dan Rather*

Orchestra originally meant the seats closest to the Greek stage.

“**Fit the century, forget the here.**”
--fashion designer **Valentina**

KWIKWIZ:

- 756.** A day on the planet Mercury would be how long on earth?
- 757.** What percentage of the earth’s crust includes volcanic debris?
- 758.** How many red blood cells does the human body produce each second?
- 759.** Who coined the phrase: “survival of the fittest”?
- 760.** Without doing the calculation, guess how long a million seconds is. Now try to guess the same for a billion seconds.

Elephant Art from *Carla*:
<http://fun.mivzakon.co.il/flash/video/2344/2344.html>

The next time you want to accuse someone of pigheaded adherence to something that is obviously wrong, call him or her a **mumpsimus**. At the very least, you'll get a respite from the argument while your opponent looks up the word.

BIG Q #80

Did God create man, or did man create God?

What is the biggest contributor to mold in the home? The gasket around the refrigerator/freezer door
 --Larry Ubell

“Tea Party” protests in Alaska proclaimed: *“Taxes Enough Already.”* That state receives **\$1.84 from** Washington, for every dollar they send to Washington.
 --Gail Collins

Patients w/six months to live were asked if their doctors had asked about end-of-life care. 69% said No. Those who did had 36% lower medical costs during the last week of life.
 --Archives of Internal Med.

Patriotic video from **Alan**:
www.bornagainamerican.org

In 1925 several countries banned inside use of lead-based paint. 53 years later we did.

In the word *inflammable*, the prefix *in-* functions as an intensive--it indicates increased emphasis or force. But because this prefix can also mean 'not', inflammable could mistakenly be interpreted as meaning '*not flammable*.'

TAXES

When tax rates were extremely high, they applied to only the richest of the rich: the truly wealthy and merely affluent had separate marginal rates. For a married couple in 1960 the 38% rate started at \$20,000 [\$145,000 today]. The top bracket of 91% began at \$400,000 [nearly \$3 million today].

--David Leonhardt

In 1935, FDR raised the top rate to 79%, from 63%, and raised the income level for that rate to \$5 million [about \$75 million today] from \$1 million. It only applied to **one person**:

John D. Rockefeller. --D.L.

President Obama is being called a “socialist” who seeks to destroy capitalism because he wants to raise the tax rate on the highest-income Americans back to about 10 percentage points less than it was for most of the Reagan administration.

KWIKWIZ answers:

751. New Guinea has 1,000 of the world's 6,000 languages crammed into an area only slightly larger than Texas, and divided into dozen of language families and isolated languages as different from each other as English is to Chinese. Nearly half have fewer than 500 speakers; the largest has only 100,000.

752. Native Mexicans since they lacked domestic animals to hitch to wheeled vehicles.

753. Cardsharp

754. Sanford

755. Self-made billionaire & NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who donated \$235 million in 2008

756. two years

757. 80%--of course that includes the ocean, too

758. 2.5 million/second

759. Not Charles Darwin, but his nemesis, philosopher Herbert Spencer. They shared two basic tenets: universality of conflict [all beings are in competition for limited resources], and the principle of adaptation [those who best adapt to the changing environment will most likely dominate resources and reproduce].

760. A million seconds is less than 12 days; a billion is almost 32 years.

CHALLENGE #167 was:

He had six academic degrees, but blew off the fingers of his left hand trying to improve on gunpowder. He wrote a 'cook-book' for sex with illustrations of him 'doing it' with his wife's best friend. **Answer:** Alex Comfort, “The Joy of Sex” [*Jim S. got it.*]

CHALLENGE #168:

His father was a blind lawyer who won a case of adultery with only a pair of footprints upside down on a car dashboard--as evidence. He was expelled from Oxford for writing mash notes to a 17-year-old boy, but was an avid bedder of actresses. He started each day at 6 a.m. with a glass of champagne. His fame: writing about a lawyer.

CHALLENGE #169:

What was the highest mountain range in the world--400 million years ago?