

Bob's Corner

It seems that human beans, including couples and others, always have had difficulty understanding each other. Sometimes it's simply a matter of not hearing "properly."

For example, I heard of a man quite a few years back, telephoned by a neighbor, who asked him if he could come over and catch a chick. As the neighbor had small children, the man figured that a pet had gotten loose, and that the neighbor needed assistance in corralling the critter. But when he got next door, his buddy wanted to know if \$50 was OK. "OK for what?" queried the man. "Well, I need to cash that check I phoned about," responded the friend.

And when our daughter, Vicki, was quite young, we were in a restaurant, where the waitress asked her if she wanted "super salad." "Yes," said Vicki. The waitress looked puzzled, then repeated her request, but more slowly and distinctly. What she said was, "Do you want soup or salad?" (Vicki took the salad, which wasn't super, but tasty).

An aside here. Why is our language so "weird?" I mean, we say that certain items are "pretty ugly." Or that food was "awfully tasty." I can't figure it out.

Anyway, this matter of hearing one phrase or word, but incorrectly, sometimes causes family memories of a distant kind. For example, when our son, Michael, was around 8 or so, he was in our bathroom, and I was ill. Not because Mikey was in the bathroom, but I had some ailment or other. Jan went to the door of the reading chamber and yelled, "Michael, is the Vick's Day Care in there?" And Mikey responded, in all seriousness, "The big steak hair?" To this day we still talk about the "big steak hair." Actually, I think that accurately describes the toupees worn by William Shatner and Robert Redford.

A bit of confession here. When I was a teen-ager, there was a popular song, "Poetry In Motion." I swear to you that until I was in my mid-20s I thought the words were, "Oh, a tree in motion." Strange. And that song that's still popular, "Love Potion #9" includes the words, "You know, that gypsy with the gold-capped tooth." For more years than I want to admit, I firmly believed that the words were, "that gypsy with the gold tattoo." And truthfully, there was a long period during which I thought the words were, "that gypsy with the polecat too." Selective hearing?

More recently, Jan sent me to Shop Smart for a jar of spiced olives. I checked the olive supply, and came home with a jar of pimento-stuffed olives. When I handed it to her, Jan looked at me oddly and asked me what happened to the sliced olives she wanted. I had no suitable answer. Or as is said in the military, "No excuse, sir." But olived through it.

A few days later she asked me for a tooth pick. When I handed her one from the kitchen she gave me that odd look again, and said, "Where's my Q-tip?" Again, I had no suitable answer. It was sort of an "ear-ie" situation.

But enough of this. I need to get to a bank and catch a chick.

Letters to the Editor

(Editor's Note: Views and commentary expressed in letters to the editor are strictly those of the letter-writers.

Typed, double-spaced letters are acceptable for consideration. Hand-written letters that are double-spaced and highly legible also can be considered for publication. Cards of thanks are not accepted as letters.)

**From Bill Reid
Cave Junction**

Webster's Dictionary defines fiction "as a making up of imaginary happenings." Ivy Greenwood in a letter to the editor last week wrote a masterful piece of fiction concerning depleted uranium.

Fact: Depleted uranium (DU) is approximately 40 percent less radioactive than natural uranium. DU emits alpha and beta particles and gamma rays.

Alpha particles, the primary radiation type produced by DU are blocked by the skin, while beta particles are blocked by clothing. Gamma rays emitted by DU is very low. When fired or after "cooking off" in fires or explosions, the exposed DU rod poses an extremely low radiological threat as long as it remains outside the body. Taken into the body via metal fragments or dust-like particles, DU may pose a long-term health hazard if the amount is large.

The impact of DU ammunition against a had target creates a fine DU dust that contaminates the impact site, though small amounts of DU dust drift downwind. Test data demonstrate that normally, approximately 20 percent of a DU penetrator is aerosolized on impact with a tank. The impact of one 120 mm DU tank round could therefore create approximately 950 g of DU dust. During a single attack by an A-10 aircraft shooting a burst of 30 mm ammunition, between five and 16 DU bullets will likely hit the target, creating 300 to 960 g of aerosol.

In the last Gulf War, aircraft accounted for approximately 86 percent (by weight) of the DU shot. A strafing attack from an aircraft typically results in few DU rounds (5-10 percent) hitting the target. Tank rounds accounted for approximately 14 percent (by weight) of the total DU released, but more than half this quantity was shot on practice ranges in Saudi Arabia.

In combat, 80 to 90 percent of the tank rounds fired will hit the target and remain in or near it. Rounds that hit a soft target or the ground tend to stay intact or break into a few large fragments. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, it is plausible that well over 80 percent (by weight) of the DU shot during the war did not hit a hard target, thereby minimizing the creation of respirable-size DU dust and reducing the immediate post-war health risks posed by DU in Kuwait and Iraq. Approximately 286,233 kg of DU was used in the 1991 Gulf War.

The voluntary Veterans Affairs DU Medical Follow-up program is an important source for identifying potential untoward health effects in friendly fire victims who have retained DU fragments. About a quarter of the over 60 level I exposed individuals who have been evaluated still carry DU fragments in their bodies, and they have elevated levels of urinary uranium nine years after the Gulf War. The present health status of this group

shows they have not developed kidney abnormalities, leukemia, bone or lung cancer, or any classical uranium-related adverse outcome.

For male, active duty military personnel in the U.S. military, the average frequencies of hospitalization for malignant disease are: Leukemia (all types) two per 100,000 per year and All Cancer, 60 per 100,000 per year.

There are many uncertainties about the use and effects of DU munitions, but the growing body of scientific research points to the conclusion that the use of DU munitions creates environmental contamination that can affect the health of people. The most prudent course of action for Ivy Greenwood is to press for scientific studies, and not science fiction.

'A plan'

**From Fred Mittleman
Cave Junction**

"Why do they hate us?" I am afraid we are all in for a demonstration.

What I was hoping is that we were at a historic moment of worldwide consideration leading to a plan. The plan could establish contracts, timetables, inspections, sanctions, and rewards for the worldwide destruction of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

The carefully observed destruction of WMD in Iraq could be the first part of a package deal.

Wouldn't this be something the world's nations could buy into? Even Iraq? Wouldn't it be a gift?

'Advertising the war'

**From Lucky Jean
Cave Junction**

I am proud to stand for peace with the Women in Black.

It's good to stand up as a visible opposition to all the lies on television. I'm tired of seeing one war after another being packaged for our approval like another new TV miniseries.

War is not a movie or a video game. Real soldiers that have been in real wars will tell you that. War is serious. War is death and poison and pain.

Every time anyone contemplates waging a war, there should be someone with the guts to stand up and say it's wrong.

I'm tired of being complicit in all the death going on in Iraq. I'm tired of being expected to just sit here and be quiet about it like I'm too stupid to tell that all the talk about "freedom" and "democracy" is just advertising.

I'm tired of George Bush looting the treasury for his rich friends and wasting the rest on "playing war."

(Continued on page 3)



MILL DEMO - Despite the relentless rain, between 30 and 40 people attended the Lomakatsi Restoration Project's wood products demonstration with Economizer Wood Mill from Hayfork Watershed Research Center in California on Saturday, March 22 at Kauffman Wood Products in Kerby. The demonstration was funded through a grant from The National Fire Plan, which gives money to state and area organizations for such efforts as fire education and on the ground fuels reduction. For the second year, the Lomakatsi Restoration Project held a fuels reduction workforce training program, in which some I.V. residents took part. The wood poles used in the demonstration were from private lands, including three valley residences. (Photos by Sam Newton)

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and Chinese Herbs
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Look who's on the President's mailing list!

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Best Wishes,
George W. Bush

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Illinois Valley News

An Independent Weekly Newspaper Co-owned and published by Robert R. (Bob) and Jan Rodriguez
Bob Rodriguez, Editor El Jefe

Entered as second class matter June 11, 1937 at Post Office as Official Newspaper for Josephine County and Josephine County Three Rivers School District, published at 321 S. Redwood Hwy., Cave Junction, OR 97523

Periodicals postage paid at Cave Junction, OR 97523
Post Office Box 1370 USPS 258-820
Telephone (541) 592-2541, FAX (541) 592-4330
Volume 66, No. 1

Staff: Cindy Newton, Britt Fairchild,
Chris Robertson, Sharon Silva & Becky Loudon
Member: Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association

DEADLINES:
News, Classified & Display Ads,
Announcements & Letters
3 P.M. FRIDAY

(Classified ads will be accepted until Noon, Monday with an additional charge.)

POLICY ON LETTERS: 'Illinois Valley News' welcomes letters to the editor provided they are of general interest, in good taste, legible and not libelous. All letters must be signed, using complete name, and contain the writer's address and telephone number. The latter need not be published, but will be used to verify authenticity. The 'News' reserves the right to edit letters. One letter per person per month. Letters are used at the discretion of the publisher. Unpublished letters are neither acknowledged nor returned. A prepaid charge may be levied if a letter is inordinately long in the editor's opinion.

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