

OUT OF THE VAULT

# Self-inflicted gunshots just part of the job

On Nov. 20, 1929, Jim Letts borrowed a .41 caliber revolver from a deputy in the Umatilla County sheriff's office in Pendleton and, in front of four women, the deputy and a reporter, shot himself in the side. Those in attendance laughed when Letts pulled the trigger.

After shooting himself, Letts coolly passed the gun back to the deputy, then took out his pocket knife and pried the bullet free. But there was no parlor trick involved — Letts, you see, was only giving his sales pitch. Shooting himself, sometimes multiple times a day, was how he made his living selling bullet-proof vests.

"I've shot myself more than 4,000 times in the past five years," he bragged.

The vest he wore for his demonstrations was made from laminated steel plates, and would stop everything from BBs to a .45 caliber bullet. Letts traveled throughout the country marketing his wares to law enforcement, and though heavy-caliber bullets dented the protective steel plates slightly, the vest could withstand multiple shots in the same spot.

"Of course the police and sheriff's departments are my customers, so I always go to them to demonstrate," Letts said.

Shooting himself caused a slight stinging sensation, he said, and there was the chance that an impact in the right spot could crack a rib, but in general he was fearless in demonstrating the stopping power of vest for all types of pistols.

Letts also carried gas bombs and other weaponry. "The proper equipment," he said, "for a good lively defensive war."

Renee Struthers is the Community Records Editor for the East Oregonian. See the complete collection of Out of the Vault columns at [eovault.blogspot.com](http://eovault.blogspot.com)

DEAR ABBY

## Three-year age difference complicates teenage crush

**Dear Abby:** I'm a 17-year-old girl and a junior in high school. I have a crush on a guy who's 14 and a freshman. I know age gaps don't matter as much later on, but the difference between 17 and 14 can be drastic. "Jake" is really sweet, and he's as interested in me as I am in him (unlike the boys in my grade).



JEANNE PHILLIPS Advice

I'm friends with Jake's sister "Julie," who's a year older than me and a senior. Julie has made it clear she doesn't like the idea of a romantic relationship between Jake and me because Jake is only 14.

What can I do? Should I ignore this crush? I have judged people who have dated despite age gaps. (For example, a senior boy dating a sophomore girl.) But now I understand it. If the girl is older, does that complicate things?

I don't want to be seen as creepy or gross, but, to be honest, I'm not that experienced romantically or socially myself. (I have never even been to a real party.) Must I forget my feelings and move on, or do I talk to Julie and try to pursue this? — **Teen Crush**

**Dear Teen Crush:** Julie has already given you her answer. As you have

pointed out, there is a bias against dating someone so much younger, and it could cause you problems not only with your peers, but also with the law if your relationship were to become sexual when you turn 18. That's why I'm suggesting you turn your romantic interests elsewhere. When you're BOTH adults, if you're still interested, you can pursue a romantic relationship then.

**Dear Abby:** My fiancé and I are being married in a few days. We are expecting our first child a few days after that. The problem is my mother. We decided on a small ceremony, but my mother is opposed to the marriage because she doesn't like the idea of me marrying — not just my fiancé, but anyone. She has always told me a man will leave me destitute, pregnant with too many kids, and I won't be able to take care of myself. She has repeated it since I was about 10.

Because she has threatened to object at the ceremony, we decided not to invite her. We have invited his parents and my father and stepmother. Mom has said she will not allow my child to

see her grandfather because "he is a bad person." She may have good intentions, but dictating who can be around my child is not her choice, considering she has had little to no contact with him in 25 years.

I wish she could be at our wedding, but she has now distanced herself from me and my fiancé. Should I let her cool off and hope she comes around, or accept that this is the path she has chosen? Please advise, Abby. — **Problem Mother In Kentucky**

**Dear Problem Mother:** Your mother may be anti-marriage because hers failed spectacularly. She appears to be a troubled woman. By all means, let her cool off, but do not allow her to dictate your life. If she does, her anger and bitterness could negatively affect your marriage.

**Dear Veterans:** For your service to our nation, I salute you. My thanks to each of you, as well as to the brave men and women still on active duty, some of whom are in harm's way. You are the personification of patriotism and self-sacrifice for your dedication to our country. I would also like to recognize your families for the sacrifices they, too, have made. — **Love, Abby**

ODDS & ENDS

### Germany bomb alert leads police to big zucchini

BERLIN (AP) — A worried resident in Germany alerted police to what he thought was a World War II bomb in his garden. Officers found ... a particularly large zucchini.

Police were summoned to the scene in Bretten, near the southwestern city of Karlsruhe, on Thursday morning by a worried 81-year-old man.

They said in a statement Friday that officers determined "the object, which really did look very like a bomb" was actually a nearly 16-inch zucchini.

The offending vegetable, which was very dark in color, weighed about 11 pounds. Police believe someone threw it over a hedge into the garden.

Unexploded wartime bombs are unearthed frequently during construction work in Germany, often forcing authorities to evacuate residents while they are defused.



Karlsruhe Police Photo via AP

**A worried resident alerted police to what he thought was a World War II bomb in his garden. Officers rushed over — and found the particularly large zucchini.**

### Thief doesn't get far in motorized grocery store cart

FAIRBANKS, Alaska (AP) — A man accused of stealing a motorized shopping cart from an Alaska grocery store didn't get very far or go very fast before his low-speed getaway attempt was foiled by police.

The battery-operated cart with a basket mounted behind the handlebars has a top speed of 1.9 mph. Authorities say Rondell

Tony Chinuhuk of Anchorage is charged with felony theft for attempting to take the cart early Tuesday from a Safeway store in Fairbanks.

Police say they stopped Chinuhuk while he was crossing a thoroughfare following a 10-minute joyride that consisted mostly of trying to leave the expansive store parking lot.

*The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* reports Chinuhuk was charged with felony theft of the \$2,500 cart. Assistant public defender Jennifer Hite

says in an email the office doesn't comment on cases.

### Cat long thought dead found alive 120 miles away

KENNEBUNKPORT, Maine (AP) — A cat missing for more than a year has been reunited with his owner 120 miles from their Maine home.

Kennebunkport resident George Lichte says he believed his cat, Romeo, was dead after he never came home one day last fall. *The Bangor Daily News* reports Lichte received a phone call two weeks ago from a Skowhegan veterinarian, saying Romeo was found alive.

Solon resident Kevin Taft says he found the friendly feline while he was sitting at a picnic table, and assumed he was a stray. He planned to adopt Romeo, before learning the cat already had an owner.

Lichte says he wonders how Romeo got so far away.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 315th day of 2017. There are 50 days left in the year. This is Veterans Day in the U.S. and Remembrance Day in Canada.

#### Today's Highlight in History:

**On Nov. 11, 1918,** fighting in World War I ended as the Allies and Germany signed an armistice in the Forest of Compiègne.

**On this date:**  
**In 1620,** 41 Pilgrims aboard the *Mayflower*, anchored off Massachusetts, signed a compact calling for a "body politic."  
**In 1778,** British redcoats, Tory rangers and Seneca Indians in central New York killed more than 40 people in the Cherry Valley Massacre.

**In 1831,** former slave Nat Turner, who'd led a violent insurrection, was executed in Jerusalem, Virginia.  
**In 1889,** Washington became the 42nd state.  
**In 1917,** Liliuokalani, Hawaii's first and only queen and its last monarch, died in Honolulu at age 79.  
**In 1921,** the remains of an unidentified American service member were interred in a Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery in a ceremony

presided over by President Warren G. Harding.

**In 1938,** Irish-born cook Mary Mallon, who'd gained notoriety as the disease-carrying "Typhoid Mary" blamed for the deaths of three people, died on North Brother Island in New York's East River at age 69 after 23 years of mandatory quarantine.

**In 1942,** during World War II, Germany completed its occupation of France.

**In 1966,** Gemini 12 blasted off on a four-day mission with astronauts James A. Lovell and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin Jr. aboard; it was the tenth and final flight of NASA's Gemini program.

**In 1992,** the Church of England voted to ordain women as priests.

#### Today's Birthdays:

Actress June Whitfield (TV and film: "Absolutely Fabulous") is 92. Actress Bibi Andersson is 82. Country singer Narvel Felts is 79. Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., is 77. Americana roots singer/songwriter Chris Smither is 73. Rock singer-musician Vince Martell (Vanilla Fudge) is 72. The president of Nicaragua, Daniel Ortega, is 72. Rock singer Jim Peterik (Ides of March, Survivor) is 67. Golfer Fuzzy Zoeller is 66. Pop singer-musician Paul Cowsill (The Cowsills) is 66. Rock singer-musician Andy Partridge (XTC) is 64. Singer Marshall Crenshaw is 64. Rock singer Dave Alvin is 62. Actress Demi Moore is 55. Actress Calista Flock-

hart is 53. Actor Leonardo DiCaprio is 43.

**Thought for Today:** "Life happens too fast for you ever to think about it. If you could just persuade people of this, but they insist on amassing information." — *Kurt Vonnegut, American author (born this date in 1922, died 2007).*

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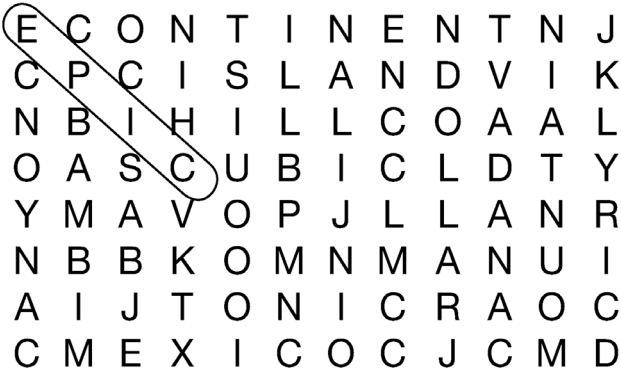
# WORD★Roundup™

by David L. Hoyt & Jeff Knurek

Find and Circle...

- Seven words ending in C  □ □ □ □ □ □ □
- Five land formations  □ □ □ □ □
- Two North American countries  □ □
- Buck (six-letter answer)  □
- Disney deer  □

Answers to Saturday's puzzle: BASIC COMIC STRIP TOPIC EPIC / MOUNTAIN ISLAND CANADIAN / MEXICO CANADA / DOLLAR / BAMBIE



## 7 LITTLE WORDS

Find the 7 words to match the 7 clues. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in each solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

CLUES	SOLUTIONS
1 Jolly Roger flyers (10)	_____
2 bottlenose swimming mammals (8)	_____
3 auburn, russet, and sepia (6)	_____
4 smartphone necessities (8)	_____
5 puts up with (5)	_____
6 they're usually paid monthly (5)	_____
7 numbers like 1, 2, and 3 (9)	_____

DO	WNS	HI	CAR	NEE
BI	DIN	BUC	RG	CHA
BRO	LLS	RS	ERS	BE
LP	CA	ALS	ARS	NS

Today's Answers: 1. BUCKANERS 2. DOLPHINS 3. BROWNS 4. CHARGERS 5. BEARS 6. BILLS 7. CARDINALS

DAYS GONE BY

100 Years Ago  
From the East Oregonian  
Nov. 11-12, 1917

Local employees of the O.-W. R. & N. this morning received letters from General Manager J.P. O'Brien urging them to cooperate in the elimination of waste of food by using care and diligence in the handling of foodstuffs in transit. The food administration lays great stress upon this phase of conservation work and asks that employees make it their patriotic duty to see that foods in transit receive proper refrigeration and ventilation and that it is handled with care to the end that none be wasted or spoiled.

50 Years Ago  
From the East Oregonian  
Nov. 11-12, 1967

Pendleton has turned its back to the river. "Isn't that sad," said Ronald J. Loving, instructor at the University of Oregon School of Architecture, Saturday to a regional town meeting. About 15 people attended the meeting at Pendleton, one of four Oregon cities to hold such meetings. Loving, in a series of color slides, showed Pendleton's relationship with the river. Downtown buildings had their "back" to the river. He said perhaps the luckiest people along the river were those who had homes facing it. He said the benches, pathways and trees could be placed along the river and that things like river bars could be used for beautification. It should be preserved for future generations, he said.

25 Years Ago  
From the East Oregonian  
Nov. 11-12, 1992

Craig Williams, who lives a few miles from the site of a proposed chemical weapons incinerator in Kentucky, has a forecast for Hermiston's future. Williams, a founder and executive director of Kentucky Environmental Foundation, and Pat Costner, a Greenpeace research director, visited Hermiston this week to discuss what they call a "badly flawed" plan to incinerate the nation's arsenal of chemical weapons. Speaking at a Wednesday forum that drew more than 100 people, Williams said several developments led him to conclude the incinerators have a "high potential" to be permanent, even though current law requires them to be dismantled after the weapons are destroyed.

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