

October 2008 E-Newsletter

Dear Colleague,

Click on *Worthwhile Websites* below to check out some great travel sites for teachers and students. Please share this e-newsletter with your peers and invite them to subscribe by e-mailing us at teacher_center@wsboces.org with their names and e-mail addresses.

Jane, Carol and Elyse



Opportunity! Graduate Programs Starting January 2009

Reduced off-campus pricing is offered through the Teacher Center. To register or inquire, contact the Teacher Center at 254-0107 or teacher_center@wsboces.org.

School District Leader Program: Stony Brook University

MS in Literacy Education: Dowling College, 36 credits: Literacy B-6th or 5th-12th. 45 credits: Literacy B-12th

MS in Technological Systems Management: Stony Brook University, 30 credits, Online/hybrid courses will be offered.

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FYI

Announcements

Mini-grant Opportunity. Have you thought about applying for a mini-grant this year? It's a great opportunity to get funding for a classroom or school project that you've wanted to undertake. Your innovative project could qualify for a \$1200 individual mini-grant or, with collaboration, a \$1500 group mini-grant. This could be your year to win! The due time/date for proposals is **3:45 PM on November 7, 2008**. Click on <http://www.seteachercenter.org/grants.cfm> to read and download the Mini-Grant Guide and Application.

If Long Island's Children Each Gave Just \$1, We Could Easily Raise \$1 Million For Disaster Relief
The Hurricanes of 2008 have devastated communities across the Gulf Coast. From day one, the American Red Cross has provided food, shelter and emotional support to those who have been affected. Now, we need your help. The storms may be gone, but relief efforts in Texas and Louisiana will continue for months. Plus, we must be ready to face any other disasters that strike our nation. Long Island's Red Cross chapters know that Long Islanders are generous, but we also know the challenges facing our economy. That said, we are asking Long Islanders to give what they can — even if that is only \$1. Our children alone could raise a million dollars — imagine what we all can do! Contact your local Red Cross chapter to learn more about this important appeal and how you, your business, school or organization, can become a part of the ongoing relief efforts:

Attn: Priscilla Lee, Development Director. Suffolk County Red Cross
95 Horseblock Road, PO Box 745,
Yaphank, NY, 11980, (631) 924-6700

Lincoln, Douglas, and Their Historic Debates. Long before television, the twenty-four-hour news cycle, and the sound bite, political debate was a vital part of civic life in this country. The Gilder Lehrman Institute and the House Divided Project at Dickinson College look back at America's first great debates: the seven joint discussions between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas during the Illinois U.S. Senate campaign of 1858. Longtime rivals who would meet up again in the watershed presidential election of 1860, Lincoln and Douglas famously debated at length about the issues of the day, including slavery, economic development, and American expansion. To take a closer look at each of the Lincoln-Douglas debates, click on: <http://www.gilderlehrman.org/collection/online/lincolndouglas>

Courses and Workshops

November 22-23, Harvard Weekend: Ancient Civilizations Workshops; Harvard Semitic and Peabody Museums

Saturday: Archaeology and Ancient Daily Life: Semitic Museum

Sunday: Pseudo-Archaeology: Supermarket Aisle Archaeology and the Bible: Peabody Museum
Cost: \$65. For registration information, please contact Dr. Peter Feinman, Institute of History, Archaeology, and Education, PO Box 41, Purchase, NY 10577, 914-933-0440, feinmanp@ihare.org

December 2, 2008, Special SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) Training Opportunity: *Adelphi University and WS BOCES, in cooperation with LI SELF present: Embracing the Guidelines: CASEL's Guide to Successful and Sustainable School-wide Social and Emotional Learning.* When schools need information about Social Emotional Learning, they consult CASEL: The Collaborative for Academic,

Social and Emotional Learning. Don't miss this rare opportunity to work with Linda Lantieri and the lead CASEL trainers as they introduce Long Island to their comprehensive "SEL Implementation Guide and Tool Kit." Schools are encouraged to bring a building level team to the conference, as you will have an opportunity to work together to identify your school's needs and next steps. Participants will leave with \$90.00 worth of materials, a wealth of new information and a strategic plan for a successful and sustainable SEL implementation!! SEATING is LIMITED. This is the first time CASEL trainers will be presenting on Long Island. Our State SEL Guidelines will be released by the NY State Education Department in early 2009. To insure that your school is ready, create your school team and register today!

Use this link to download the registration brochure:

<http://www.wsbores.org/library/pdfs/iss1819.pdf> Register on My Learning Plan, or by fax or mail.

See brochure for registration instructions. Team registrations are recommended. Individual registrations are also welcome. Contact Debbie Maxwell for registration questions:

dmaxwell@wsbores.org, 631-595-6829. Contact Joan Fretz for conference program questions: jrfretz@optonline.net, 631-673-2106.

Events

Registration Deadline: October 31, 2008; Invite *Poetry Out Loud: National Recitation Contest* into your high school's ELA classrooms! Register your school to participate. To learn more about this program, visit the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page. **Poetry Out Loud** is a national program that encourages the study of great poetry by offering educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition to high schools across the country. Poetry Out Loud uses a pyramid structure. Beginning at the classroom level, winners will advance to the school-wide competition, then to the state capital competition, and ultimately to the National Finals in Washington, DC. More than 100,000 students are expected to take part in Poetry Out Loud this year!

Upon registration, teachers will receive dynamic teaching tools that will invoke students' excitement about literature and poetry recitation, including sample lesson plans, audio CDs of poets reciting their own famous works, publicity materials for school competitions, and a DVD of winning student performances from the 2007 *Poetry Out Loud* National Finals. If you would like to bring **Poetry Out Loud** to your school, click [here](#) to download a registration form. For more information about registration, contact Sharon Scarlata at sharon@nysaae.org.

November 8, 2008, Presentation "America's First Parkway: The Long Island Motor Parkway"

Long Island authors and researchers Howard Kroplick & Al Velocci will be speaking about and signing their new book, **The Long Island Motor Parkway** " from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM on Saturday, November 8th at the Suffolk County Historical Society. This interactive presentation will include rare images of the parkway and unique memorabilia; including the Tiffany plaque given to George Robertson for winning the 1908 Vanderbilt Cup Race. The room holds approximately 60 people and a donation of \$5 to the Society is suggested. For more complete information, click on the website link below: <http://www.vanderbiltcupraces.com/index.php/events/details/2008/11/>.

March 6 & 7, 2009, The Celebration of Teaching & Learning is back! Where Knowledge Meets Inspiration. We've just launched the 2009 Celebration of Teaching & Learning Web site. Join the conversation and see our new look at thirteencelebration.org. This year, we're honored to host Alan Alda, Temple Grandin, Sir Kenneth Robinson, Eric Schmidt, and the new cast of Sesame Workshop's

"The Electric Company". 2009 will bring exciting news and speakers from the worlds of Science, Math, Technology, Global Awareness, Literacy, Autism, English Language Learners, and Whole School Policy. Keep an eye out for updates and visit thirteencelebration.org often for chances to interact with speakers, make your voice heard, learn about key conference information, and to see all that will happen at The Celebration on March 6-7, 2009 at the Hilton New York. Register now for the Super-Early Bird rates which will save you almost 50%. But it is only available until November 10th. See you there!

Sharing Success Research

Please [click here](#) to access research information on Curriculum Design/ Mapping [Elem, MS, HS]

Please [click here](#) to access research information on:

- Principals as Instructional Leaders [Elem, MS, HS]
- Effective Feedback for Students [Elem, MS, HS]
- Literacy [Elem, MS, HS]

Please [click here](#) to access research information on Technology Integration

Upcoming Sharing Success Surveys:

- Formal Staff Evaluation
- Improving Performance of ELL Students in Literacy and Math

You are invited to submit questions for these surveys. [Click here](#)

Worthwhile Websites

Seven travel and leisure sites for teachers and students

<http://www.classtrips.com>. Educational and fun day and travel trips for school groups, scout groups and home-school groups.

<http://www.familybuzzguide.com>. Entertainment, enrichment and recreation for Parents, Kids & Grandparents, plus movie and DVD reviews.

<http://www.buzzguide.com> Entertainment and recreation for the 21+ audience plus movie and DVD reviews.


www.educationaltravel.com. NETC offers high quality educational tours that inspire, enrich and educate your students.


<http://www.edinformatics.com/travel/>. Education for the Information Age. Student and teacher Travel Resources and Educational Tours.


www.Passports.com. Passports provides educational travel tours for high school and college students, their teachers and professors, and adults. Travel trips are scheduled year-round to Europe, Scandinavia, Africa, the Caribbean, Asia and Australia.


www.EducationalTravelAdventures.com. Customized educational group tours designed to fit your travel budget.


Fourteen websites for elementary and middle school students

Slaves' Stories.  <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/nof/slavery>. Meet four Africans who were taken into slavery in the year 1780. Woodcuts, paintings, and photographs of period artifacts bring their struggles to life for today's youth.


Cynthia Leitich Smith.  <http://www.cynthialeitichsmith.com>. This official Web site not only includes biographical and bibliographical information but also includes recommended fantasy, horror, and multicultural books by other authors.

Smithsonian Education.  <http://www.smithsonianeducation.org>. Whether you're planning a visit, have already visited and even if you've never been to the Smithsonian Museum, this site will have something of interest for you. Take a virtual tour, learn about science, natural history, aviation, dinosaurs, or whatever else interests you. There is something here for everyone.

Smithsonian: National Museum of the American Indian  <http://www.nmai.si.edu>. Part of the Smithsonian Institution, this museum is devoted to the protection and study of the life, languages, literature, history, and arts of Native Americans.


SnowCrystals  <http://www.snowcrystals.com>. This site is all about snow crystals and snowflakes-- what they are, where they come from, and just how these remarkably complex and beautiful structures are created, quite literally, out of thin air.


Space Day.  <http://www.spaceday.com>. Launched in 1997, as an educational initiative, Space Day is the first Thursday of each May. Students are encouraged to participate in suggested Design Challenges to provide unique solutions to some "out-of-this-world" problems encountered in space exploration by role playing scientists, engineers, and explorers working on the space frontier. Suggestions for Design Challenges are posted a year in advance. Space Day tool kits are available for educators to help in planning a Space Day Event, including suggested classroom activities, large group activities, and interviews with former astronauts.

Space Today Online.  <http://www.spacetoday.org>. The site bills itself as covering space from earth to the edge of the universe. Learn about space shuttles, space stations, satellites, astronauts, space history, the solar system, & deep space.

Sport Science @ the Exploratorium.  <http://www.exploratorium.edu/sports/index.html>. Learn about the game and the science behind it. Interviews with scientists and the NHL Sharks' hockey players and coaches! Learn the science behind a home run.


Sports Illustrated for Kids.  <http://www.sikids.com>. Click here to get the latest issue online.

Starfall  <http://www.starfall.com>. Short stories that concentrate on a vowel or blend sound. By clicking on a word, help is given. Primarily designed for first grade, also useful for pre-kindergarten, Kindergarten and second grade.

[StateAnimals.com](http://www.stateanimals.com/)  <http://www.stateanimals.com/> Do you know your state's insect, reptile, or bird? It's all here. Make this your first stop when you have a state report due.

[Janet Stevens](http://www.janetstevens.com/)  <http://www.janetstevens.com/>. She is the illustrator of *To Market, To Market* and *Gates of the Wind*, and she wrote and illustrated *From Pictures to Words (A Book About Making a Book)*.

[Story Place: The Children's Digital Library](http://www.storyplace.org/)  http://www.storyplace.org. Take a virtual trip to The Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County. Stories, online activities, take-home activities, and reading lists can be found in English and Spanish.

[Storyline](http://www.bookpals.net/storyline)  <http://www.bookpals.net/storyline>. Enjoy a selection of stories read online by members of the Screen Actors Guild. Files are available for Windows Media, Real Player or Quicktime formats.

NCTE Inbox

News

Easing the Toll on Teachers' Checkbooks. Sponsors of "[A Day Made Better](#)" estimate that teachers spend \$1000 per year out of pocket for school supplies for their classrooms, so 1000 teachers received classroom supply surprises worth just that much. [The Washington Post, October 9, 2008](#)

On the Campaign Trail

"Where They Stand: McCain, Obama Split on Education": [USA Today, October 13, 2008](#)

"Candidates View Parental Role Differently": [Education Week, October 14, 2008](#)

"Education in Spotlight on Statewide Ballots": [Education Week, October 6, 2008](#)

Using 21st Century Technologies in 21st Century Classrooms

"Video Games Start to Shape Classroom Curriculum": [The Christian Science Monitor, September 18, 2008](#)

"I'll Take My Lecture to Go, Please": [Inside Higher Ed, September 23, 2008](#)

"Sharing Your Notes Online -- and Getting Paid for It": [Inside Higher Ed, September 19, 2008](#)

"Laptops in Schools Help Research, Writing, but Not Test Scores": [Argus Leader, September 23, 2008](#)

"A Quarter Million Teachers to Get Free Wikis": [cnet news, September 15, 2008](#)

Blogging from the Classroom, Teachers Seek Influence, Risk Trouble. Teacher blogs tell the story about what's really going on in schools. [U.S. News & World Report, September 19, 2008](#)

Who Wants to Be a Teacher? A Whole Lot of People, a New Survey Finds. According to a [survey](#) by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, 42% of college-educated 24- to 60-year-olds would consider teaching as a career. [The Christian Science Monitor, September 10, 2008](#)

NCLB

Under "No Child" Law, Even Solid Schools Falter. Many schools, even schools that make progress, are not making enough progress to meet the annually increasing goals that states agreed to when they signed on to the legislation. [The New York Times, October 13, 2008](#)

...More on NCLB

"Many Schools Could Get Left Behind": [San Antonio Express-News, October 14, 2008](#)

"More Schools Miss the Mark, Raising Pressure": [The New York Times, October 10, 2008](#)

"NCLB Testing Said to Give "Illusions of Progress" [Education Week, September 22, 2008](#)

Blog....

Dropbox: Your Online Filing Cabinet. Ever in the classroom and realize you want a computer file that's at home? NCTE INBOX blogger Traci Gardner shares a solution in [this week's NCTE INBOX Blog](#)

Ideas

Successful Strategies for Writer's Notebooks and Journals. The ways that we introduce and structure writer's notebooks or journals for students at the beginning of the term has repercussions that echo through the rest of the school year. Consider the following options for journals and journal entries:

- **Include drawing and art.** In "[Drawing to Write](#)" (G) from *Voices from the Middle*, Linda Rief lists eight ways teachers can encourage students to use drawing in language arts classrooms, all of which can be used in journals at any instructional level.
- **Engage families.** Family message journals are a teacher-tested tool for encouraging family involvement and supporting writing to reflect and to learn. The ReadWriteThink lesson plan [Launching Family Message Journals](#) (E) demonstrates how to introduce the strategy. Once the process is underway, two additional ReadWriteThink lessons explore how to extend the strategy through the school year: [Persuasive Writing: What Can Writing in Family Message Journals Do for Students?](#) (E) and [Family Message Journals Teach Many Purposes for Writing](#) (E).
- **Focus on language.** "[Keeping Language Journals in English Composition](#)" (S-C), from *Teaching English in the Two-Year College*, describes a weekly, focused journal writing assessment in which students note any use of language they find interesting, puzzling, amusing, or annoying as

well as their response to it. The activity enhances students' awareness of how language is used and where, and can be used as a bridge to discussions on grammar and usage.

- **Explore fictional voices.** In the *Voices from the Middle* article "[Crossing Cultures with Multi-Voices Journals](#)" (M), eighth graders write journals from the perspectives of fictional characters they're reading about. As they explore the different cultures represented by the characters, students gain a greater sensitivity to issues of diversity and culture.
- **Foreground students' own language.** Journals can be effective in cultivating formal discourse while respecting cultural differences. The *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* article "[Expanding the Discourse through Journals](#)" (C) explains a strategy in which journals make up a major part of the writing and the final grade, and, more important, in which students are invited to share details about their own culture and values in their own language.

In the News

Eye on Curriculum

Expert: Youth education essential to future of chemistry. This week is National Chemistry Week, and it has never been more important to try to get students involved in the science because interest is fading just as an older generation is retiring, writes Cal Dooley, chief of the American Chemistry Council. There are plenty of high-paying jobs in the industry and the education of youth to fill those jobs is imperative. [The Deseret News \(Salt Lake City\)/Hearst Newspapers](#) (10/23)

School leaders scramble to keep field trips alive. Bob Clancy, a Massachusetts elementary school principal, wants to make sure his students see more than just the inside of a classroom, so he's driving the field trip bus himself to make sure such class trips are more affordable. Other schools are taking advantage of discounts and public transportation to avoid canceling field trips. [The Boston Globe](#) (10/20)

D.C. students' reactions mixed over first paychecks. Some 3,300 Washington, D.C., middle-school students had their first payday Friday, collectively earning \$137,813 for good grades, attendance and behavior, which averaged out to about \$43 per student. Educators said fewer students have been tardy so far this year, but how the program will affect grades is yet to be determined. [The Washington Post](#) (10/18)

Researchers: Giftedness can be lost. The talents of children who are considered gifted are not fixed and can be nurtured or lost depending on their academic experiences, according to an American Psychological Association book to be released in January. "The essence of this book, and the reason I found it so exciting, is that it is moving away from this idea of talent as something that some people have and some people don't. It's showing talent as something developable," said Carol S. Dweck, a Stanford University psychology professor who wrote the book's foreword. [Education Week \(premium article access compliments of Edweek.org\)](#) (10/15)

More states infuse standards with 21st-century skills. An increasing number of states, including Iowa, West Virginia and Wisconsin, are adding skills like collaboration, creativity and critical thinking as

well as financial, technological, health and global literacy into their statewide standards. "Fifty years ago, the ticket up the economic ladder was content mastery of four or five subjects," said Ken Kay, president of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills. "Today, it's the ability to think critically, solve problems, communicate, collaborate, use technology and be globally competent." [Education Week \(premium article access compliments of Edweek.org\)](#) (10/13)

Professional Leadership

Foreign teachers fill gaps in low-income schools. At least 18,000 of the United States' 3.7 million teachers were hired from other countries to fill national shortages of math, science and special-education teachers, according to The American Federation of Teachers union. Officials say most foreign teachers are hired for poor urban or rural schools, and may broaden students' world views by exposing them to other cultures. [USA TODAY](#) (10/23)

States eye possible uses for data on teachers. As more data is compiled on teachers and their students, more state legislatures are weighing in on how such information can or should be used. California passed a 2006 law banning such data from being used in salary or personnel decisions; meanwhile, many other states are laying the groundwork to use the information as part of accountability systems. [Education Week \(premium article access compliments of Edweek.org\)](#) (10/20)

Federal judge upholds NYC limits on teachers' political speech. School districts should be able to ban teachers from wearing political buttons but not from distributing political materials in areas inaccessible to students, a federal judge ruled Friday. Rulings on such cases have been mixed but generally aim to protect teachers' rights while preventing them from unduly influencing students, said New York University law professor Samuel Issacharoff. [The New York Times](#) (10/17)

Technology

Cell phones may ring in "whole new world" of learning. Cell phones may aid both students and teachers with podcasts, quizzes, homework and class projects, says the author of a new [book](#). "If you can get [students] thinking of cells as an anytime, anywhere, Swiss Army knife-type data-collection tool, it can open up a whole new world," said Liz Kolb, an adjunct Madonna University professor. [Edutopia magazine](#) (10/2008)

Are cell phones and the Web bringing families closer? The widespread use of mobile devices and the Internet might just be strengthening family bonds, according to a survey from the Pew Internet and American Life Project, which found that technology has helped families cope better with the stress of modern life. Pew reported that 60% of the responding adults said new technologies had made no difference in their families' closeness, while 25% said it had actually improved and 11% said it had worsened. [The Washington Post](#) (10/20)

Students can anonymously report bullies, crimes on new site. Students reluctant to report classmates to their teachers or parents can now provide anonymous tips online in close to 50 schools. [SchoolTipline](#) "allows students to have an outlet and avenue to report things they might otherwise not

have reported," said Utah middle-school principal Rosanna Ungerman. [Seattle Post-Intelligencer/The Associated Press](#) (10/13)

Policy Watch

CDC study finds Gardasil vaccine safe. A CDC study of 190,000 girls and young women given the cervical cancer vaccine Gardasil over the past two years found no evidence that it raises the risk of blood clots or other serious reactions. Dr. Paul Offit of Children's Hospital of Philadelphia says the study results are "really reassuring" and counter the public perception that the vaccine is not safe. [The Washington Post/HealthDay News](#) (10/22)

As states struggle with finances, schools may be hit hard. The economic crisis is cramping state budgets, prompting some state leaders to order cuts in education spending, observers say. "This situation is as bad as I've ever seen it," said William T. Pound, executive director of the National Conference of State Legislatures. "States have been confronted with bad economic circumstances in the past, but not so many and all at once." [Education Week \(premium article access compliments of Edweek.org\)](#) (10/20)

Report: Childhood food allergies on the rise. Roughly 1 in 26 U.S. children now suffer from food allergies, an 18% increase since 1997, according to a new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report. Some experts said the increase may be in part attributable to a greater awareness among parents who are acting more speedily in taking their children to the doctor for allergy testing. [Google/The Associated Press](#) (10/22)

Schools pressured by financial crisis: The global financial crisis is affecting schools nationwide as they halt construction projects that cannot win financing and lose access to millions in investments with bankrupt firm [Lehman Brothers](#). Others are struggling to find short-term credit to make payroll until property-tax revenues begin rolling in. [Education Week \(premium article access compliments of Edweek.org\)](#) (10/10)

Survey: Nearly nine of 10 gay students harassed at school. More than 86% of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students said they had been verbally harassed at school in the past year due to their orientation, while 22% reported being physically assaulted at school on that basis, according to a Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network survey. [Education Week \(premium article access compliments of Edweek.org\)](#) (10/13)

Presidential candidates approach education reform differently. Education has largely been squeezed out of the U.S. presidential race, but some educators, parents and students are trying to draw more attention to the stark policy differences between the candidates. "What I'm trying to do is get [students] to want to turn the TV on and think about what's going on in our society," said Utah high school teacher Aaron Hadfield. "I think this is probably the most intense and significant election of my lifetime." [USA TODAY](#) (10/14) , [The Salt Lake Tribune \(Utah\)](#) (10/13)

Learning and Teaching

New teachers talk classroom preparedness. New teachers say managing their classrooms and teaching students with special needs their top obstacles during their first year on the job. Paperwork is another worry, but according to surveyed teachers, recent graduates are receiving more help preparing to teach and report that education programs "pushed us to be great." [Teacher Magazine](#) (10/22)

Long-term projects help students develop collaborative skills. Critical thinking and other valuable skills are best developed by inquiry-based teaching, according to a book co-authored by educational policy analyst Linda Darling-Hammond, a Stanford University professor. Such projects should be closely tied to curriculum, be driven by students and focus on real-world problems, say researchers. [Edutopia magazine](#) (10/2008)

In the Field

Health, bad habits affect students' grades. Poor habits like failing to get sufficient sleep, using alcohol or tobacco and spending copious amounts of time in front of the computer or TV are hurting students' GPAs, according to a comprehensive new survey of college students, conducted by researchers at the University of Minnesota. Those students with healthy habits reported higher GPAs than those who smoked, slept too little, played online or watched TV too much, the researchers found. [ScienceDaily](#) (10/22)

More minorities attending college, but progress still needed. A report released Thursday reveals significant increases in the number of minority students pursuing college degrees, but points out that further gains are still needed. Research showed wide achievement gaps between minority groups in 2006, with Asian Americans pursuing considerably more advanced degrees than Hispanic Americans. [Yahoo!/The Associated Press](#) (10/9)

A Light Touch

Did You Know?

'Stewardesses' is the longest word typed with only the left hand.

And 'lollipop' is the longest word typed with your right hand.

No word in the English language rhymes with month, orange, silver, or purple.

'Dreamt' is the only English word that ends in the letters 'mt'.

The sentence: 'The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog' uses every letter of the alphabet.

The words 'racecar,' 'kayak' and 'level' are the same whether they are read left to right or right to left (palindromes).

There are two words in the English language that have all five vowels in order: 'abstemious' and 'facetious.'

TYPEWRITER is the longest word that can be made using the letters only on one row of the keyboard.

Our eyes are always the same size from birth, but our nose and ears never stop growing.

Babies are born without kneecaps. They don't appear until the child reaches 2 to 6 years of age.

A cat has 32 muscles in each ear.

A shark is the only fish that can blink with both eyes.

An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.

In the last 4,000 years, no new animals have been domesticated.
There are more chickens than people in the world.

A 'jiffy' is an actual unit of time for 1/100th of a second.
February 1865 is the only month in recorded history not to have a full moon.
Leonardo Da Vinci invented the scissors
Peanuts are one of the ingredients of dynamite!
The cruise liner, QE 2 moves only six inches for each gallon of diesel that it burns.
The winter of 1932 was so cold that Niagara Falls froze completely solid.
Winston Churchill was born in a ladies' room during a dance.

“Nothing on Earth so beautiful as a final haul on Halloween night.”

Steve Almond

“A grandmother pretends she doesn't know who you are on Halloween.”

Erma Bombeck