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You're Drunk!

"You're drunk!" "Yeah, and you're crazy! But I'll be sober tomorrow, and you'll be crazy the rest of your life." ----- W. C. Fields

Teaching shop is a lot more than saws, drills and welders. For instance, state standards require a lesson in drug awareness. In designing my contribution, I viewed the "Just say no" approach as ineffective and the ole' scare tactics as comedy (check out the 1936 "Reefer Madness" on U-tube for a good laugh).

But they ask for it, so I go all out and drill into the rotten heart of this monkey business. The monkey on your back is an old analogy because we have known of addiction for a long time. Certainly there are variables. Different drugs have different rates of addiction, and genetics can play a role but when the monkey jumps on the rules are always the same ... feed him and he's happy, try to oust him and he digs his claws in like a raging creature on steroids. Whether the drug is legal or not has no bearing ...smack, crack or Joe Camel's pack, that monkey is just an inbred cousin of the same family.

We all want to feel good, that's not a crime, but doing so by self-inflicting a chemical alteration of the brain comes with a price. Hit the "free" pleasure button too hard or too often at your own peril. Break the machine and it explodes. Know the price.

I love that old bumper sticker "Are you stupid or just stoned?" As W.C. asks, is the condition permanent or temporary? Don't say no, say why? Don't be scared, be informed, and above all, if the monkey comes to visit your house, ask yourself: are you drunk or crazy, because living with addiction is unadulterated insanity.



Granddaughter Abby at work on her "jumps" in my shop. The pleasure of handwork.

"Real knowledge arises through confrontations with real things."- Matt Crawford.

Until next issue,

Tom Hull

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tomhull@charter.net

Success Story

Jamie Peterman Rinnert



Usually highlighted in this success column is a person who went on to a career related to the classes that I teach. There are hundreds of such people with no time to cover them all, but the truth is that most of my graduates disperse into the world pursuing unrelated occupations. Enter Jamie Peterman.

After graduating from South Umpqua High School in the early 90's, she went on to earn a bachelors degree in exercise and sport science from Oregon State University. Recently she wrote me, "Over the years I have lived and worked in various cities in Oregon and also lived in Arizona. Now I am back in the Roseburg area. I am currently busy being a wife and mother and loving life!"

Here in my classroom in Coos Bay, buried in a display case between a steam gauge and an ancient box of sal ammoniac, is a framed picture of Jamie as a teenager in coveralls posed next to her classmates Jamaal and Julie. The caption reads "3J Auto Clinic." Pretty sure they were tearing down a 390 Ford engine, and the smile on her face is a mirror image to the one you see above.

Women's lib is great; glass ceilings are real, and I respect all alternate life styles, but here I hail to motherhood! Three cheers! Look at that baby! I'm not mushy, and defer to James Joyce in his last chapter of Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man. "Whatever else is unsure in this stinking dunghill of a world, a mother's love is not." Thanks, Jamie for sending in the purest sentence in recent memory. *I am currently busy being a wife and mother and loving life!* Three cheers. Look at that smile.

Here's How: Tips from the Field

Finding Leaks

Idea this issue from Matt Crawford

Engines used to leak oil all the time (lots of old Harley jokes about being better oilers than the road department, or what to call a Harley that doesn't leak oil? Empty.) Today's engines are far better sealed, but you still run into oil leakage problems. For these cases Matt e-mailed a tip: *"Using athlete's foot powder spray to pinpoint oil leaks. Get the surfaces clean and then spray the suspect areas. It dries white and powdery, so oil leaks show up well."*

I can see this would be a nice trick on slow oil leaks. They can get hard to pinpoint when the road wind or fan is blowing the oil about as it slowly oozes. But the best advice in Matt's tip wasn't about the foot spray...it was *getting the surfaces clean*. Only then can you be sure of the location of the problem. Even then it may take close inspection. Take automotive rear main seal oil leaks. I've known guys who replaced the pan gasket and didn't fix a thing because they thought oil was dripping out of the back of the pan. Look close. Cross your fingers because if it's the rear main either the engine or tranny is coming out.

The Pirate Shop dictionary now has over 100 unique words to describe the observable human behavior that doesn't have the perfect word. Students are constantly offering nominations for inclusion, but the standards are high so not many are accepted. Three that made the cut in the last year were: 1.)

Ricecrispin Cutter (*Evan Dell*): This is a person whose cutting torch goes snap, crackle and pop while they are cutting. 2) **Wiggle Wobbler** (*Matty Summers*): A person (many of us at times) that finds something that moves, like a loose tooth, and then proceeds to wiggle it back and forth with increased vigor. 3) **G.M.A.W.** (*Brandon Wright*) An extension of my word **Squirt Gun Kid** (a guy who thinks all there is to running a wire machine is pulling the trigger), Brandon offered that squirt gun kids don't see the acronym as Gas Metal Arc Welding but "Grind Metal After Welding."

My all-time favorite word was propelled by the comical antics of Zack and Ed as they returned a hand plane to the woodshop. Zack was in coveralls stained red with gasket sealer and had a kind of Charles Manson look. When asked by a girl what they had, Zack said, "a human skinning tool." Within the hour I was called to the office to review a video tape and identify persons who may have a dead body in a school locker as called in by a frantic parent.

Human Skinning Tool: saying stupid stuff to people you don't know that is bound to get you in trouble.