

Jewelry Box

[Blog 1](#) [Blog 2](#)

Holiday 2016

A newsletter from

Joseph's Jewelry

200 Wanaque Ave.

Pompton Lakes N.J. 07442

(973) 839-6639

By Joseph Mirsky, Gemologist and Proprietor

www.jewelrynewsletter.com

Your community Jeweler since 1987

Can Head

After Jamie Keeton, known as "Can Head", shaved his head 23 years ago, something strange happened when he put a cold drink can on his head to cool down.

"I was at a ball game. I was trying to cool my head down because it was a hot day. And all of a sudden they hit a home run. I went up to grab it... I missed it, and then said, 'Where's my drink?' Everybody was laughing... The drink was stuck to the back of my head. The drink was pouring out of it."

He has a high body temperature of 100 degrees which his doctor says causes his pores to act like suction cups. There are only two other people in the world, both in India, with this condition. Keeton said he first noticed his stickiness when a Star Wars storm trooper toy stuck to him when he was 7 years old. He says he can "shoot a can across the room just by moving a muscle."

The 47 year old from Illinois now makes a living performing as Can Head and earning up to \$8,000 in a weekend from brands that pay him to stick their products to his head.

He made an appearance on the Ellen DeGeneres show in 2010 and got a Guinness world record in 2016 for "Most cans stuck by suction to one's head" by sticking 8 cans to his head for 10 seconds on a Chinese TV show.

One video shows him holding a large bottle of Bacardi on the side of his head and pouring rum into people's mouths.



Would You Like Butter or Jam on Your Oxymoron?

The largest supermarket chain in England, Tesco, has straightened out the croissant.

The Tesco croissant buyer explained: "After demand for crescent shaped croissants started falling, we spoke to our customers and nearly 75 per cent of them told us that they preferred straight ones."

"At the heart of the move away from curved croissants is the spreadability factor. The majority of shoppers find it easier to spread jam, or their preferred filling, on a straighter shape with a single sweeping motion."

"With the crescent shaped croissants, it's more fiddly and most people can take up to three attempts to achieve perfect coverage, which increases the potential for accidents involving sticky fingers and tables."

A straight croissant? Croissant means "crescent" in French.

Revisionism

Wikipedia celebrated its 15th anniversary this year. It released a list of the most edited articles. Top of the list was George W. Bush with 45,862 edits. Second was wrestling: List of WWE* Personnel (42,836). Michael Jackson (28,152) was fifth. Eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh were Jesus (25,084), Barack Obama (24,708), Adolf Hitler (24,612) and Britney Spears (23,802).

George Bush was also the most controversial article, as measured in a scholarly study of "reverts", when an edit is undone then restored back to the original.

* World Wrestling Entertainment. Originally WWF, World Wrestling Federation, changed to WWE after lawsuit in 2000 by the World Wide Fund for Nature.



Filigree band ring in 14 karat white or yellow gold. .30 carat diamonds total. \$1150.

Big Bucks

On March 6, 1933, two days after his inauguration*, President Roosevelt declared a bank holiday, closing all banks in the country. Since 1929, 20% of banks, over 6000, had failed, wiping out \$2.5 billion (\$34.6 billion today) in savings. The Emergency Banking Relief Act was passed on March 9, 1933. The act provided for the reopening of banks closed by Roosevelt's bank holiday on March 13.

Roosevelt's national bank holiday was precipitated by a bank holiday in Michigan on February 15, forced by the imminent failure of a large bank. This sparked a run on banks everywhere, with an increase of 30% of currency in circulation as depositors pulled their money out, and bank holidays were declared in many other states.

People who didn't pull out their money coped in ingenious ways. A pair of trousers bought a ride on a Salt Lake City trolley, 10 bushels of wheat a subscription to a Montana newspaper and in Oklahoma City, a hotel said it would accept "anything we can use in the coffee shop," whereupon the first customer offered a pig. In Alaska, gold dust was used for small transactions.

Roosevelt said in his first fireside chat on the radio March 12, just a week after his inauguration, that reopened banks would be given unlimited money by the Federal Reserve. "The new currency is being sent out by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing in large volume to every part of the country." This so reassured the populace that when the banks reopened the next day, people lined up to put their money back. Big money.

"That the return flow of currency was from hoards and not from active circulation is indicated by the fact that the larger part of the paper currency returned to the Federal Reserve banks since last March has been in the larger denominations, \$50 and over, such as are used relatively little in day-to-day transactions," according to the Federal Reserve Bulletin September, 1933.

* The Twentieth Amendment moved the presidential inauguration from March 4 to January 20. It was ratified in January, 1933 but didn't take effect until October.

Bombardment

The December 25, 1943 issue of *The Billboard* was the “Bombardment Number”, with articles about celebrity entertainers during the war touring the country promoting War Bonds. But Louie the Waiter sold bonds to the celebrities. An article about Louie headlines:

“Treasury’s Poet Laureate; Chopped Liver Tycoon Most Singular Plural Bondy-namo in America; His Name is Louie Schwartz and His Game is With the Sports.”

Louie the Waiter waited at the Sixth Avenue Delicatessen in New York, a hole in the wall nine feet by seventy five feet frequented by show biz and radio clientele.

Four days after Pearl Harbor¹, he served corned beef sandwiches to a group of ladies from the American Women’s Voluntary Services who worked around the corner. Louie’s waiter jacket was festooned with military insignia buttons given him by servicemen customers. One of the women complimented him on his jacket and Louie asked for an A.W.V.S. button. She said he could have a button if he would sell War Bonds for the organization. When she returned after lunch with the button and application forms, Louie had already sold a hundred dollar bond to a customer.

Louie was already famous for his “Schtickle for a Nickel” doggerel. A schtickle was a bite-size sample of deli fare served on a toothpick, often advertised with a rhyme:

Oh Romeo! Where art thou? Said Juliet and sighed.

At Irving’s Sixth Avenue Delicatessen eating a schtickle for a nickel he replied.

Louie pressed his poetic talent into winning the war: “Send a Salami to your boy in the Army”² and “You will buy war bonds sooner or later, get ‘em today from Louie the Waiter”, which was printed at the top of the menus shortly after he started selling bonds.

According to a *New Yorker* article, March 18, 1944, Louie would size up the customer for a bond while waiting for the order. When one prosperous-looking man asked for an extra pat of butter. Louie told him it would cost \$375. The check was waiting when Louie returned with the butter. Another time, a man begged off buying a bond saying he was waiting for the upcoming bond drive. “Here every day is a drive going on,” said Louie. The man bought a hundred dollar bond. When an elderly lady ordered a pastrami on rye, Louie said “America’s winning ‘cause she’s on the alert. Now you buy a War Bond for dessert.”

By the time of the *New Yorker* article, Louie had sold \$4 million in bonds, an unrivalled record, and was famous for it. He shook hands with Treasury Secretary Morgenthau, went to bond rallies with New York Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia, went on radio shows, and sold bonds to Walter Winchell, who mentioned Louie in his column. He was friends with cartoonist Al Hirschfeld who drew a large portrait of Louie that hung on the wall of the delicatessen and wrote an article about him, “Hero of Sixth Avenue”, for *Don Freeman’s Newsstand* in 1943 accompanied by the drawing at right. And he was made an honorary male member of the American Women’s Voluntary Services, the only one.

Louie’s son-in-law, Second Lieutenant Thomas Berschig, was shot down in his B-17 bomber by German fighters on a mission over the marshalling yards of Bologna, Italy October 5, 1943. He was wounded and taken prisoner according to his unit records. Louie felt that every bond he sold brought Berschig closer to coming home.

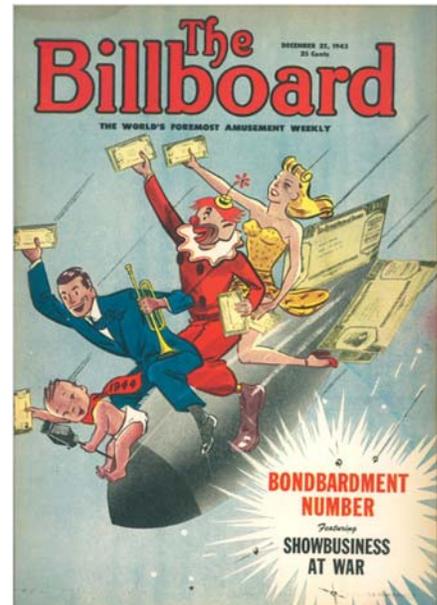
Louie’s bond sales were earmarked for P-47 Thunderbolt fighter planes, on each of which was painted “Louie the Waiter” and the record of his bond sales to date. A Marine Corps captain wrote to him from the Pacific “Dear Louie: Here in this benighted part of the world, I have seen your results in action. The Jap has learned to curse Louie the Waiter and his War Bonds. No higher compliment can be paid you,” according to the *Detroit Free Press* November 19, 1944. Ultimately, Louie’s bond sales paid for 66 of the fighters and he sold \$9 million in bonds.

After the war, Louie moved to Florida, working in a Miami Beach restaurant. He retired as a waiter in 1967 and was working as a parking lot attendant at his death of a stroke January 9, 1972 at 70, according to his obituary in the *New York Times*.

1. This date is in the *New Yorker* article, but it was in December, 1942 according to *The Billboard* article. Since the *New Yorker* is legendary for its fact-checking and the author, the legendary Phillip Hamburger, evinces a personal relationship with Louie in the article: “For some years now I have known Schwartz and held him in high esteem, and I often drop into the delicatessen for the sheer pleasure of watching him at work,” I have preferentially used his account.

However, *The New Yorker* says that Thomas Berschig was shot down over Foggia and in November, not October. Foggia is 342 miles southeast of Bologna and in *Combat Chronology US Army Air Forces Mediterranean - 1943 Part 2* the last bombing raid on the Foggia marshalling yards listed is on August 25th. The *5th Bomb Wing, History of Aircraft Assigned* lists Berschig’s plane as “MIA Bologna 5 Oct 43 on 28th mission. Shot down by fighters.”

2. This became an iconic bit. Jerry Lewis sings it in the 1951 movie *At War with the Army*.



© The Al Hirschfeld Foundation.
www.AlHirschfeldFoundation.org

Artificial Stupidity

I could not find out when the 6th Avenue Deli closed. It is listed in the 1940 and 1946 Manhattan phone books, the only ones I could find online, as at 1364 Sixth Avenue. The author of a book on delis said in an email that he didn't know when it closed.

I tried to track down what happened to Louie's son-in-law Thomas Berschig after he was captured. I was able to turn up the name of his plane, High Tension II, and that he had been imprisoned in Stalag VII-A Moosberg, Bavaria, Germany's largest prisoner-of-war camp. The camp was liberated April 29, 1945 and Berschig was reported liberated June 25, 1945. I could not find any details about his subsequent life — or death. He would have to be in his nineties if he were alive today.

In a search for “2nd Lt Thomas F Berschig WW2 prisoner” was an ad: “WW2 prisoners on eBay-fantastic prices on WW2 prisoners.”

This Spud's for You

"Nothing says 'I love you' like a potato. Nothing says 'happy birthday' like a potato. Nothing says 'I miss you' like a potato. You should mail a potato!"

That's according to MysteryPotato.com, one of four web sites that will send a potato to someone for you. Mysterypotato sends a potato with a message anonymously for \$9.99.

In addition to the standard message potato, Potato Parcel also offers Potato Postcard with a photo glued to the potato for \$12.99 or Potato Pal with a photo of someone actually printed on the spud for \$14.99. You upload the photos. And for \$4.99 extra, your potato will be put into a burlap sack.

Potato Gram will "send any message to friends or family and have anything drawn on it."

With mailaspud there's "No box. No envelope. Just a potato and some stamps." \$9.99.

Mysterypotato founder Jeff Kelly said "We tried yams, but yams are basically potatoes." Yeah, but then you could have a yamgram.



Mail Odor Dating

That's how the Smell Dating website describes its service:

1. We send you a t-shirt
2. You wear the shirt for three days and three nights without deodorant.
3. You return the shirt to us in a prepaid envelope.
4. We send you swatches of t-shirts worn by a selection of other individuals.
5. You smell the samples and tell us who you like.
6. If someone whose smell you like likes the smell of you too, we'll facilitate an exchange of contact information.
7. The rest is up to you.

You get no info on the age, gender, or sexual orientation of who's behind the smell. "Even in blinded experiments, subjects' smell preferences align broadly with their sexual desires."

It costs \$25, which covers costs — it's a non-profit operation. You'll get 10 swatches cut from other people's T-shirts in numbered bags mailed to you.

Smell Dating was started by the School for Poetic Computation, "an artist run school in New York that was founded in

2013. A small group of students and faculty work closely to explore the intersections of code, design, hardware and theory — focusing especially on artistic intervention. Our motto is: more poetry, less demo." "Code to Joy" as one article put it.

At least you won't have to worry about cuddling in the voting booth. In the Fall '15 newsletter was an article about an experiment in which people sniffed pads from other people's armpits. If the politics of the sniffer and the sniffee were the same, the sniffers found the smell attractive and hated it if politically opposite. Or you could just put on some Donald Trump Success Deodorant to cover up your stinky politics. \$4.20 from Amazon.

Ripped Roo

In 2006, Roger, a red kangaroo was a joey found in his dead mother's pouch by the side of a road in Australia by Chris Barnes.

Barnes started The Baby Kangaroo Rescue Centre in Alice Springs in Australia's Northern Territory and worked two jobs to fund it until an uncle helped out. In 2009, he founded the 90 acre Kangaroo Sanctuary where he cares for 30 orphaned and injured kangaroos.

Roger grew up. He now stands 6' 6" and weighs almost 200 pounds. He's the alpha male at the sanctuary, and you can see why from this picture of him crushing his metal feeding bucket. Kangaroos kick box to determine who will be the alpha male and get the girls. Roger even challenged Barnes, who is as tall as he is giving him a wound in the groin that needed 6 stitches.

Barnes, 42, nicknamed "Brolga" ("only my mum calls me 'Chris'") after a large Australian crane, made a documentary series about his work for the BBC called "Kangaroo Dundee", a nod to the Paul Hogan movie "Crocodile Dundee."



The Banality of Evil

"If you want to do something evil, put it inside something boring."

— Comedian John Oliver on his HBO show *Last Week Tonight* June 2, 2014 speaking of cable companies after playing a clip of a dull FCC hearing on net neutrality. After a 13 minute rant about net neutrality, he urged his listeners to comment on the FCC web site. 45,000 comments then crashed that section of the FCC site.

I've heard that Oliver is very funny. Unfortunately I can't hear that he's very funny — his British accent is so thick I can't understand a word. Neither could YouTube, whose closed-captioning translated on March 23, 2015 "if you earn minimum wage there — 7.25 an hour..." as "if you on minimum wage the ass 7.25 an hour," and "Just throw a robe on a pelican and tape a gavel to its wing" as "Just roll roll a pelican and type a double to is where."

Oliver says his accent is "a mongrel" of Brummie (Birmingham), Scouse (Liverpoolian), and Bedford.

I Kid You Not

Mairzy doats and dozy doats
And liddle lamzy divey
A kiddley divey too,
Wouldn't you?

— Mairzy Doats, 1943 novelty song

Goats eat just about anything green, including poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac. Fort Hancock on Sandy Hook was so overgrown with poison ivy that Nubian goats from Rhinebeck, New York were set loose on the weeds in 2013 (a few weeks ahead of schedule due to the looming government shutdown). The goats returned for seconds in 2014 and the poison ivy is almost gone.

If you pet your pet kid after it's eaten the poison ivy, you'd better get an ocean of calamine lotion. The problem is that the goats get the poison ivy poison on their coats from contact with the plants.

Got poison ivy and no kids? Amazon offers "hire a goat grazer" in the lawn and garden section of its new Home Services business. They'll email you with an estimate.



Earrings in 18 karat white and yellow gold with white and yellow diamonds, .50 carat total. \$1700. See it in color on the web.

11/3/16 11/3/15 11/3/14

| | | | |
|----------|-------|-------|-------|
| Gold | 1301 | 1123 | 1168 |
| Silver | 18.07 | 15.38 | 16.15 |
| Platinum | 991 | 960 | 1241 |

You can get live precious metals prices on the web site.

Joseph's buys old gold for cash

Holy Chow

C.W. Post (1854-1914), after a number of nervous breakdowns, wound up at the Battle Creek Sanitarium, run by the Kellogg brothers in 1891 for a 10 month stay. The sanitarium was the celebrity place to go for the cure with a vegetarian diet, exercise, various quack remedies involving light, heat, cold, electricity, and lots of enemas.

While at the sanitarium Post had sampled a coffee substitute, Caramel Cereal Coffee, but found it unpalatable. He had set up his own health spa, La Vita Inn, and invented his own drink, Postum, which became successful. Another success, Grape Nuts cereal followed in 1898.

In 1906, Post marketed his cornflakes, called Elijah's Manna. It became the manna from hell when religious types denounced it as sacrilegious. Britain refused to register the name as a trademark. Post retorted "perhaps no one should eat angel food cake, enjoy Adam's ale, live in St. Paul, nor work for Bethlehem Steel..." but in 1908 changed the name to Post Toasties.

In 1914, Post was suffering from stomach pain and went to Minnesota for an appendectomy by the Mayo brothers. Still in pain he committed suicide at his winter home in Santa Barbara, California with a rifle, putting the barrel in his mouth and pulling the trigger with his toe.

The Postum Cereal Company was taken over by his 27 year old daughter, Marjorie Merriweather Post who then became the richest woman in America. She built the Palm Beach mansion Mar-a-Lago in 1927, now owned by Donald Trump. The company eventually became General Foods.

I drank Postum as a kid. It was discontinued in 2007, with a limited resurrec-

tion in 2012. Post Toasties was discontinued in 2006 and brought back in 2010.

Battle Creek Sanitarium went downhill after the 1929 crash, was put into receivership in 1933, and was bought by the U.S. Army in 1942 and made a hospital and is now the Hart-Dole-Inouye Federal Center, named for three Senators who were wounded in World War II and treated there.

* The 1994 movie The Road to Wellville starring Anthony Hopkins, Matthew Broderick, and John Cusack takes place in the Sanitarium.



★ **Holiday Hours** ★

Sun. Dec. 18 from 12-4
Mon. - Fri. Dec. 19 - 23 from 10-8

| HOURS | |
|-----------|--------|
| MON - WED | 10 - 6 |
| THU - FRI | 10 - 8 |
| SAT | 10 - 6 |
| SUN | Closed |



Earrings in 14 karat white gold with tanzanites .92 carat total and diamonds, .13 carat total. \$750. See it in color on the web.

Deep Thought

*The days that make us happy
 make us wise.*

— From a Chinese fortune cookie



Pendant in 14 karat white gold with bright red rubies, .47 carat total, diamonds, .13 carat total. \$795. See it in color on the web

Tax Avoidance

I reported to you in the Fall '13 newsletter that Guinness estimates that 92,749 liters of beer worth £423,070 are lost as froth stuck to moustaches each year in Great Britain, dubbed a "tache tax".

Problem solved! The Stache Shield will let you keep your beer in your mouth and your money in your pocket. Made from stainless steel it's "The Greatest & Most Multifunctional Moustache Protector your upper lip has ever seen. Hand-crafted in Sweden."

The Kickstarter crowdfunded company, ODD, sells the Stache Shield for \$20, with quantity discounts. You can also buy a Stache Shield Christmas gift card: "We just wanted you to know that we've just uploaded 3 (!) different versions of the official Stache Shield Christmas gift card :) *woohooo!*"



Copyright © 2016 Joseph Mirsky Jewelry Inc.

[The book of the Newsletters](#)

[Blog 1](#) [Blog 2](#)