

# Jewelry Box

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Holiday 2018

A newsletter from

**Joseph's Jewelry**

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By Joseph Mirsky, Gemologist and Proprietor

[www.jewelrynewsletter.com](http://www.jewelrynewsletter.com)

Your Community Jeweler since 1987

## The March of Dimes

President Franklin Roosevelt, himself crippled with polio, organized annual Birthday Balls in cities around the country to raise funds to combat the disease held on his birthday, January 30, beginning in 1934.



In 1937, Roosevelt created the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis as a national organization to raise funds. Googly-eyed performer Eddie

Cantor, vaudeville, movie, and radio star as a comedian and singer (If You Knew Suzie, Ida (Sweet as Apple Cider), Makin' Whoopee) came up with "The March of Dimes," a play on the March of Time newsreel series that played in theaters before the movie started, in 1937.

In the lead-up to the 1938 Birthday Ball, a radio campaign urged listeners to send in a dime to the White House. The White House mailroom was overwhelmed by over 80,000 letters with dimes, quarters, and dollars totaling \$268,000 by January 29.

10¢ in 1938 is \$1.72 in 2018 dollars. The mercury dimes were made from 90% silver. Silver was then 43¢ a troy ounce, and a dime contained 3.1¢ worth of silver, but \$1.03 today at \$14.00 silver. The metals in today's copper and nickel dime are worth about 1.4¢.

## Fake Knees News

After you ditch your cane and stride into the airport on your new artificial knee you'll set off the metal detectors. There's metal in your new fake knee. A note from your doctor won't help, nor will a card issued by the TSA that says you have an implant. You'll still be pulled aside and screened again with the magic metal wand. Wear loose clothes so you can show your scar. This could be a problem if you're a fake hippie.

Petite ring in 14 karat white gold with exceptional blue sapphire, .72 carat and diamonds, .06 carat total. \$650. Made here. See it in color on the web.



## Gwyneth the Vampire Slayer

Feeling listless and drained? You may be suffering a psychic vampire attack. Psychic vampires feed on your life force. Problem solved! Just get a bottle of Paper Crane Apothecary Psychic Vampire Repellent from Goop, Gwyneth Paltrow's web site. \$28 for 3.4 ounces in a spray bottle.

"A protective mist designed to shield you from negative energy and safeguard your aura." It does it with "sonically tuned gem elixirs, including black tourmaline, ruby, lapis lazuli, onyx and garnet."

So what's a gem elixir? There are various complicated recipes and two methods, direct and indirect. Both involve soaking the stones in water for a while, adding vodka then "sit it on a windowsill where it can absorb the sun's and/or the moon's energies."

On a vampire budget? One pound of garlic, the traditional vampire repellent, \$9.50 on Amazon. And for a permanent solution, try a Buffy the Vampire Slayer inspired wood stake. \$18.95.

Are you a vampire? Find out how to repel the repellent at [vampirewebsite.net](http://vampirewebsite.net), "a unique Real Vampire website for vampires as well as the curious."

## Gumshoes

3.3 million pounds of chewing gum a year are spit out on the streets of Amsterdam. That would be about 574 million sticks of gum. With a population of 850,000 plus 3.5 million visitors a year that works out to 131 sticks of gum per person.

A city marketing organization, a Dutch clothing company and a U.K. recycling company called Gumdrop have partnered to create a sneaker sole made from recycled chewing gum.

Those Chiclets you love to chew aren't made from chicle, natural latex from a Central American tree, any more. Chicle went out in the 1940's. Now chewing gum is made from "gum base," probably polyisobutylene (which is also used to make inner tubes), in other words synthetic rubber.

Gumdrop makes pink gum recycling bins which are hung on poles and walls

in Amsterdam and the U.K. Gumdrop was able to make a new type of rubber from from the chewing gum and make sneaker soles from it. 2.2 pounds of gum make four pairs of Gumshoes. The gum recycling bins are also made from recycled gum.

The sneaker soles are bubblegum pink, of course, and they even smell like gum. A map of Amsterdam is molded into the soles of the sneakers. The uppers are leather and come in bubblegum pink, black and red. Cost is \$232 a pair.

Now everyone can be a private eye. The word "gumshoe" for private detective comes from late 19<sup>th</sup> century shoes with gum rubber soles, stealth shoes for sneaking around. Originally "gumshoe" meant a thief but by about 1908 came to mean the catcher of the thief.

"Sneaker" comes from *Female Life in Prison, By a Prison Matron*, pseudonym of the British novelist Frederick William Robinson in 1862: "The night-officer is generally accustomed to wear a species of India-rubber shoes or goloshes. These are termed 'sneaks' by the women."



## The Rain in Tourane Falls Mainly in the Plane

Da Nang, Viet Nam was also known by its French name, Tourane. Even today there is a Grand Tourane Hotel.

Leaving Da Nang at the end of 1966, we were flown out on an unpressurized C-123 cargo plane. The humidity must have been 100% and when the plane ascended clouds formed inside the plane and it actually rained on us.

## Lucifer's Fire

A 15 year old mutt named Lucifer saved a Kansas man when a fire broke out at 2 A.M. He was asleep in his living room chair and the dog jumped on him until he woke up. He got out with Lucifer and his other dog, Angel. The fire was electrical and not caused by a Lucifer, the name of the first match patented in 1828.

### If I Can Do It It's Not Art

That's what then Mayor Rudolf Giuliani said about a 1999 display of a composition of a cow's head, flies, maggots, sugar and water and a split pig carcass floating in formaldehyde in the Brooklyn Museum. (See the Fall '07 newsletter.)

John Lennon's 85 year old widow Yoko Ono had a "conceptual art" exhibition at the Gardiner Museum in Toronto from February to June 2018 titled *The Riverbed*. The interactive exhibition has three parts.

*Line Piece* has tables with notebooks. You're supposed to "draw a line to take me to the farthest place in our planet." You can also use hammers and nails to extend string across the gallery, "creating a web that will grow and evolve over the course of the exhibition."

*Mend Piece* has fragments of broken ceramic cups and saucers for visitors to put back together with glue, string, and tape. "As you mend the cup, mending that is needed elsewhere in the Universe gets done as well. Be aware of it as you mend," said Ono.

*Stone Piece* is a pile of waterworn river stones on some of which Ono has written with a sharpie words such as "Dream", "Wish", and "Remember". People are supposed to pick up a stone "concentrating on the word and letting go of their anger or fear," said a museum press release, then put it back on the pile.

On March 12, an older woman wearing a red scarf and black hat didn't put a stone back on the pile. She was caught on camera stealing one of the stones with "Love Yourself" written on it. The stolen rock was insured for \$17,500.

Tell you what. I'll sell you a rock with "You Can Fool Some of the People All of the Time" on it for \$17.50. And for \$175, one with "May You Walk in the Broad Sunlit Uplands of Your Soul". Now that's something to concentrate on! I stole the "Broad Sunlit Uplands" part from Winston Churchill's *Their Finest Hour* speech to the House of Commons June 18, 1940.

By the way, Churchill did real art, not con art. His hobby was painting and he was pretty good at it. He made about 544 oil paintings, mainly landscapes, and wrote a book about it, *Painting as a Pastime*. In 1959 President Eisenhower arranged an exhibition of Churchill's paintings that traveled across the country.



\$175.00

Add to Cart 

### The Smoothest Shave — No Lie!

In the October 24, 1938 Life Magazine was an ad for Gillette razor blades in which a man shaves while hooked up to a lie detector.

He shaves one side of his face with a Gillette blade and the other side with another brand, without knowing which is which. "By recording breathing and blood pressure, the Lie Detector charts the emotional reactions produced by shaving."

Hundreds of men and 16 other brands of blades took the test and Gillette came out on top every time and when the test subjects were asked which of the two anonymous blades they preferred, "in practically every instance the subject's expressed preference tallies exactly with the Lie Detector's findings." Reading the squiggles printed out by the lie detector in the photo is its inventor, Dr. William Marston.



William Moulton Marston (1893-1947) graduated from Harvard in 1915, earned a law degree in 1918 and a PhD in psychology in 1921, both from Harvard.

He invented the lie detector in 1915 and wrote a number of books about the psychology of normal people.

He lived with his wife and a mistress in the same house and had two children by each. This scandalous arrangement caused his academic career to dry up. Once a full professor he took a series of lesser posts and was mostly unemployed during the 1930's.

In 1940, his mistress wrote an article in *Family Circle* in which she consulted Dr. Marston about the notion at the time that comic books were dangerous for children and that Superman was a Fascist. Marston said that comics were just wish fulfillment and that Superman symbolized our national power which would be used to defeat evil and protect the innocent.

M.C. Gaines, the publisher of *Superman*, read the article and hired Marston as a consultant. Marston convinced Gaines that he needed a female superhero and Wonder Woman was born in December, 1941. Marston wrote the Wonder Woman scripts until his death from cancer in 1947.

The inspiration for Wonder Woman was Margaret Sanger (1879-1966), ad-

vocate of birth control, who actually coined the term in 1914, and women's rights activist. Marston's mistress was her niece. His mistress and his wife lived together the rest of their lives after Marston's death.

Marston was interested in the women's suffrage and feminist movements from the 1910's. "Wonder Woman is psychological propaganda for the new type of woman who should, I believe, rule the world," Marston said in a 1942 press release after the debut of the comic.

It has been suggested that Wonder Woman's Lasso of Truth — anyone roped by it was compelled to tell the truth — was inspired by the lie detector.

Marston was inducted into the Comic Book Hall of Fame in 2006.

### Gör Det Rätt!\*

In the Fall '13 newsletter I told you how Google gave Sweden such a hard time about making the colloquialism "ogooglebar" — can't be found by searching the Internet, officially Swedish.

Google insisted that it be defined as "something that cannot be found on the web using Google" as opposed to any old search engine. They wanted the trademark symbol added, too. The Language Council of Sweden finally gave up and the word stayed unofficially Swedish.

The article was titled *Var Inte Ond*, Swedish for "Don't Be Evil," Google's motto. I got the Swedish version from Google translate, of course.

"Don't be Evil" was in Google's code of conduct since 2000. A letter from Google founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin in its prospectus when it went public in 2004 said that not being evil would make Google "a better company that does good things for the world even if we forgo some short term gains." This was later dubbed the "Don't Be Evil Manifesto."

In April, 2018 Google wimped down "Don't Be Evil" to "Employees of Alphabet... should do the right thing — follow the law, act honorably, and treat each other with respect." There's a token "don't be evil" in the last line of the revised code of conduct. There were several paragraphs about not being evil originally.

\* Do the right thing, courtesy of Google translate.



Pendant in 14 karat white gold with blue topaz, 1.55 carat and diamonds, .05 carat total. \$430. See it in color on the web.

## Flapper Girl

"The new silver dollar will not stack!" charged an article in the Literary Digest January 28, 1922. This was the new 1921 Peace dollar with the head of Liberty on the front and a perched eagle clutching an olive branch on the back with "Peace" below it.

The article goes on at length quoting the Wall Street Journal panning every aspect of the design from the "'flapper' Liberty head" to the "so-called eagle" that is "presumably a compromise—a concession to the cuckoo, with adequate class representation for the buzzard and the English sparrow." (Flappers were the hippies of the jazz age, with scandalous bobbed hair and short skirts — without corsets!)

The initial strike of the Peace dollar was high relief which presumably affected its stackability. But the New York Times disputed this, saying in a January 5, 1922 article "Reports that the new dollars would not 'stack'...were proved untrue at the Federal Reserve Bank. Experienced cashiers at the institution 'stacked' several twenty dollar piles of the new dollars and said they line up as well as the old silver dollars."

In World War I, Germany spread rumors that Britain didn't have enough silver to back the pound. This triggered people in India, then a British colony, to redeem their notes for silver. The U.S. Came to the rescue with the 1918 Pittman Act which authorized the melting of silver dollars into bullion to be sold to Britain. Over 270 million were melted. These were Morgan dollars, first minted in 1878.

The Pittman Act also authorized the minting of replacement silver dollars with silver purchased from domestic mines. Initially 86,730,000 Morgan dollars were minted until the new Peace dollar commemorating the Great War was first struck in December, 1921. The dies for the Morgan dollar had been destroyed in 1910 after the silver reserves mandated for the purpose ran out in 1904 and Master engraver George Morgan, who designed the dollar, had to recreate them.

Anthony de Francisci, a 34 year old Sicilian immigrant, won the competition for the design of the coin. His initial design of the Peace dollar showed the eagle on the reverse clutching a broken sword. After protests that the design would be interpreted as defeat rather than peace, lacking time to start over with a new model, Morgan was able to skillfully modify the design in the steel master hub, from which the coin dies are made, removing the sword and extending the olive branch. This was done at the Philadelphia mint December 23, 1921 with de Francisci looking on.

The pressure of striking the high relief of the Peace dollar caused the dies to break and on January 10, 1922 after only 32,400 Peace dollars had been minted, production was halted. Attempts to solve the problem by striking with less pressure resulted in loss of detail. de Francisci had to redo the design from scratch with lower relief, sculpting a large plaster model that was then cast in metal and traced with a pantograph reducing lathe that cut the design into the hub. The new coins went into production a month later. Peace dollars were minted from 1921 to 1928, and again in 1934 and 1935 for a total production of 190,577,279.

A widely quoted excerpt from "a Philadelphia newspaper" says "Liberty is getting younger. Take it from the new Peace dollar, put in circulation yesterday. The young woman who has been adorning silver currency for many years never looked better than in the 'cart wheel' which the Philadelphia Mint has just started to turn out."

"The young lady, moreover, has lost her Greek profile. Hellenic beauty seems to have been superseded by the newer 'flapper' type. Judging by the same profile, Liberty is growing more slender."

de Francisci in a letter to The Numismatist, February, 1922, said he didn't have enough time to search for a model but "I derived some help from the features of Mrs. de Francisci, but generally the Liberty head as it stands is a composite one." Anthony de Francisci went on to design many other medals and medallions. He died October 20, 1964 at 77. Flapper girl Mary Teresa de Francisci died on the same date 26 years later in 1990 at 92.



High relief 1921 Peace dollar



Mary Teresa de Francisci



## Birdie Penalty

Your birdie will turn into a bogey if you didn't see that crow steal your golf ball. You'll have to play another ball from where it was when you first hit it and take a one stroke penalty.

An article in the February 8, 1954 Life Magazine says "Irate Japanese players watch crows soar off with their best golf balls." The balls cost \$1.40 each then, twice the cost today adjusted for inflation.

A 1951 article in a Perth, Australia newspaper says that crows stole 31 golf balls over a weekend at one course. The problem was so serious that many players carried shotguns in their golf bags. "However, with their usual cunning, they were never in sight when a player armed with a gun was involved." A search found one cache of 23 balls under a log, but 350 were still missing. The club offered a free weekend at the town's best hotel for anyone with a solution to the problem.

They're still at it. A 2015 article in the Daily Mail says crows steal up to 7 balls a day from a golf course in Leeds. The crows think they're tasty eggs of other birds.

"A ball wiped with a cloth soaked in whiskey will stop crows from taking the ball," said an article in The Sydney Morning Herald July 3, 2010. Another paper suggested using golf balls with fluorescent colors.

Even the name for a group of crows mocks the unsuccessful attempts to shoot them: "a murder of crows."

## Top of the List

Can't remember the name of the web site? Google "jewelry newsletter." It will be second or third. Below "jewelry newsletter" it will say "a jewelry store newsletter with wit and attitude, very different internet." For 5 pages of jewelry pictures, click on "Local Shopping/gold price" upper right.



Pendant in 14 karat gold with very fine rich green tsavorite garnet, .54 carat and diamonds, .15 carat total. \$1250. See it in color on the web.

## Deep Thought

*Persons who insist that all food should be carried to the mouth with the fork, should be fed on green peas until they change their opinion.*

— The Reading Eagle (Pa.) January 4, 1870

11/1/18 11/1/17 11/1/16

<b>Gold</b>	<b>1231</b>	<b>1277</b>	<b>1288</b>
<b>Silver</b>	<b>14.45</b>	<b>16.94</b>	<b>18.24</b>
<b>Platinum</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>931</b>	<b>995</b>

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

**Joseph's buys old gold for cash**

### Cultural Friction

"When you eat that bowl of noodles, everything comes together in your mouth when you slurp it up, which is very different than the way you would eat a bowl of chicken noodle soup."

— Ivan Orkin, owner of the Ramen Slurp Shop in Manhattan.

But you'll gross out everyone around you with the slurping. Problem solved! Unslurp with the Otohiko Fork. The highly directional microphones built into the fork send the slurping noise to your smartphone where an app will emit sounds that cancel out the slurping.



"Otohiko provides a magnificent solution for 'Noodle Slurping

Noise' - the cultural friction between the people who enjoy slurping noodles and the people who feel the noise uncomfortable," said Nissin, which makes the fork and Cup Noodles, instant ramen soup.

A promotional video in Japanese shows tourists eating ramen soup quietly then looking uncomfortable when a Japanese couple loudly slurp up their soup. Provided with the fork, the tourists then happily slurp away. This is billed as the solution to "noodle harassment" by tourists in Japan. Nissin will only produce them if 5,000 are pre-ordered for \$130.

### Underground Deodorant

One of Vienna's subway lines is still not air-conditioned. In 95 degree heat the sweltering passengers were treated to cans of deodorant spray handed out by the public transport company. The deodorants were "torn out of our hands," said a spokesman for the company. 14,000 were gone in a day.

### Don't Mess up Your Selfie

June 21 is National Selfie Day, started by a Texas disc jockey in 2014. The National Selfie Day Website says to take your selfie in your own creative way, post it on their Facebook page to share them, and "Keep them CLEAN please."

You can keep your selfie clean while wolfing down your Quarter Pounder at McDonald's with the Frylus, a yellow plastic stylus shaped like a French fry used to push your smartphone buttons for "mess-free selfies." It comes free with a Quarter Pounder on June 21 "while supplies last."

But as I reported to you in the Fall '18 newsletter, your nose will look 30% bigger at arm-length selfie range and even bigger if your schnozzola is red.



★ **Holiday Hours** ★

**Mon. - Fri. Dec. 17 - 21 from 10-8**

**Sun. Dec. 23 from 12-4**

<b>HOURS</b>	
<b>MON - WED</b>	<b>10 - 6</b>
<b>THU - FRI</b>	<b>10 - 8</b>
<b>SAT</b>	<b>10 - 6</b>
<b>SUN</b>	<b>Closed</b>

Ring in 14 karat white gold with hot pink natural color spinel 1.49 carat and diamonds, .75 carat total. \$1250. See it in color on the web.



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### Pac-Man Effect

A conference of 200 Flat-Earthers met in Birmingham, England in 2018. One problem addressed is how do you wind up back where you started if you keep going long enough if the earth isn't round. "One logical possibility for those who are truly free thinkers is that space-time wraps around and we get a Pac-Man effect." In other words, when you hit one edge of the flat earth, you are magically teleported back to the other edge.



### Mail Odor

In the Spring '14 newsletter in an article titled *High Finance*, I told you about a scratch and sniff coin from the African country of Benin with a raised green marijuana leaf on it. Rubbing the coin releases the odor of pot.

On June 20, 2018 the Post Office came out with scratch and sniff stamps that are decidedly less culturally malodorous: popsicles. Frozen Treats Scratch and Sniff stamps feature 10 different flavors of popsicles that "will add the sweet scent of summer" to your letter. The stamps debuted at a children's museum in Austin, Texas.

But there's only one smell, described as "fruity" by a Reading, Pa. mother and "watermelon" by her 9 year old daughter. But if you wait a few years maybe you'll be able to mail that ounce of pot with a scratch and sniff cannabis stamp.



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