



EnviroBriefs



Bagpipes Blues. Bagpipes are being viewed as a threat to the environment (not just the eardrums). Over-logging in Africa has led to the wood used to make Scotland's national instrument being nearly wiped out. Musicians are being urged to ensure that the wood for their bagpipes comes from eco-friendly sources. Scots are generally sympathetic, but one major bagpipe manufacturer stated "I for one am not going to be made to feel guilty by a bunch of misguided environmental do-gooders."

Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow. The Cosco Busan, a 900-foot container ship, struck the western span of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge and spilled 58,000 gallons of fuel oil into San Francisco Bay. A unique eco-cleaning solution for the slimed beaches that uses human hair and mushrooms is being implemented. Hair mats soak up the oil and

oyster mushrooms are placed on the mats to grow and absorb the oil. After 12 weeks, the oily hair mats then become non-toxic compost.

IRS (Intestinal Revenue Service). Estonian officials have sent out tax notices to farmers for methane emissions from their cattle. Cows produce large quantities of methane gas (belching and flatulence) when they digest grass. No other European Union country imposes a flatulence tax on farmers.

DisAstroTurf. Two playing fields in New Jersey were closed after state health officials detected high levels of lead in the synthetic (nylon) turf and warned that athletes could swallow or inhale fibers or dust from the playing surface. Additional testing has been ordered. Pigment containing lead chromate is used in some surfaces to make the turf green and hold its color in sunlight.

The United States has about 3,500 synthetic playing fields made of various materials. Lead can cause brain damage and other illnesses, particularly in children.

Mister Splashy Pants. Greenpeace held an online contest to name a humpback whale in the South Pacific as a way to increase awareness of the group. Over 150,000 people voted - "Mister Splashy Pants" won 79% of the vote and was declared the winning name. Pictured below, the mortified Mr. Splashy Pants (who liked the 2nd place name, Humphrey), abruptly cancelled his Greenpeace membership.



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Did you Know?

- Thomas Jefferson, the principal author of the Declaration of Independence, invented a macaroni machine with instructions for making pasta.
- Desperate for a presidential candidate in 1884, Republicans looked to William Tecumseh Sherman (infamous for burning Atlanta). He is the first to utter the words: "If nominated, I will not accept. If elected, I will not serve."

Presidential Moments in History

1789: George Washington has to borrow money in order to attend his own inauguration.

1845: At Andrew Jackson's funeral, his pet parrot is ejected because of its incessant cursing.

1848: Zachary Taylor is known as "Old Rough and Ready" because he

dresses like a slob. And he is so cheap that he refuses to pay for a postage due letter informing him that he has won his party's presidential nomination. He learns that he is the party nominee weeks later.

1931: When Herbert Hoover and his wife want to avoid being

overheard by White House dinner guests, they speak to each other in Chinese.

1965: Lyndon Johnson has such a thirst for the soft drink *Fresca* that he has a soda fountain installed in the Oval Office that dispenses the beverage by pushing a button on his desk chair.

OGI Environmental

Kevin Pentony, Managing Partner
830 S. Durango Drive, Suite 103
Las Vegas, NV 89145

phone: 702-804-5545

fax: 702-804-4649

email: kpentony@ogienviro.com

Common Sense Consulting



Got goat?

Top 10 Least Popular ...

10. Disney Store item - Mickey Mouse Glue Traps
9. Breakfast cereal - Unexceptional K
8. Stuffed animal - Winnie the Pimp
7. Amusement park - Six Flags over Newark
6. Halloween candy - Poisonettes
5. Toy - Fisher Price Bathtub Toaster
4. Clothing store - Burlington Goat Factory (see photo at left)
3. Disney World attraction - Country Bear "When Animals Attack" Jamboree
2. Restaurant - Old Gravy
1. Starbucks drink - Crappuccino

Enviro-quote: "The release of atom power has changed everything except our way of thinking ... If only I had known, I should have become a watchmaker" - *Albert Einstein*

Garbage Island

The Eastern Great Pacific Garbage Patch (also known as Garbage Island) is a floating landfill between Hawaii and California that is estimated to be twice the size of Texas. The enormous floating "island" is growing at an alarming rate and consists of 80 percent plastics weighing some 3.5 million tons. The majority of the trash originates onshore and is held in place by inward blowing winds and circular currents. Due to lack of large fish



and gentle breezes, fishermen and sailors rarely travel in these "horse latitudes."

Garbage Island presents numerous hazards to marine life, fishing and tourism. About 10 percent of plastic produced worldwide winds up in the oceans. The durability that makes plastic so useful to humans also makes it harmful to the planet. It breaks down into smaller pieces but doesn't biodegrade.

Jellyfish consume tiny particles of plastic instead of plankton. Sea turtles mistake clear plastic bags for jellyfish. Birds swoop down and swallow indigestible shards of plastic. The plastic fills their stomachs, doesn't pass, and they eventually starve to death. At least 267 marine species have suffered from some kind of



ingestion or entanglement with marine debris. In total, more than a million birds and marine mammals die yearly from consuming or becoming caught in plastic and other flotsam.

At this time, there are no plans to clean up Garbage Island because no country is willing to step forward and claim the problem as its own responsibility.