



## EnviroBriefs



Tree Museum

**Swiss Trees.** Singer-songwriter Joni Mitchell was right about the tree museum in her song *Big Yellow Taxi*. The Tree Museum near Lake Zurich in Switzerland opened with fanfare in June on the sprawling grounds of a 14th century monastery. Over 22 tree species are on display at the outdoor museum. The collection contains trees as high as 40 feet and as old as 130 years set against sections of time-worn sandstone.

**Healthy Living.** In August, Frank Viscido made his weekly pick-up from the Food Bank in Clearwater FL. He asked for healthy food, so a volunteer gave him a can of *Senior Holistic Superfood* which boasted glucosamine, beta carotene, vitamins and antioxidants for “sharp vision, strong immune system and joint health.” The Food Bank later discovered that the rest of the label read “Healthy skin and coat. Superfoods every dog needs.” Frank

was not home when workers tried to contact him - a neighbor said he had gone to visit the Tree Museum in Switzerland.

**Trash Talk.** Everyone knows that recycling is a good thing, but in the latest example of government knows best, officials in Cleveland OH will make it compulsory for residents to recycle and will use high-tech trash cans to ensure compliance. The technotrash cans will detect the amount of refuse that could have been recycled and report the results to authorities. If the contents are found to include more than 10% recyclable material, the owner will be liable for a \$100 fine. Commenting on the controversial program, Cleveland’s Mayor said that even though he liked the idea of fines providing additional revenue for the cash-strapped city, he thought that having to actually live in Cleveland was punishment enough.

**You Have a Point.** Ingenious managers at Yantai Park in Shandong Province in Eastern China have found a unique dual solution to crowded parks and revenue shortfalls - metered park benches. To prevent people from hogging the benches, they have been fitted with coin-operated timers. When your time is up, steel spikes rise up from the bench seat. “We have to make sure that the facilities are shared evenly and this seems like a fair way to stop people from grabbing a bench at dawn and staying there all day,” said one park official.” The metered benches with spikes have been so successful that the overcrowded park restrooms have been similarly modified and resulting waiting times have been drastically reduced.



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### Did you Know?

- The French Revolution was sparked in part by the 8 month eruption of Iceland’s Laki Volcano in 1783. The eruption carried volcanic ash over northern Europe causing widespread crop failures and famines, a major factor in the start of the French Revolution in 1789.

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## Nursery Rhymes Exposed

**Ring Around the Rosy** originates with the Great (bubonic) Plague of London in 1665. Plague symptoms include a ring-shaped rosy red rash. The term “ashes ashes” refers to the cremation of corpses. The Plague is halted only by the Great London Fire of 1666 which kills most disease-carrying rats.

**Humpty Dumpty** is a large cannon used during the English Civil War (1642-49) in the Siege of Colchester (1648-49). Humpty Dumpty is placed on a wall next to St. Mary’s Church and is blown off the wall by the attacking army. The defenders try to raise the damaged Humpty Dumpty to another part

of the wall but because the cannon is so heavy “All the King’s horses and all the King’s men couldn’t put Humpty together again.”

**Jack and Jill** tells the French Revolution story of King Louis XVI (Jack) who “broke his crown” (is guillotined) in 1793 followed by Queen

Marie Antoinette (Jill) who “came tumbling after.” The guillotine is linked with France but English Queen Mary I (Bloody Mary) debuts the *maid* (guillotine) 250 years earlier as told in the nursery rhyme **Mary Mary Quite Contrary** which ends with “And pretty maids all in a row.”

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Only Great Ideas



*It's not easy being green\* (see No. 3→)*

\*This slogan became available when Kermit the Frog was introduced as the latest Green Giant entree

## Top 10 Marketing Missteps

10. Pope memorial T-shirts in Miami (in Spanish)  
*Intended T-shirt imprint* - "Vi el Papa" (I saw the Pope)  
*Actual T-shirt imprint* - "Vi la papa" (I saw the potato)
9. Kentucky Fried Chicken  
*Marketing slogan* - "Finger lickin' good"  
*Unintended Chinese translation* - "Eat your fingers off"  
(Now a favorite item on the Colonel's new healthy menu)
8. Chevy Nova  
*Unintended Spanish translation* - "No go"
7. Coca Cola  
*Marketing slogan* - "Coke adds life"  
*Unintended Chinese translation* - "Coke brings your ancestors back from the dead"
6. Parker Quink pen  
*Marketing slogan* - "The Quink pen won't leak and embarrass you"  
*Unintended Spanish translation* - "The Quink pen won't make you pregnant"
5. Clairol curling iron  
*Product name* - "Mist Stick"  
*Unintended German translation* - "Manure Stick"
4. Milk  
*Marketing slogan* - "Got milk?"  
*Unintended Spanish translation* - "Are you lactating?"
3. Jolly Green Giant  
*Unintended Arabic translation* - "Intimidating Green Monster"  
(see photo at left)
2. Coors  
*Marketing slogan* - "Turn it loose"  
*Unintended Spanish translation* - "Get loose bowels"  
(Not entirely untrue)
1. Popular antipsychotic medication  
*Unintended Mandarin translation* - "Dogs are afraid of me"  
(Ironically, this is one of the drug's possible side effects)

## CITY OF GARBAGE

The slum of Manshiet Nasser, located on the outskirts of Cairo, Egypt is referred to as the *City of Garbage* because of the tremendous amounts of refuse shipped there from all over the Egypt's capital city. The citizens of Manshiet Nasser are mainly Coptic Christians and toil as *zabaleen* (Arabic for garbage collectors). They make a living from garbage - residents bring trash into the city by donkey



cart or small truck and sort any recyclable or useful waste. Each street and building

in Manshiet Nasser is stacked with mountains of solid waste and people are continually digging through the piles of trash, looking for anything of value.

For more than 50 years, residents of Cairo have relied on the cheap (less than



\$1 a month) door-to-door service that the *zabaleen* provide. Cairo officials have been trying to put the estimated 70,000 *zabaleen* out of business by bringing in foreign sanitation companies mostly from Italy and Spain (providing their

workers with shiny trucks and colorful uniforms) who transport

and dispose of the trash they collect in brand-new desert landfills.



In spite of the filth, health risks (mainly hepatitis) and low-tech methods, the *zabaleen* recycle up to 85% of the garbage they collect and have created one of the world's most efficient waste recycling systems. The foreign firms are only required to achieve a 20% recycling rate.