

N.Y.C. Smoking Ban Set for March 30

BACKGROUND:

Tobacco is a plant grown for its leaves, which are smoked, chewed, or sniffed for a variety of effects. It is considered an addictive substance because it contains the chemical nicotine.

The tobacco plant is believed to have originated in the Western Hemisphere. The cultivated species most often grown for North American and European tobacco products is **Nicotiana tabacum**. The leaves of the plant are prepared for smoking, chewing, or sniffing. In addition to nicotine, tobacco contains over 19 known carcinogens (most are collectively known as "tar") and more than 4,000 chemicals.

Prior to European influence in the Americas, tobacco was used by the Indians of Mexico and Peru for ceremonies, medicinal purposes, and to alleviate hunger pangs during famines. Columbus is credited with introducing tobacco into Europe. Tobacco use became widely accepted by the Portuguese, Spanish, French, British, and Scandinavians. Explorers and sailors who became dependent upon tobacco began planting seeds at their ports of call, introducing the product into other parts of Europe and Asia.

The colonists introduced tobacco on the American continent in the early 1600s. It became a major crop and trading commodity of the Jamestown colony. Over the years, tobacco has been claimed as a cure for a wide range of ailments with varying forms of administration (for example, used in poultices, pastes, smoked, chewed, sniffed, or placed in any body cavity). Its social importance also grew over the years, even to the point of denoting the "modern or liberated woman" during the first part of the twentieth century.

It was not until the 1960s, with the introduction of medical research related to cigarette smoking, that the adverse health effects of tobacco became widely publicized.

EFFECTS:

Nicotine has both stimulant and depressant effects upon the body. Bowel tone and activity increases along with saliva and bronchial secretions. Stimulation is followed with a phase that depresses the respiratory muscles. As a euphoric agent, nicotine causes arousal as well as relaxation from stressful situations.

On the average, tobacco use increases the heart rate 10 to 20 beats per minute, and it increases the blood pressure reading by 5 to 10 mmHG (because it constricts the blood vessels). Nicotine may also increase diaphoresis (sweating), nausea, and diarrhea because of its effects upon the central nervous system. Nicotine's effects upon hormonal activities of the body is also evident. It elevates the blood level of glucose and increases insulin production. Nicotine also tends to enhance platelet aggregation, which may lead to thrombotic (blood clot) events.

The "positive" effects of nicotine upon the body may also be noted. It stimulates memory and alertness, enhancing cognitive skills that require speed, reaction time, vigilance, and work performance. As a mood-altering agent, it tends to alleviate boredom and reduce stress and reduces aggressive responses to stressful events.

It also tends to be an appetite suppressant, specifically decreasing the appetite for simple carbohydrates (sweets) and inhibiting the efficiency with which food is metabolized. (For this reason, fear of weight gain also influences the willingness of some people to stop smoking.)

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The addictive effects of tobacco have been well documented. It is considered mood and behavior altering, psychoactive, and abusable. As a multisystem pharmacological agent that is voluntarily administered, tobacco is believed to have an addictive potential comparable to alcohol, cocaine, and morphine.

STORY:

On the eve of the year's biggest party night, New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg approved one of the nation's toughest anti-smoking laws while Gov. George Pataki toughened the state's drunk driving statute. The smoking ban, affecting nearly every public indoor space in the city, takes effect March 30, giving smokers one last New Year's Eve to light up in most bars and restaurants.

Smokers claim the law violates their rights, and some bar and nightclub owners say it will drive them out of business. But Bloomberg, a former smoker, said protecting nonsmokers from secondhand smoke is paramount. "I don't think there's anything that any of us who have been elected to serve the people will do in our entire lives that will have the kind of impact that this legislation will have," Bloomberg said Monday. "This will literally save thousands of lives."

The few exceptions include cigar bars, private clubs and specially ventilated smoking rooms in bars that employees do not enter.

Meanwhile, Pataki signed legislation reducing the blood-alcohol limit for drunken driving from 0.10 percent to 0.08 percent. The change conforms with laws in most other states. "This is a great time of year, a time to celebrate," Pataki said, "but also to let the public be aware that it is not a time to drink and get behind the wheel." The legislation is scheduled to take effect in November, but the Legislature is expected to move up the start date.

Based on results from other states, Pataki said the new limit could reduce drunken driving deaths by 12 percent — or 40 each year — in NY.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Although over 38 million people in the United States have quit smoking, about 50 million continue to smoke (about 25.7% of the adult population). Each year, approximately 1.3 million Americans quit smoking. In addition, about two-thirds of current smokers state that they would like to quit and only 19% of the current U.S. smokers report they have never tried to quit. About 30% to 40% of those who have not tried to quit say they do not believe that the health risks of smoking are real, or they do not believe that quitting smoking will ultimately decrease their risks for disease.

It is estimated that about 5.5 million people use smokeless tobacco daily and another 6 million use it at least weekly. Young men are at highest risk for using tobacco products but the incidence in women is increasing. Smokeless tobacco use is highest in the Southeast region, followed by the Central Plains and Western states. Its use is lowest in the Northeast region of the United States. Smokeless tobacco use patterns are higher within the following occupations: athletes, ranchers, farmers, fishermen, lumberjacks, and industrial workers who have repetitive jobs requiring hand freedom.

PROCESS OF QUITTING:

- within 20 minutes of quitting
 - blood pressure and pulse rate drop to normal
 - body temperature of extremities (hands/feet) increases to normal
- within 8 hours of quitting
 - carbon monoxide level in blood drops to normal
 - oxygen level in blood increases to normal
- within 24 hours of quitting
 - risk of sudden heart attack decreases
- within 48 hours of quitting
 - nerve endings begin to regenerate
 - senses of smell and taste begin to return to normal
- within 2 weeks to 3 months of quitting
 - circulation improves
 - walking becomes easier
 - lung function increases up to 30%

- within 1 to 9 months of quitting
 - overall energy typically increases
 - symptoms associated with chronic use decrease (such as coughing, nasal congestion, fatigue, and shortness of breath)
 - cilia function begins to return to normal, which increases the body's ability to handle mucus, clean the respiratory tract, and reduce respiratory infections
- within 1 year of quitting
 - excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a tobacco user
- within 5 years of quitting
 - lung cancer death rate (for average one pack/day former smoker) decreases by nearly 50%
 - risk of cancer of the mouth is half that of a tobacco user
- within 10 years of quitting
 - lung cancer death rate becomes similar to that of a nonuser
 - precancerous cells are replaced with normal cell growth
 - risk of stroke is typically lowered, possibly to that of a nonuser
 - risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney, and pancreas decreases

New Power Source in Australia



--Australia with inventive idea for new power source.--

BACKGROUND:

One of the first energy sources used by humans was firewood. Men and women of the Stone Age (some 25,000 years ago) used firewood to cook food, as well as to heat and light their caves and huts.

About 5,000 years ago, people in the Middle East used wind energy to propel their sail boats. They made durable tools and weapons from

tin and copper that they took out of the ground and refined by means of fire (heat energy).

About 5,000 years ago, most likely in China, it was discovered that a type of iron ore rock called magnetite seemed to possess a mysterious force. The rock would attract pieces of iron and hold them fast. This magnetic energy proved to be very useful when humans figured out that a magnetized needle, dangled from the end of a string, would always point north. To this day, travelers all over the world use magnetic compasses.

A Greek scientist and philosopher named Thales, who lived about 2,500 years ago, discovered another type of energy. He noticed that when he rubbed fur against a piece of amber, the amber would attract things to itself, such as feathers and lint. That attractive force we now call "static electricity."

About a thousand years ago, people living in China were amazed to discover some hard, black rocks which burned much more slowly than wood, and gave off lots of heat. This magical material is now known as coal. For many centuries coal has been one of our most important fuels, even though we now know that when it is burned it sends undesirable pollutants into the air.

The explorer Marco Polo went to China with his family in 1275, and when he returned to Italy twenty years later he wrote a book about his experiences there. In his book, Europeans read about these "black stones", and they began to burn pieces of coal they found lying about. People in the Netherlands found they could dig down and find this fossil fuel underground: coal.

From ancient times until the 17th century, humans used brute strength animal energy - horses, oxen, camels, donkeys, elephants - to serve most of their hauling and transportation needs. As early as A.D. 800, the Moslems built crude wind mills to drive wheels that ground grain. Improved versions of the windmill sprang up in Europe following the Crusades.

The history of energy use in the United States reflects these general themes. Wood energy, for example, has been a significant part of the U.S.

energy mix since colonial times. In fact, fuelwood was overwhelmingly the dominant energy source from the founding of the earliest colonies until late in the last century. But thereafter, the modern era is notable for the accelerated appearance of new sources of energy, in contrast to the imperceptible pace of change in earlier times.

Coal ended the long dominance of fuelwood in the United States about 1885, only itself to be surpassed in 1951 by petroleum and then by natural gas a few years later. Hydroelectric power and nuclear electric power appeared about 1890 and 1957, respectively. Solar photovoltaic, advanced solar thermal, and geothermal technologies represent further recent developments in energy sources. The most striking of these entrances, however, is that of petroleum and natural gas. Their consumption remained shallow for several decades following the success of Edwin Drake's drilling rig in 1859, but begin to rise more steeply in the 1920s. Then, interrupted only by the Depression, the its use climbed at increasingly alpine angles until 1973. Annual consumption of natural gas exceeded that of coal in 1947 and then quadrupled in a single generation. Neither before nor since has any energy source become so dominant so quickly.

STORY:

Australia's merciless sunshine is about to be harnessed to produce massive amounts of renewable energy. As part of the process, the tallest man-made structure built, a one-kilometre-tall tower, will rise from the red desert in the south-west of New South Wales.

EnviroMission Limited, a company listed on the Australian Stock Exchange in August last year, plans to have its first \$800 million solar-thermal electricity generator up and running in 2005 and four more operating by the end of 2010. Each of these power plants, the world's first large-scale solar thermal power stations, will produce 200 megawatts of electricity, enough to supply 200,000 households.

The technology is relatively simple, but its execution on this scale will be one of the great

engineering feats of recent times. It uses the basic principle that hot air rises. Enough hot air in a column tall enough, can produce phenomenal horsepower.

The 200 megawatt solar tower, which will cost A\$ 1 billion (\$563 million) to build, will be of a similar width to a football field and will stand in the center of a massive glass roof spanning seven kilometers in diameter. The sun heats air under the glass roof, which slopes upwards from three meters at its outer perimeter to 25 meters at the tower base. As the hot air rises, a powerful updraft is also created by the tower that allows air to be continually sucked through 32 turbines, which spin to generate power 24 hours a day.

Hot air, collected inside a vast, 7500-hectare greenhouse surrounding the base of the tower, will drive turbines set at various levels inside the tower - rather like a jet engine in reverse. The turbines will drive electrical generators, just as the water-driven turbines of the Snowy scheme drive their generators.

The principle of the solar tower generator has been tested in a pilot plant built at Manzanares in Spain in 1982 under a joint venture between the German engineering company and the Spanish Government. This relatively small 50-kilowatt pilot plant operated successfully for seven years between 1982 and 1989.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The company says that by the end of this decade it will be able to supply clean, renewable energy to more than one million households, about one-eighth of the present total. EnviroMission says that each of its proposed towers would be capable of saving 830,000 tons of greenhouse carbon dioxide gas from entering the environment.

Time magazine gives the project one of its 2002 Best Inventions awards, congratulating its engineer-designer, Professor Jorg Schlaich, a founding partner of Schlaich Bergermann and Partner, the German company that built the Munich Olympic Stadium and the Montreal Olympic Stadium.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY:**January 6, 1912****New Mexico Joins the Union**

On January 6, 1912, New Mexico is admitted into the United States as the 47th state.

Spanish explorers passed through the area that would become New Mexico in the early 16th century, encountering the well-preserved remains of a 13th-century Pueblo civilization. Exaggerated rumors about the hidden riches of these Pueblo cities encouraged the first full-scale Spanish expedition into New Mexico, led by Francisco Vásquez de Coronado in 1540. Instead of encountering the long-departed Pueblo people, the Spanish explorers met other indigenous groups, like the Apaches, who were fiercely resistant to the early Spanish missions and ranches in the area.

In 1609, Pedro de Peralta was made governor of the "Kingdom and Provinces of New Mexico," and a year later he founded its capital at Santa Fe. In the late 17th century, Apache opposition to Spain's colonial efforts briefly drove the Spanish out of New Mexico, but within a few decades they had returned. During the 18th century, the colonists expanded their ranching efforts and made attempts at farming and mining in the region.

When Mexico achieved its independence from Spain in 1821, New Mexico became a province of Mexico, and trade was opened with the United States. In the next year, American settlers began arriving in New Mexico via the Santa Fe Trail. In 1846, the Mexican-American War erupted, and U.S. General Stephen W. Kearny captured and occupied Santa Fe without significant Mexican opposition. Two years later, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ceded New Mexico to the United States, and in 1853 the territory was expanded to its present size through the Gadsden Purchase.

The Apache and the Navaho resisted the colonial efforts of the U.S. as they had those of

Spain and Mexico, and after three decades of bloodshed, Indian resistance finally ended with the surrender of Geronimo, chief of the Chiricahua Apaches, in 1886. After the suppression of New Mexico's natives, the population of New Mexico expanded considerably, and many came to participate in the ranching boom brought on by the opening of the Santa Fe Railroad in 1879. In 1912, New Mexico was granted statehood.

WHO YOU NEED TO KNOW:**Oscar Winner Conrad Hall Dies at 76**

Cinematographer Conrad L. Hall, a master artist of the camera who was nominated for nine Oscars and won two, has died of cancer. He was 76.

Considered an expert in the use of light, Hall filmed nearly three dozen movies in a career that stretched 50 years. He won Academy Awards for 1969's "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid" and 1999's "American Beauty." Hall's other films included "Road to Perdition," "The Professionals," "In Cold Blood", "The Day of the Locust" and "Searching for Bobby Fischer".

Born and raised in Tahiti, Hall was the son of James Norman Hall, co-author of the novels "Mutiny on the Bounty" and "The Hurricane."

His many honors included a lifetime achievement award from the American Society of Cinematography in 1994 and an outstanding achievement award in 1988 for "Tequila Sunrise." He served last year as cinematographer at the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television.

Hall was to be honored later this month with a lifetime achievement award from the National Board of Review. Hall's son, Conrad W. Hall, followed him in the profession, most recently filming "Panic Room."

SPORTS:

College Football

No. 2 Ohio State 31, No. 1 Miami 24, 2OT

Two nerve-racking overtimes and a delayed officials' call were hardly too long to endure for a team waiting 34 years for another national title.

Showing patience and poise of a champion, Ohio State outlasted Miami in one college football's greatest games, beating the Hurricanes 31-24 Friday night in the Fiesta Bowl.



“There were a lot of great plays,” Ohio State coach Jim Tressel said Saturday. “We'll all be able to sit and talk about which one turned the tide.”

On Friday, the Buckeyes needed many plays to derail the Hurricanes' run for back-to-back national titles and snap their 34-game winning streak.

Craig Krenzel engineered two touchdown drives in overtime -- with help from a delayed penalty -- and the relentless Ohio State defense came up with a goal-line stand in this shocking, thrilling season-ender.

The confident 'Canes rushed onto the field at one point thinking they had won, only to learn that a pass-interference call gave the Buckeyes another chance in the first overtime.

Krenzel tied the game with his second touchdown and freshman Maurice Clarett scored on a 5-yard run in the second overtime to give the second-ranked Buckeyes (14-0) the win over No. 1 Miami (12-1). Ohio State was an 11 1/2 -point underdog.

Playoff Football

- January 4-5 -- Wild Card Weekend
- January 11-12 -- Divisional Playoffs
- January 19 -- Conference Championships
- January 26 -- Super Bowl 37 - San Diego
- February 2 -- Pro Bowl - Honolulu

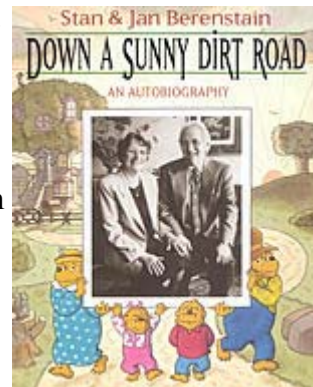
ENTERTAINMENT:

Down A Sunny Dirt Road

An Autobiography by Stan and Jan Berenstain



Once upon a time, in a first-year drawing class at the Philadelphia Museum School of Industrial Art, a "lantern-jawed exotic" named Stan openly admired the work of a shy, blue-eyed girl named Janice. It was kismet - and it heralded the birth of one of the great collaborations in all of children's literature.



So begins the wonderfully honest and enchanting tale of Stan and Jan Berenstain, co-creators of the Berenstain Bears. In their newly-released "Down a Sunny Dirt Road", Stan and Jan recount their autobiographical adventures (and some misadventures) that led not only to their enormously popular children's books but also to a romantic collaboration that continues still.

If you've ever wanted to know more about Stan and Jan Berenstain; if you've ever wanted to feel closer to the spirit of their work, this is the book for you. Learn about the authors' incredibly similar childhoods (and their markedly different backgrounds). Read about their inspirational relationship. And discover how a big tree house down a sunny dirt road deep in Bear Country has become an internationally recognized passage for generations of readers.

Enormously readable, packed with information, and great fun, "Down a Sunny Dirt Road" is a great curl-up-and-read treasure to be shared by every generation that has been raised on the Berenstain Bears.

NOTE: Look for their new cartoon series on PBS.

FEATURE:

Getting Down to Business in Hi-Tech Hotel Rooms

Hotels rooms aren't just for sleeping anymore. They're hubs of high-technomania equipped with broadband and wireless connections, 42-inch plasma screens, video-conferencing units, ergonomic chairs and e-butlers. It's enough to keep a weary traveler awake all night. Increasingly dependent on corporate business, hotels all over the world are competing to find ways of bringing the high-productivity concept to the next level.

To keep business travel a positive experience, hotels are blending low-tech comforts of home with a high-tech environment. Sheraton Smart Rooms, for example, created a relaxing work environment that allows guests to work effectively within a bedroom suite that doubles as a fully equipped private office that includes a work-desk and adjustable chair, multi-channel TV, radio, minibar, fax/printer and modem outlet.

Industry estimates show that business travelers account for 80 percent of extended-stay, i.e. five or more consecutive nights, guests nationwide. While increasingly computer-savvy, not all of them are comfortable with technology overload. A national survey conducted by a travel magazine found that in-room coffee makers, easy-to-reach dataports and ironing boards topped the list of preferred amenities for business travelers. And a poll of hotel general managers in 2000 ranked voicemail, Internet access and coffeemakers in the top three.

If guests at London's Art Deco Dorchester have trouble locating their state-of-the-art 42-inch plasma screens -- concealed in wooden cabinets to

retain the hotel's English country house style -- they can call an e-butler for assistance.

Gentler needs may gain preference as baby boomers continue to age and, in addition to work support, require amenities such as Yoga tapes, libraries or even access to a hotel doctor.

The Lake Austin Spa Resort in Texas is featuring prominent U.S. physicians and experts in health, nutrition, behavioral science and exercise training in its "A Fresh Start to Fitness" program. Interactive sessions and problem-solving seminars are scheduled for January and February (<http://www.lakeaustin.com>).

Marriott International worked with spa consultant Suzie Somers to create a distinctive atmosphere at its first branded spa, Revive, launched several weeks ago at the new JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort & Spa in Phoenix, Arizona. Freshly prepared sandwiches and salads, beer, wine, frozen desserts and snacks will be available for business travelers whether they check in at midnight or are just brainstorming into the wee hours.

Some places even encourage writing on the walls. Embassy Suites Hotels has begun testing a new type of room it calls a Creativity Suite, designed to stimulate business travelers creativity -- and, by extension, their productivity. The suites come with sectional sofas that can easily be rearranged into "thought-provoking positions," and grease boards, complete with a box of crayons, travelers can put to use if struck by an idea, even while taking a shower. Similar rooms are planned midyear in Chicago and Los Angeles.

Products that can help keep work-weary travelers' dispositions sunny include lamps and handheld stress monitors, so they can manage their biorhythms better. Changes in body function are transformed into a signal, such as a tone or meter reading; a rising tone indicates increased tension.

Reuters contributed to this story.

Quote of the Week:

"Anything I wanted to do, I did. If there's something I want to do, nothing stops me." --Calvin Klein

Fact of the Week:

In-room coffee makers, and ironing boards topped the list of preferred amenities for business travelers.

Word of the Week:

Trig (trig) v.t. Trim, neat, spruce.

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And
Have a Great Week!

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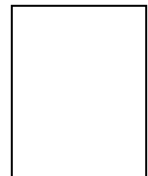
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