

Curiosity Corner: Acronyms

We use a lot of acronyms these days—words or names which are formed from abbreviations from the initial components of the phrase they represent, usually in individual letters. It's fun to figure out what they stand for. For example, in a recent column, I asked if you knew what GEICO stood for (as in the TV ad that features the little green gecko). GEICO actually stands for Government Employees Insurance Company.

Acronyms are generally used to refer to companies, organizations, and so on, but when asked what they mean... d'oh! (It's okay—I'm guilty, too!)

Let's take a quiz to see how well you know some of these common acronyms:

- UPS (package delivery)
- IBM (tech company)
- CVS (drug store)
- ZIP (the mail must go through)
- BMW (the beemer)
- 3M (what would we do without post-its?)
- M&M (the candy)
- The "K" in "Kmart"
- ESPN (sports network)
- Aflac (as heard by a duck on the commercials)
- NECCO (candy wafers)
- Laser (let there be light, and a little physics)

Here are the answers:

- United Parcel Service.
- International Business Machine.

•When it was founded in 1963, CVS originally stood for Consumer Value Stores. At the time, it sold health and beauty products. Only in 1967 did CVS begin operating locations with pharmacy departments. In 1969, CVS



CURIOSITY CORNER
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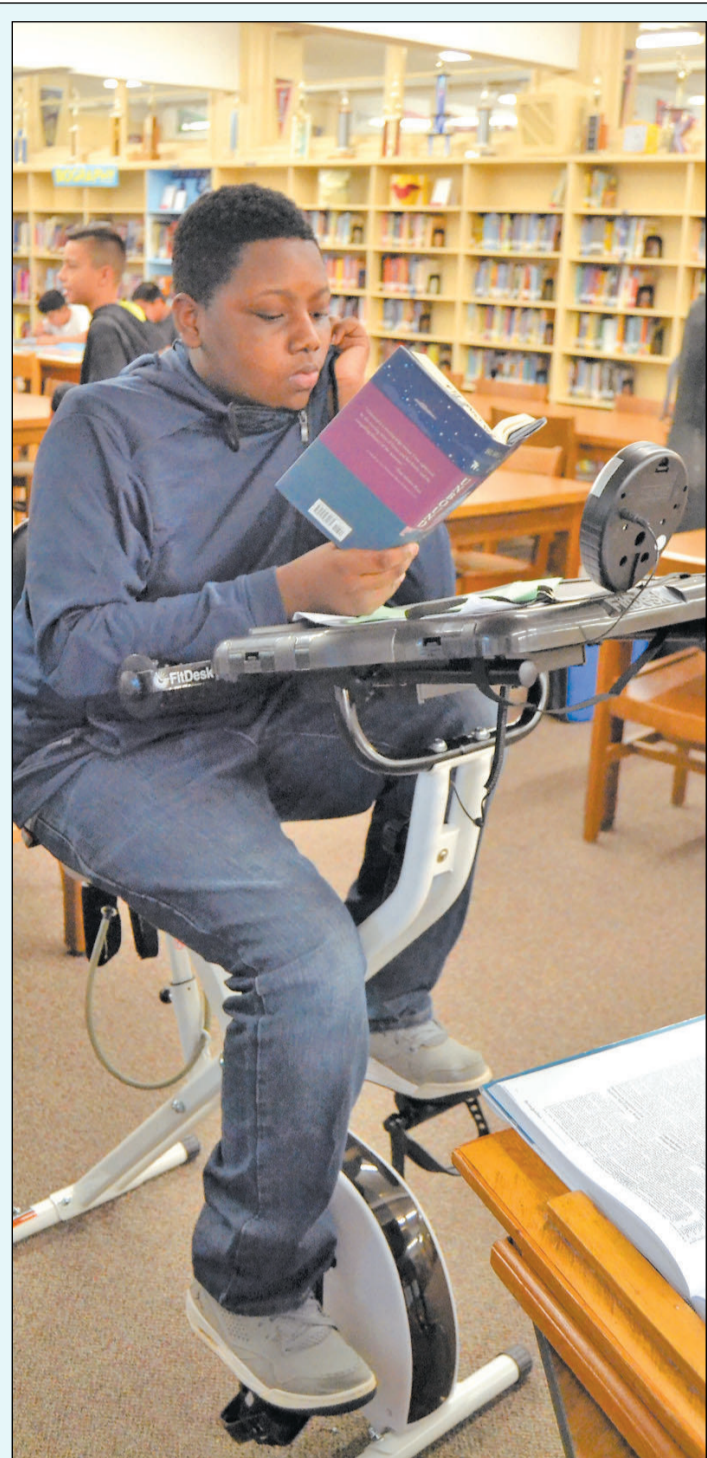
was sold to Melville Corporation; in 1996, it became "CVS Corporation."

- Zone Improvement Plan (ZIP code).
- Bayerische Motoren Werke in German, which translates to "Bavarian Motor Works."
- Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company.
- Mars and Murrie, after its founders.
- Kresge, after its founder.
- American Family Life Insurance Company.
- New England Confectionary Company.
- Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation.

We won't get into government acronyms they have one for everything!

C.P.S. (Curious Postscript): Someone's acronym for COMPUTER: Capable of Making Perfectly Uncomplicated Tasks Extremely Rigorous.

Curious about something? Send your questions to Dr. Jerry D. Wilson, College of Science and Mathematics, Lander University, Greenwood, SC 29649, or email jerry@curiosity-corner.net. Selected questions will appear in the Curiosity Corner. For Curiosity Corner background, go to www.curiosity-corner.net.



MAKING READING MORE FUN — The LMS library is now home to a pair of FitDesks, as is the teachers' workroom. These desks help the user be simultaneously active and productive. The FitDesk has a sliding platform and tablet holder, making it perfect for reading or studying while getting in some exercise. Seventh grader Elijah Gray said, "It is fun because you get to exercise while enjoying your favorite novel." The FitDesks have been very popular with library patrons at Laurens Middle School. Several staff members have been sighted peddling away the stress of the day while reading on one of the FitDesks housed in the workroom. "It's comfortable and helps me read better. It can also help you lose some weight, and makes reading more fun," added Tyrone Little, eighth grade, who is pictured enjoying a his book while utilizing one of new FitDesks.

PTC 'Ready to Roll' in workforce partnership to fix S.C. roads

Have you ever gestured toward a commercial truck driver to pull on his air horn? It's great fun, and Piedmont Technical College (PTC) is having a little fun "blowing the horn" in announcing an inspired partnership that is rooted in the challenge of improving the state's network of roads and highways. The S.C. Workforce Development Board has named PTC the lead agency and training provider for a \$355,363 grant project, titled "Ready to Roll," designed to increase the state's workforce for highway construction and related sectors.

"The timing for this partnership is perfect, because Piedmont Tech is offering two new, first-time degree tracks: Commercial Driver's License A/B and S.C. Logistics Certified," said Rusty Denning, PTC associate vice president for economic development and continuing education. "We expect the program to be up and running in mid-October, but registration is open now for the classes."

The Upper Savannah Council of Governments (USCOG) board learned of the state's plans to use earmarked gas tax funds to address overdue maintenance issues last fall when DOT Secretary Christy Hall addressed the group. Although funding was available, the highway construction industry is experiencing a shortage of skilled labor, which has stalled progress on the plan.

"Developing a system of roads to meet the demands of area residents takes time, money and manpower. For 20 years, the Upper Savannah Council of Governments has been working with the S.C. Department of Transportation (SCDOT) to help plan improvements," said USCOG Executive Director Patricia Hartung. "Member governments in six counties and the board of directors have provided input on the region's needs to improve safety and increase commerce."

Ready to Roll will offer short-term training (two months or less) to help people with employment barriers enter the logistics profession either as a material handler or

a truck driver working in the road construction industry.

Highway construction jobs are traditionally high-paying, and training for the jobs usually can be obtained in a relatively short period of time. PTC's Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Class A program takes six and a half weeks to complete and qualifies participants to drive a tractor-trailer. Tuition for the class is \$3995, all of which is covered by the grant. Students only incur a \$25 out-of-pocket fee for background screening.

Research by USCOG staff identified dump truck drivers as the most in-demand professional right now for local road construction projects.

"Getting more trained drivers on the roads fit with other regional needs as well. Manufacturers need truck drivers to pick up raw materials at the port and deliver finished goods. Schools need bus drivers. Generally, both truck drivers and construction workers are older, and employers have had a difficult time getting younger workers interested in their opportunities," Workforce Development Director Ann Skinner said. "Up until now, the closest truck-driving school was in Anderson."

USCOG will assist with Ready to Roll project coordination, along with the identification of participants. The program also will include Work Ethics Skills Training as well as opportunities for certifications from the S.C. Asphalt Pavement Association.

"This is an excellent example of how collaboration sparks ideas that then assist with what needs to be done for the community," said Ben Davis, chairman of the SCDOT Commission.

To register for this training, interested individuals must go through a pre-qualification process conducted by S.C. Works. Contact S.C. Works Specialist Ashley Guy at 864-227-7044 or aguy@upper-savannah.com for more information. Or you may call PTC's Continuing Education Division at 864-941-8400 with questions.

Affordable health screenings coming Oct. 1

Residents living in and around Laurens can learn about their risk for cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, diabetes, and other chronic, serious conditions with affordable screenings by Life Line Screening, Laurens City Hall- Community Room will host this community event on Oct. 1. The site is located at 126 East Public Square in Laurens.

Screenings can check for:

- The level of plaque buildup in your arteries, related to risk for heart disease, stroke and overall vascular health.

- HDL and LDL Cholesterol levels
- Diabetes risk
- Bone density as a risk for possible osteoporosis
- Kidney and thyroid function, and more

Screenings are affordable, convenient and accessible for wheelchairs and those with trouble walking. Free parking is also available.

Packages start at \$149, but consultants will work with you to create a package that is right for you based on your age and risk factors. Also

ask about our Wellness Gold Membership Program with allows customers to get all the screenings they need now, but pay \$19.95 a month. Call 1-877-237-1287 or visit www.lifelinescreening.com. Pre-registration is required.

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