

Curiosity Corner: Dibstones

Question: Where does the word "dibs" come from? For example, one might say, "I got dibs on that!" (Asked by a curious and faithful column reader.)



CURIOSITY CORNER
Dr. Jerry D. Wilson
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Reply: The word "dibs" commonly implies a right of priority or claiming precedence. My familiarity with it comes from playing marbles in my younger days. "I got dibs" meant that you established the right to shoot next.

It is believed that the term comes from the game of "dibstones." An early writing in 1895 refers to it as "a game of dibs." Dibstones was a game similar to jacks and played with marble-like "dibs," which were sheep knuckle bones. It is unclear how dibs became associated with a child's way of claiming right of priority. Perhaps there was a "dibs" rule in the dibstones game.

Another associated term is "dubs," which is used to claim two or more marbles knocked out of the ring by a single shot — laying claim to a right or privilege. But, whatever the origin, just remember that "a little dib'll do ya."

While on the topic of word origins, let's consider one that is near and dear to me: jury-rigged (or jury-rigged), and jury-built.

First, let's look at "jury-rigged." The term might infer tampering with a jury, but more often, we use it to refer to makeshift repairs made only with tools and materials at hand. Jury-rig is an old nautical term coming from "jury-mast." It refers to a temporary mast to hold the sail (and the rigging) lost in a storm or battle. It may have been short for "injury-mast," and as a verb, you would

have to "jury-rig" your "jury-mast."

"Jerry-rigged" is thought to simply be a misspelling of "jury-rigged" and is often used instead. For example, you might jury-rig something to keep your kitchen chair from wobbling.

A "jerry-builder," in jolly old England, was a house builder who constructed shoddy, poorly built homes out of inferior materials. Such "jerry-built" structures were probably a bit more lasting than if they were "jury-rigged," but not by much. How the "jerry" got mixed in is unknown. The jury is still out.

C.P.S. (Curious Postscript): "If I want your opinion, I'll give it to you." — Al Capone

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.



ROCK TO END ALZHEIMER'S — Staff and residents at The Clinton Presbyterian Community joined together on June 21 for the Alzheimer's Association's Longest Day. The longest day of the year is set aside as an opportunity to stand up to the darkness of Alzheimer's and honor all those affected. Money was raised at the Community during the "Rock to End Alzheimer's" events which included a rock-a-thon, henna tattoos, putt putt and a raffle.

Coffman receives degree

Devon Coffman of Gray Court, has earned a Bachelor of Science in Physics and Bachelor of Science in Materials Science and Engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta.

Coffman was among approximately 3,800 undergraduate and graduate students who received degrees during Georgia Tech's 257th Commencement exercises on May 3-4, at the McCamish Pavilion.

One of the nation's leading research universities, the Georgia Institute of Technology is in the business of creating the next idea and the next technology.

Local students named to President's List at Clemson University

Local students have been named to the President's List at Clemson University for the spring 2019 semester.

They are:
Clinton - Shakiyl Y. Smiley, Industrial Engineering
Fountain Inn - Kevin E. Ayala, Biological Sciences; Thor I. Brockman, Computer Engineering; Samantha Taylor Capo, Early Childhood Education; Josie Louise Hollingsworth, Communication; Lydia C. Martzin, Nursing; James G. Otovic, Political Science; Elizabeth G. Stephens, Marketing
Gray Court - Jessica F. Blakely, Animal and Veterinary Science;

Emily E. Wessinger, Animal and Veterinary Science
Kinards - Marylee R. Brehmer, Biological Sciences; Olivia N. Moore, Biological Sciences

Laurens - Ryan Lazarus Anderson, Economics; Cal P. Bedenbaugh, History; George Lewis Compton III, Environmental and Natural Resources; Noah S. Fuller, Construction Science and Management; Ashlee M. Graham, English; Callie Marie Harlan, Biological Sciences
Mountville - Isaiah Cole Prince, Biological Sciences

To be named to the President's List, a student must achieve a 4.0 (all As) grade-point average.

UA awards McLeod

Robert Edward McLeod of Kinards, has received the following from The University of Alabama: Bachelor of Science in Athletic Training. UA awarded some 5,716 degrees during spring commencement May 3-5.

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