

# STRANGE PLACES TO SPEND THE NIGHT

## *WORLD FAMOUS CLOWN MOTEL*

**LOCATION:** A former mining town called Tonopah, in central Nevada

**DETAILS:** After Clarence David died, his children ended up with his collection of 150 clowns. They honored Clarence's memory by opening the Clown Motel in 1985. And clowns have been amassing there ever since. Today, there's a giant neon clown outside and thousands more clowns in the lobby's museum. Each room features "two to three custom clown art paintings."

For an extra \$25, you can rent an EMF meter for ghost-hunting, because, of course, "America's Scariest Motel" is haunted. As they say on the website, "We'll do everything to make your stay comfortable, but what happens after dark is out of our hands . . ."

**BE SURE TO . . .** visit the Tonopah Cemetery, located right frickin' next to the Clown Motel. Most of the inhabitants of this Old West graveyard were killed in a mine fire in 1911. Nighty-night!

FIVE FREAKY FACTS ABOUT ...  
PENNSYLVANIA

- ★ The Philadelphia Phillies baseball team are the oldest continuous, one-name, one-city franchise in all of professional sports.
- ★ Pennsylvania is the nation's second-largest producer of ice cream. (California is first.)
- ★ It is illegal within the state to use dynamite to catch fish.
- ★ The first public protest against slavery took place in 1688 in Germantown.
- ★ Philadelphia was the first state to issue vanity license plates (in 1931).

# Adventures of Florida Man

## FIGHTING FIRE WITH FIRE

Two nights before the Fourth of July in 2021, residents in a Cape Coral, Florida, neighborhood were awakened by loud fireworks noises . . . kind of. It was one of their neighbors (unnamed in press reports) who was making the noises with his mouth: “BOOOOM!” “BISSHHHH!” “SPLLLLOODDE!” “FIRECRACKERRRRRR!” Police used security footage to track the Florida Man down and cite him for pretending to be a firework. He told the cops he was protesting against people who set off their fireworks early.

# When Johnny Met Louisa

*We often think of presidents and First Ladies as stodgy old men and women. But they too were young once—and the stories of how these power couples first got together show a human side to the presidency.*

## **WHEN GEORGIE MET MARTHA**

In 1758, Martha Dandridge Custis was 27, recently widowed, and a very wealthy woman. That year George Washington, also 27 and already a colonel in the Virginia militia—and not at all wealthy—met Martha via the Virginia high-society social scene and proceeded to court her. Courtship was quick, and they were married in January 1759, in what at the time was viewed as a marriage of convenience. They were, however, happily married for 41 years. (Note: the marriage took place at the plantation that Martha owned, in what was called the “White House.”)

**WHEN JOHNNY MET LOUISA**

Louisa Catherine Johnson, who was born in London, met John Quincy Adams at her home in Nantes, France, in 1779. She was 4; he was 12. Adams was traveling with his father, John Adams, who was on a diplomatic mission in Europe. The two met again in 1795 in London, when John was a minister to the Netherlands. He courted Louisa, all the while telling her she'd have to improve herself if she was going to live up to his family's standards (his father was vice president at the time). She married him anyway, in 1797—and his family made it no secret that they disapproved of the “foreigner” in their family. Nevertheless, they were married until John Quincy Adams's death in 1848.

# MICHIGAN ROCKS!

*There's more to Michigan's musical heritage than Motown. Did you know these other rock 'n' rollers are also from Michigan?*

**ALICE COOPER**

**EMINEM**

**GRAND FUNK RAILROAD**

**IGGY POP & THE STOOGES**

**KID ROCK**

**MC5**

**TED NUGENT**

**MITCH RYDER & THE DETROIT  
WHEELS**

**BOB SEGER**

**THE WHITE STRIPES**

**POLITICIANS**

**SPEAK**

If I were two-faced,  
would I be wearing  
this one?

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN



# STRANGE STATE SYMBOLS

*Every US state has numerous official state symbols.  
Here are a few fun ones.*

**ALASKA'S STATE FOSSIL:** Woolly Mammoth

**CALIFORNIA'S STATE FABRIC:** Denim

**HAWAII'S STATE TRADITIONAL MUSICAL  
INSTRUMENT:** Pahu

**IDAHO'S STATE HORSE:** Appaloosa

**IOWA'S STATE ROCK:** Geode

**NEVADA'S STATE ARTIFACT:** Tule Duck Decoy

**NEW MEXICO'S STATE COOKIE:** Biscochito

**NORTH CAROLINA'S STATE TOAST:** "A toast"

**OKLAHOMA'S STATE FLYING MAMMAL:** Mexican Free-  
Tailed Bat

**RHODE ISLAND'S STATE DRINK:** Coffee Milk

**SOUTH DAKOTA'S STATE BREAD:** Fry Bread

**TENNESSEE'S STATE WILD ANIMAL:** Raccoon

**UTAH'S STATE COOKING POT:** Dutch Oven



# RODEO LINGO

*Rodeos are a staple event in the American West. But if you wanna be a rodeo cowboy, you'd better learn to talk like one.*

## **ARM JERKER**

A bull so strong it feels like it could yank the rider's arm out of its socket

## **BAD WRECK**

(Is there ever a good wreck?) When a rider is bucked off hard and either horned or stomped on by the bull

## **BAREBACK BRONC**

A horse without a saddle whose rider hangs onto a strap around the horse's ribcage

## **BARREL MAN**

Also known as a "rodeo clown." The barrel man hides inside a barrel during the bull-riding

event. If the rider is thrown, the barrel man springs into action to distract the bull from trampling the rider. The barrel protects the clown so he can protect the rider.

## **BULL ROPE**

A flat braided rope that goes around the middle of a bull, which the rider hangs onto during the bull-riding event

## **CHAPS**

The leather coverings that go over riding jeans.

## **COWBOY UP**

Psyching yourself up, getting in the zone, or preparing mentally. Whatever your cliché, it's

getting ready to climb up and give it everything you've got.

**CROW HOPPER**

A bull that jumps stiff-legged, straight into the air instead of bucking

**DOGIE**

(As in, "Git along, little dogie.") An orphaned calf

**FREE HAND**

The one hand that must be free at all times during riding

**FREIGHT TRAINED**

If a bull sprints over a rider or barrel man and tramples him down, that person's been officially freight trained

**GOOD BUCKER**

A bronco or steer that gives a particularly feisty performance

**HOOKER**

A bull that throws the rider and attempts to hook him with his horns

**HOULIHAN**

A head-over-hooves somersault that a steer can make during the steer-wrestling event

**SPINNER**

A bull that spins in circles while trying to shake off his rider. It kind of looks like a puppy chasing his tail

**SUCKS BACK**

When referring to a bull, it's when he bucks in one direction and then quickly switches to another. When referring to a rodeo attendee, it means to quickly quaff a beer.

## A Woman of Few Words



The Statue of Liberty stands as a symbol of hope, promising a better tomorrow to those who seek to make a new life in the United States. But the well-known verse that embodies that sentiment—“Give me your tired, your poor, / Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free”—wasn’t added to the pedestal until 1903 . . . and then only after officials realized what an inspiration the statue had become to the waves of immigrants arriving at nearby Ellis Island. The verse is part of “The New Colossus,” a sonnet composed in 1883 by New York poet Emma Lazarus. She donated it to an auction at the New York Academy of Design to raise money for the statue’s pedestal.

# AMERICA'S STRANGEST RACES

## Pig N' Ford

This race is held every August at the Tillamook County Fair on the Oregon Coast. When the starter gun fires, the racers run to a pig pen, grab a 20-pound pig, carry it to their stripped Ford Model T, hand crank the vehicle to start it, and then, cradling the pig in their lap, complete a lap around the track. Then they slide to a stop, shut off the engine, carry the pig back to the pen, get a new pig, run back to the Model T, hand crank it started, and do another lap. The first driver to complete three laps wins the race. This odd tradition began in 1925 after some farmers drove a pig to a farm and thought it would make for a fun race. Some of the original Model Ts still compete today.

# HOT ENOUGH FOR YOU?

*Death Valley is a place of extremes,  
so here are five extreme facts about it.*

- ☀ It got its name in 1849 from prospectors who got lost taking a shortcut to the gold fields of Northern California. After months wandering thirsty and hungry in the desert, they finally made it over the Panamint Range (near the Mojave Desert) to safety. Amazingly, only one person in their party had died. Still, on their way out, one of them declared, “Good-bye, Death Valley!” The name stuck.
- ☀ Average annual rainfall is 2.5 inches. In 1929 and 1953, no rain was recorded. Oddly, the average evaporation rate is 150 inches. (No one knows where all that moisture comes from.)
- ☀ It holds the record for North America’s lowest spot (282 feet below sea level) and hottest