

## **KILLER KITTIES**

Wildlife ecologist Pete Marra has written a book (Cat Wars: The Devastating Consequences of a Cuddly Killer) that urges cat owners to keep their pets indoors so they don't continue killing millions of birds every year. Marra does not hate cats, but in his professional work with a migratory-bird center, he is alarmed about the loss of birds that are so vital to crop pollination, seed dissemination, and control of climate change. In fact, Marra and other scientists in his field have determined that outdoor cats are the leading human-influenced cause of dead birds. (Source: "The Moral Cost of Cats," by Rachel E. Gross, Smithsonian.com, Sept. 20.) In addition, most veterinarians recommend keeping your cat(s) indoors at all times for their own health and safety. Indoor cats live longer and healthier lives than outdoor cats, because they are not exposed to all the dangers of disease, accidents, fights with other animals, etc.

## **MADE-UP WORDS**

"The Atlantic" magazine (October 2016) asked a number of famous and not-so-famous people "What concept most needs a word in the English language?" Here are a few of the answers: Reader Russell Stanaland of San Francisco says we need words to distinguish between spicy-hot food and stove-hot food. Philosopher Simon Critchley seeks a word to describe suicide that includes violently taking innocent people's lives, e.g., murder-suicide, suicide bomber. The Daily Show co-creator Lizz Winstead suggests "failikinesis" for staring at an electronic device to make it perform its functions faster. Grammar Girl editor Mignon Fogarty needs

a word to describe not being able to post a social-media item because it contains a spelling or punctuation error. Harvard education professor Howard Gardner says English needs a word to describe how instrumental music affects the listener emotionally (the feeling behind the hearing).

### **BATTERY FIRES**

I hope you don't own a Samsung Galaxy Note 7 smartphone. If you do, run don't walk to your Samsung dealer and get a refund or exchange for a different phone, because some of the Note 7's lithium ion batteries (and the replacement phones' batteries) have been exploding in all the worst places, such as on airplanes. Samsung has stopped making this model and is clumsily handling a worldwide recall of all Note 7s. And now blowing up in people's faces are electronic cigarettes and vaping devices, which also use lithium ion batteries. Several smokers have been seriously injured by these explosions. This might be a good time for e-smokers to quit and invest in some Nicorette patches.

### **FREE WINE FOUNTAIN**

Free wine flows in the fountain (fontana di vino) at Dora Sarchese vineyard in the small town of Caldari di Ortona, which sits on the Italian pilgrimage route of Cammino di San Tommaso. I imagine the tour buses are charging up the hill right now to deliver thirsty oenophiles to the site of this miracle.

### **SWAMI SEZ**

"I can live with anything for a while, and some whiles are longer than others." (Jean Headley)

## **MAYBURRITOVILLE**

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