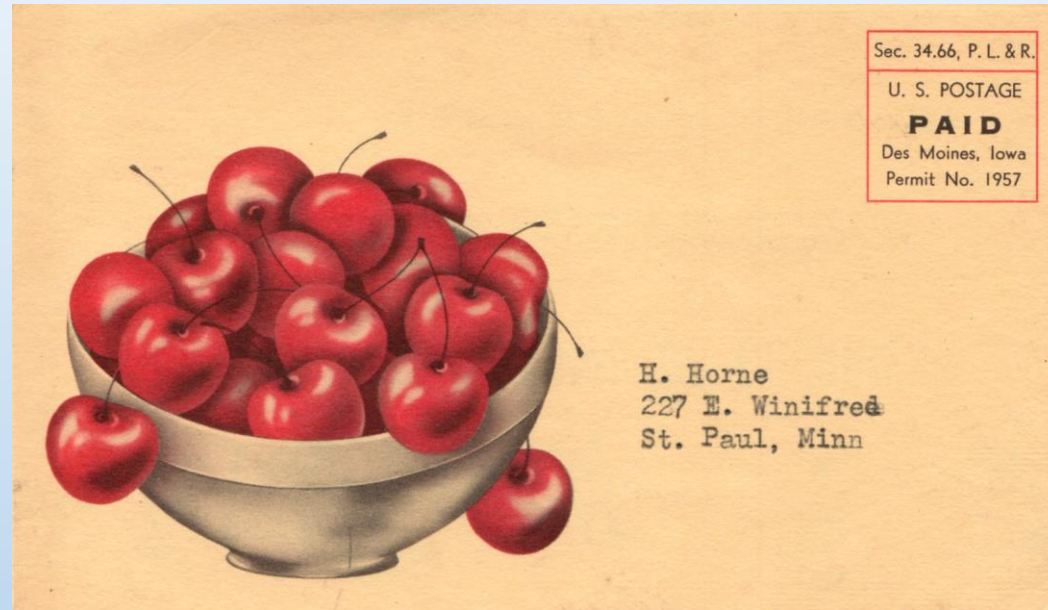


Life is Just a _____



[Bowl of Cherries]

Idioms Illustrated and Explained – Part V Nature (25 phrases)

by Tom Fortunato

idiom (n.)- an expression whose meaning can not be derived from its elements

How many times over the course of a day do you hear these? They're so common in our vernacular that we hardly take the time to recognize them with thousands in the English language alone. A few are presented here using a wide variety of material found mostly in dealer junk boxes. Don't expect to find philatelic rarities, but you will see some interesting items.

Most important is your participation! This presentation is in "fill in the blank" game format. You'll see a partial phrase at the top of each page related to the item shown along with a clue to the idiom's meaning. Just complete the phrase and keep track of your number right and wrong.

PowerPoint users have 5 seconds before a 15 second timeclock counts down then "dings," by which time an answer must be given. PDF users play on the honor system! Clicking the next page reveals the answer along with details of the origins and meaning of the idiom. Ten references were used researching these. Not all agreed, but the majority plausible response appears here.

This is 1 of 7 thematic related parts (# phrases in each). Enjoy them all!

I – Animals (24) II – Food (14) III – Man (18) IV - Sports & Games (9)

V – Nature (25) VI – Music (8) VII - Pot Luck (39)

V- Nature in _____

- *in trouble*



V- Nature in hot water

- *in trouble*

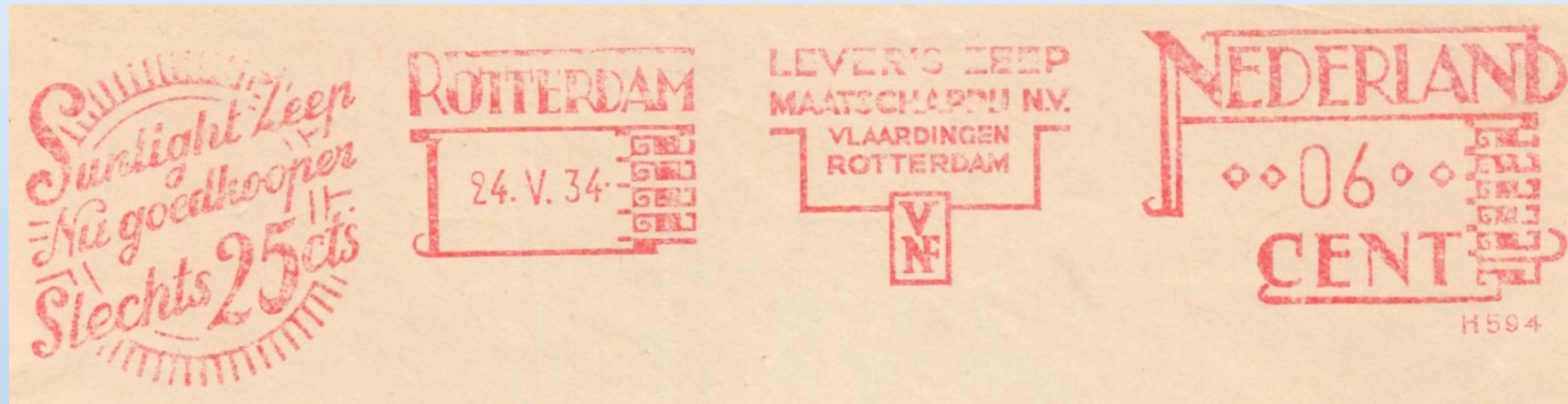


Believed to be British, as mentioned by the Earl of Malmesbury, “We are kept, to use the modern phrase, in hot water,” in a 1765 letter.



V- Nature nothing new _____

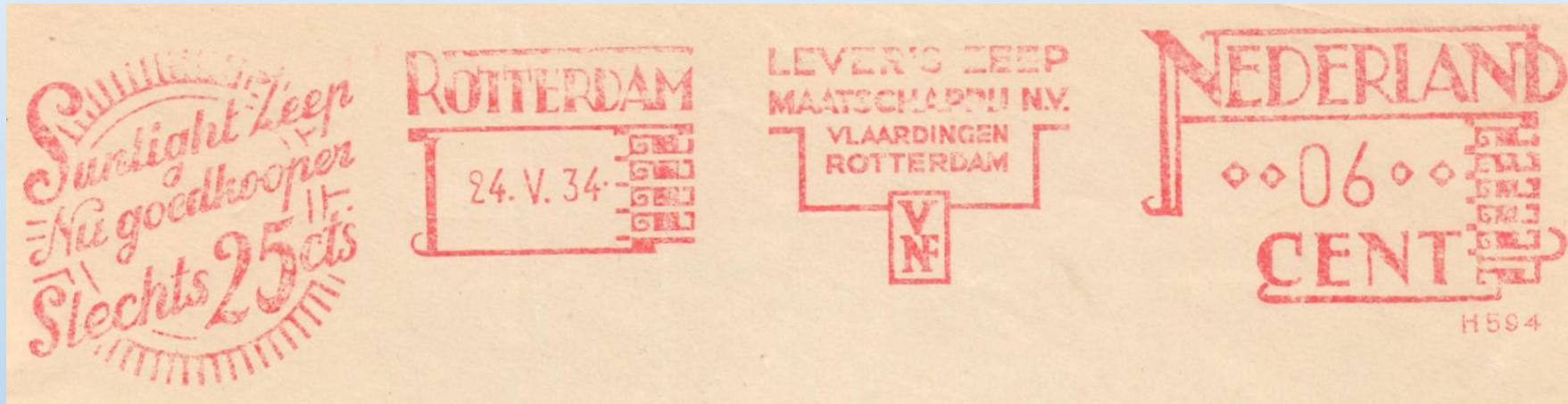
- *the same*



V- Nature

nothing new **under the sun**

- *the same*



Biblical expression.



V- Nature it's all water

- *completed, over with*



cachet commemorates the first UN Security Council meeting taking place outside of New York City, on Jan 28-Feb 5, 1972 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



V- Nature it's all water over the dam

- *completed, over with Unknown origin, but used by Richard Sale's 1942 work, Passing Strange.*



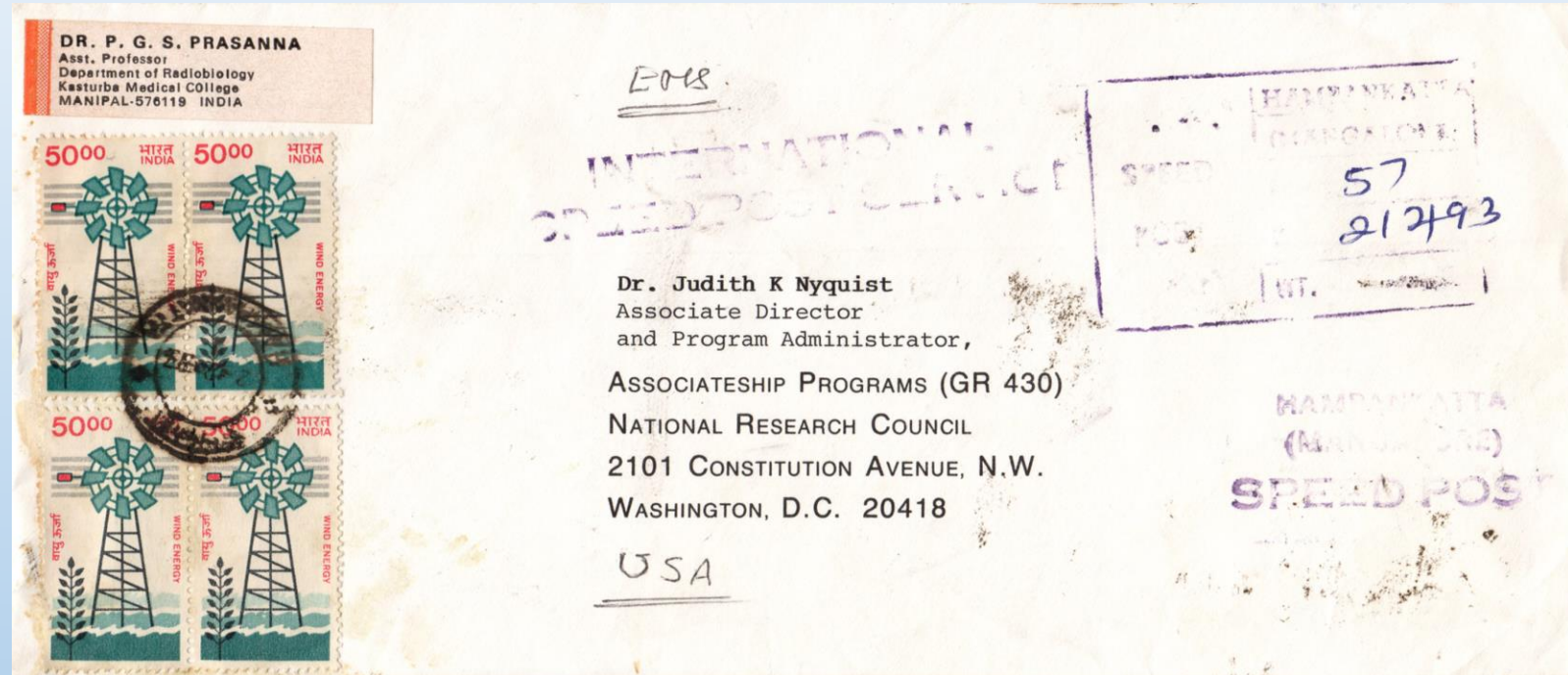
cachet commemorates the first UN Security Council meeting taking place outside of New York City, on Jan 28-Feb 5, 1972 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



V- Nature throw caution _____

- *take a bold course*

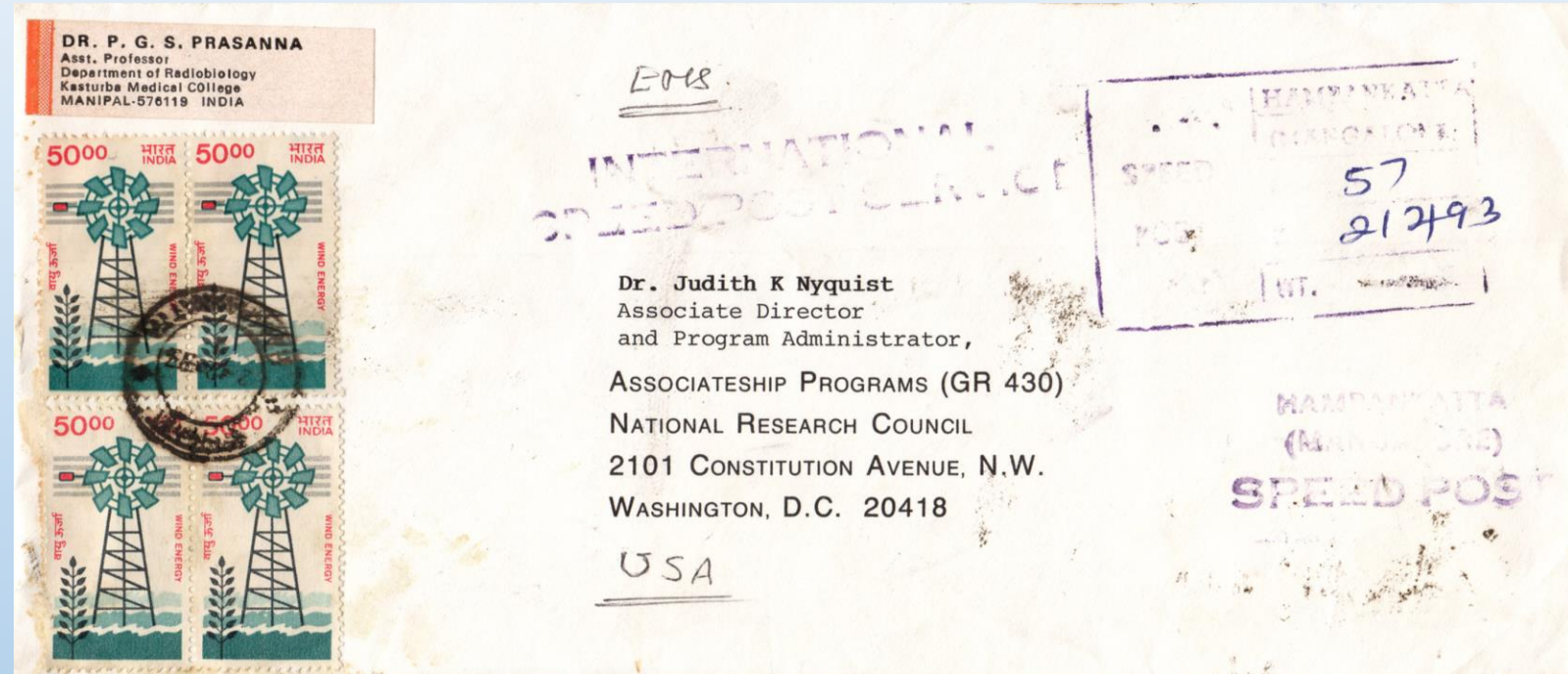
200 rupees paying the international express mail rate, posted 2/2/93, in Bombay, arrived JFK 2/9 at 5:30 AM, signed for by recipient 2/11 at 11:05 AM per USPS form on reverse



V- Nature throw caution to the wind

- *take a bold course*

200 rupees paying the international express mail rate, posted 2/2/93, in Bombay, arrived JFK 2/9 at 5:30 AM, signed for by recipient 2/11 at 11:05 AM per USPS form on reverse

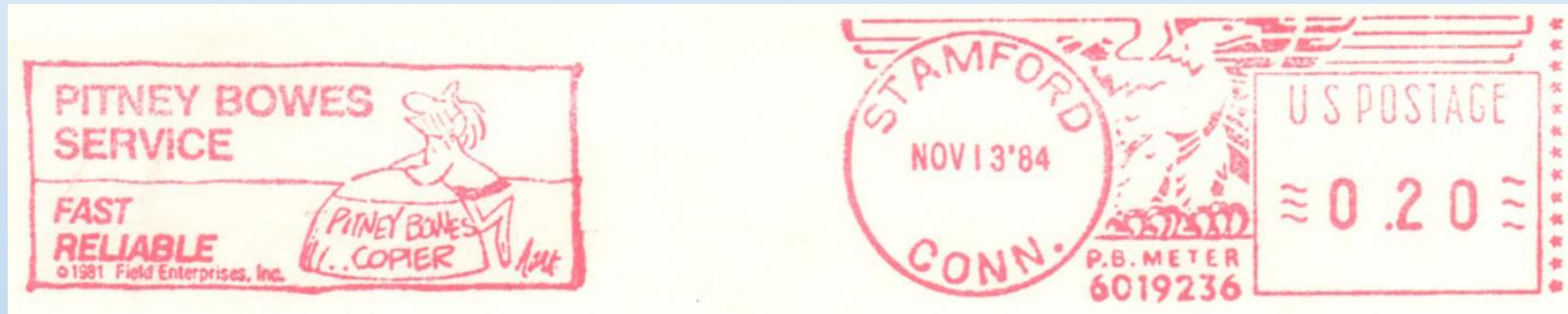


Seen in John Milton's *Paradise Lost* of 1677, "Fear of death deliver to the winds."



V- Nature _____ and a hard place

- *in a difficult situation*



V- Nature **between a rock** and a hard place

- *in a difficult situation*



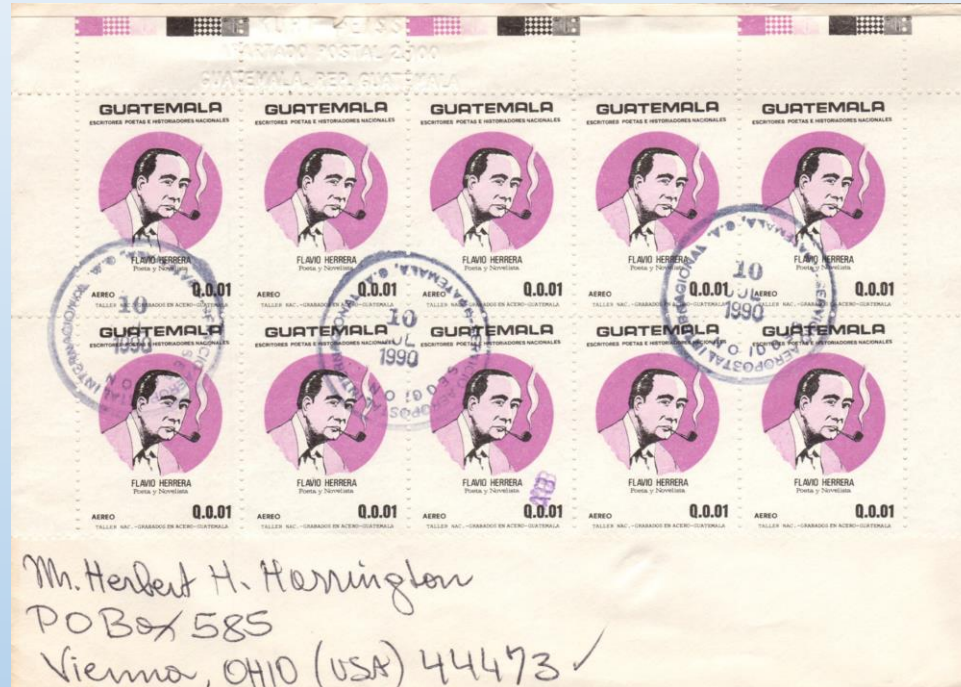
American 20th century expression. Version of the 17th century's "Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea."



V- Nature

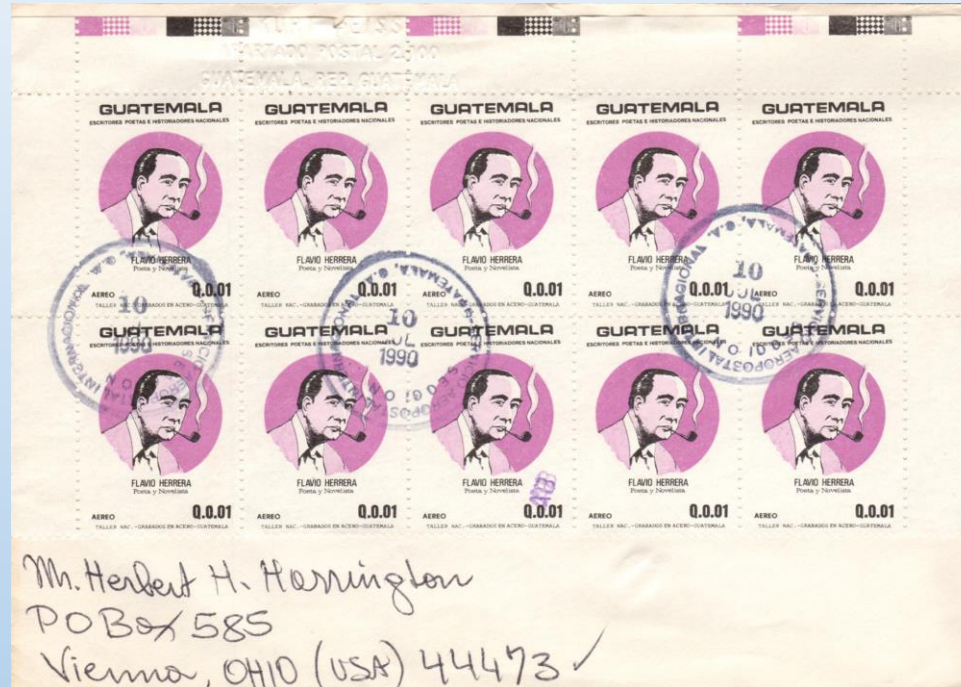
and smoke it

- *something to think about*



V- Nature put that in your pipe and smoke it

- *something to think about*



Pipe smokers have always been seen as pensive thinkers. Charles Dickens wrote in the 1836 *Pickwick Papers*, “Fill your pipe with that ‘ere reflection.”



V- Nature _____ is clear

- *without obstacles*



V- Nature the coast is clear

- *without obstacles*

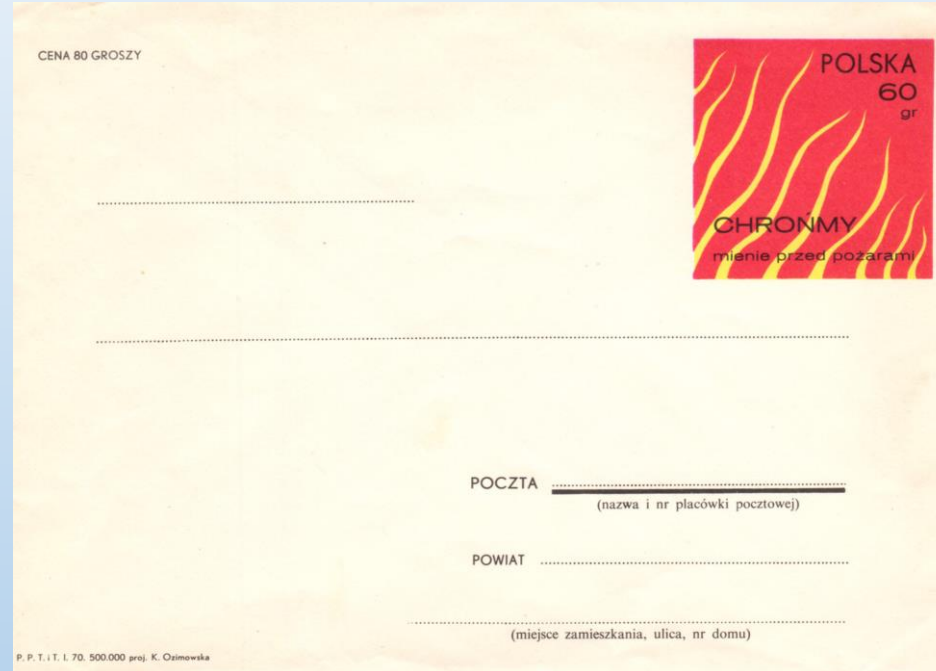


A coastline is a place of unknown dangers. Used in John Palsgrave's 1530 book on the French language, "The king intends to go to Calais, but we must first clear the coasts."



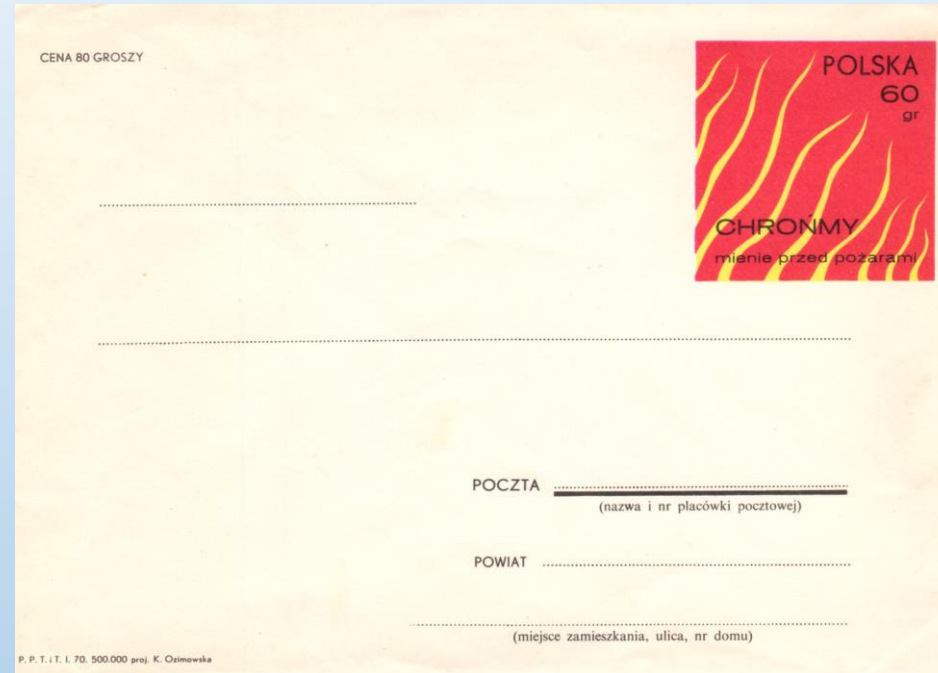
V- Nature out of the frying pan and _____

- *from bad to worse*



V- Nature out of the frying pan and into the fire

- *from bad to worse*



Originally a Latin phrase from around 200 AD, later used by Sir Thomas More in 1528, “Leapt they like a flounder out of the frying-pan and into the fire.”



V- Nature bury your head _____

- *ignore danger, hide*



V- Nature bury your head **in the sand**

- *ignore danger, hide*

From the lowly ostrich, mistakenly thought to be hiding when it actually was looking for food to help in its digestion.



V- Nature clear _____

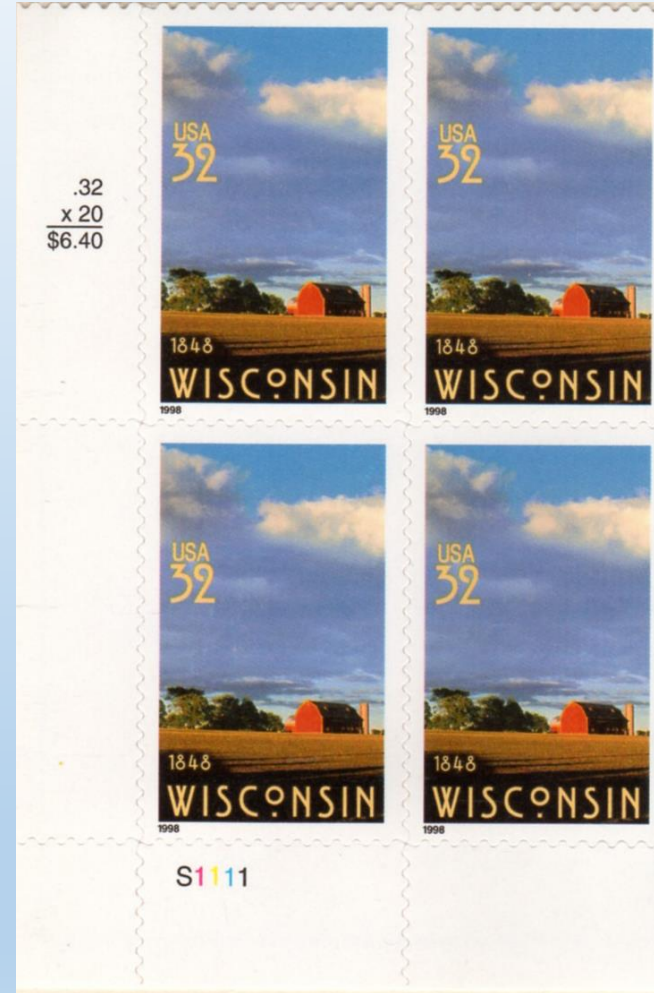
- *uncover the truth*



V- Nature clear the air

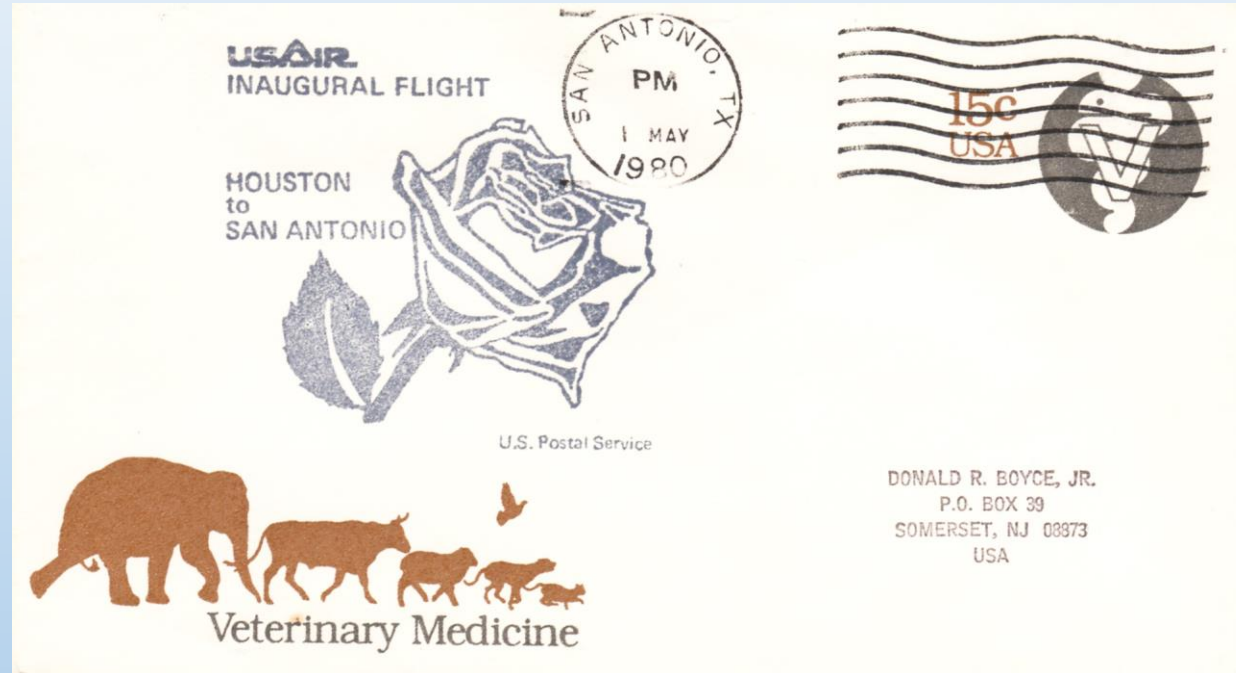
- *uncover the truth*

Literally the blowing away of clouds after a storm. Written of in 1380 by John Wyclif, “winds of truth should blow away heresies, and clear the airs of holy church, which is now full troubles.”



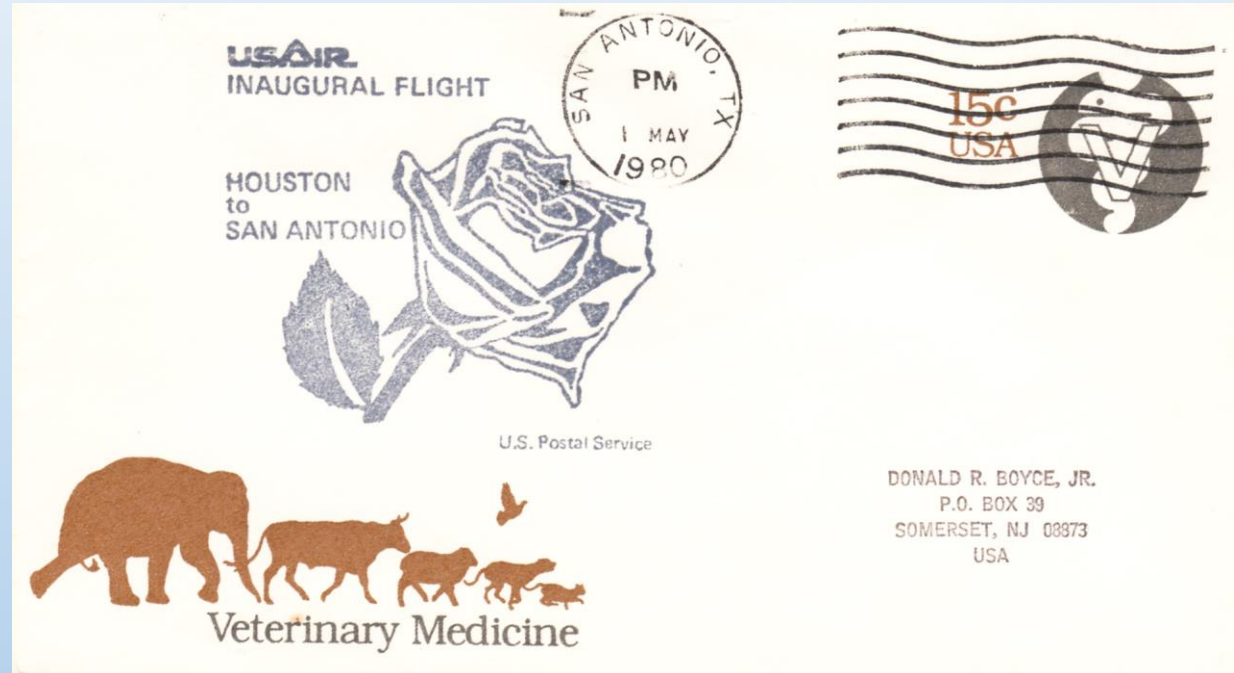
V- Nature come out smelling _____

- *without accusation*



V- Nature come out smelling like a rose

- *without accusation*



20th century American expression of unknown origin.



V- Nature turn over a _____

- *change for the better*



sunken deluxe proof



V- Nature turn over a **new leaf**

- *change for the better*



sunken deluxe proof

Actually referring to a leaf of a book, noted in the 1577 *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* by Raphael Holinshed.

- 1
- 5
- 1
- 4
- 1
- 3
- 1
- 2
- 1
- 1
- 1
- 0
- 9
- 8
- 7
- 6
- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

V- Nature gild _____

- *make the beautiful more so*



V- Nature gild the lily

- *make the beautiful more so*



Paraphrased from Shakespeare's *King John*. "To gild refined gold, to paint the lily."

1
5
1
4
1
3
1
2
1
1
1
0
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1

V- Nature diamond _____

- *untested potential*



V- Nature diamond **in the rough**

- *untested potential*



From John Fletcher's 1624 *A Wife for a Month*, "She is very honest, and will be hard to cut as a rough diamond."



V- Nature playing _____

- *tempt danger*



V- Nature playing with fire

- *tempt danger*



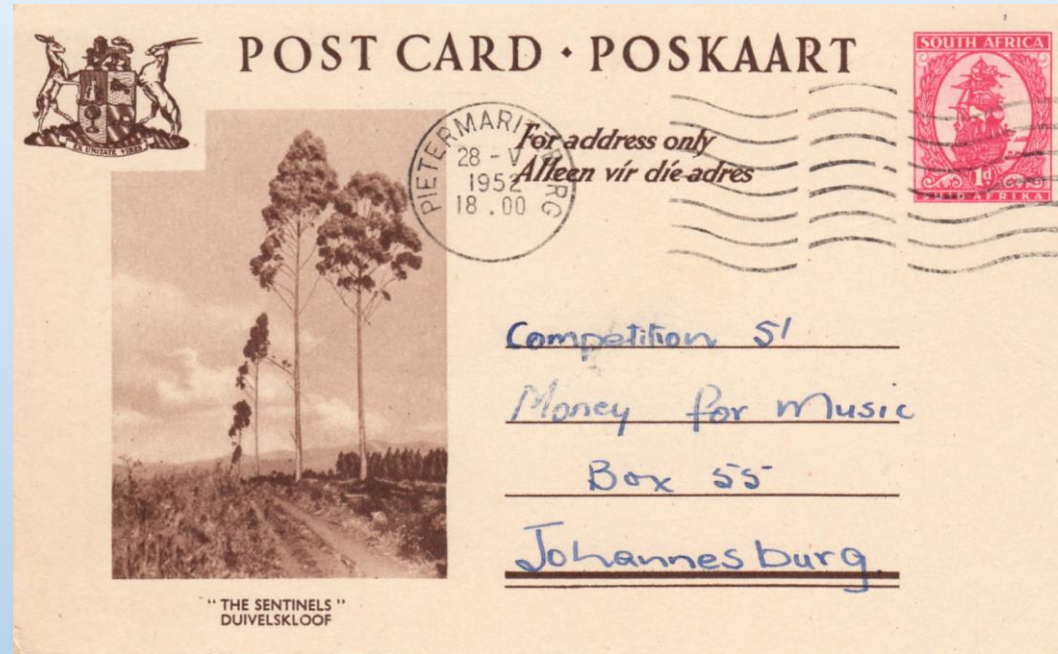
George Whetstone wrote in his 1582 book, Heptameron, "In doing these three things is great danger... to play with fire; to strew with water, and to glue a woman knowledge of our power."



V- Nature

go climb _ _

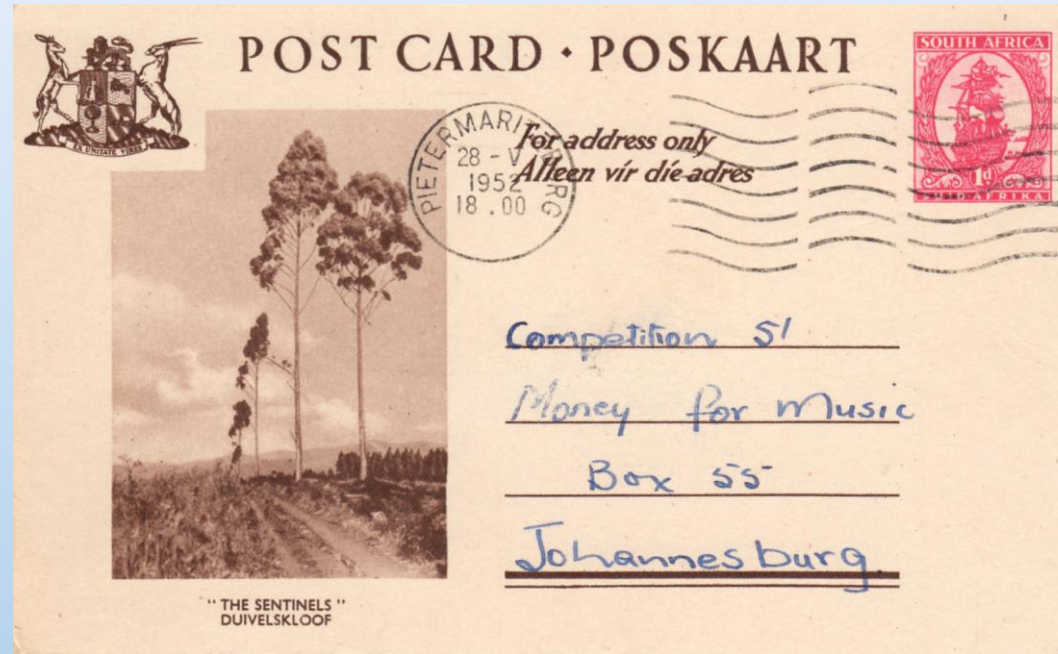
- *you're kidding*



V- Nature

go climb a tree

- *you're kidding*

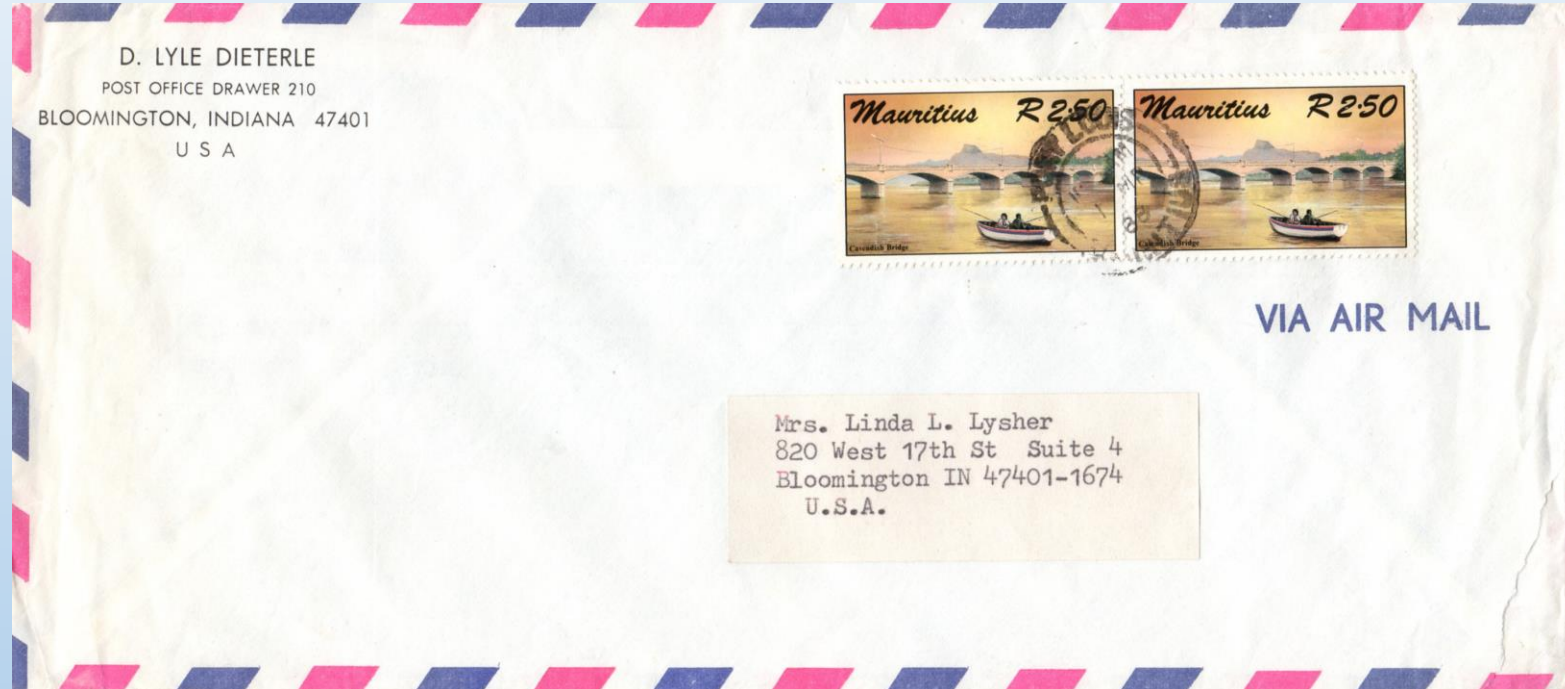


Attributed to the Los Angeles Times Sunday Magazine of 1935 and writer Oren Arnold, who mentioned, Americans... were turning to “such puerile phrases” as “go climb a tree.”



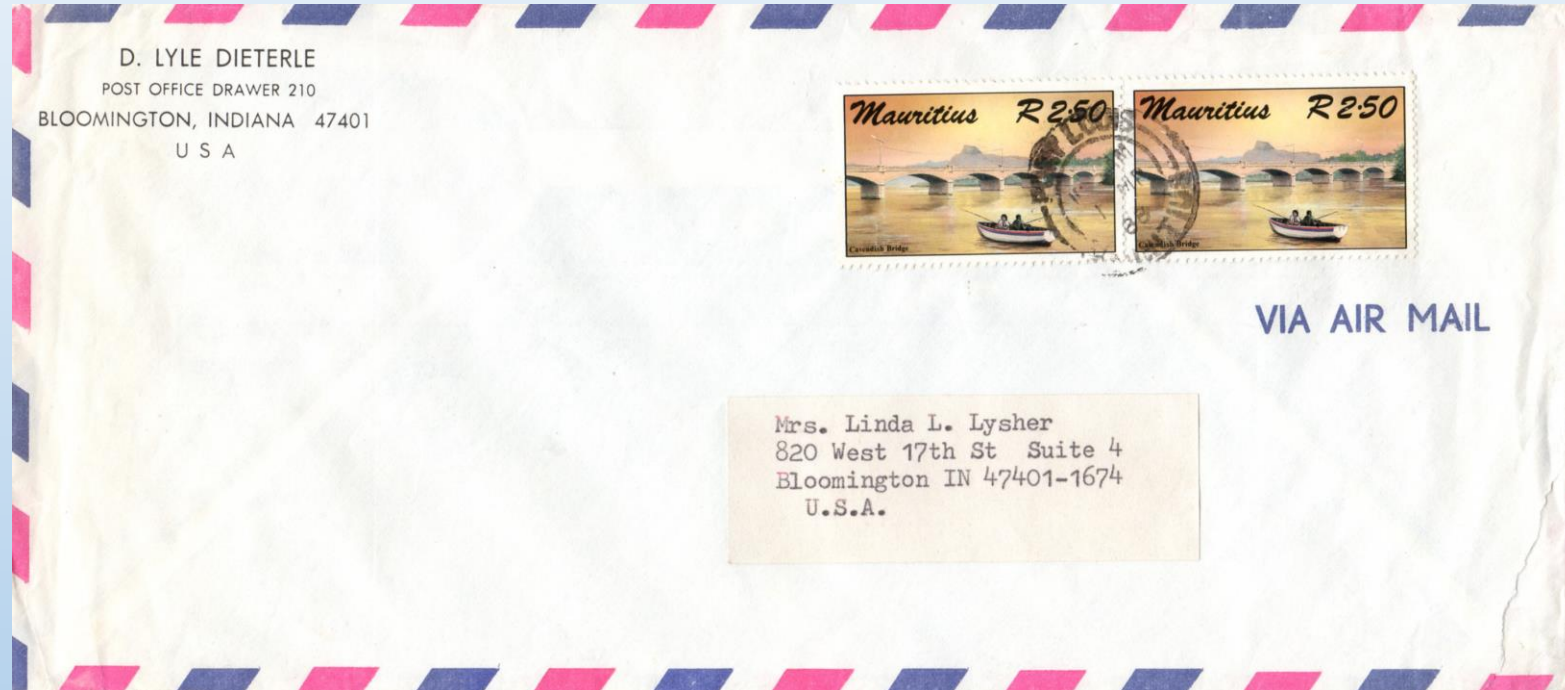
V- Nature _____ when we come to it

- *worry later*



V- Nature cross that bridge when we come to it

- *worry later*



Old proverb of ancient and unknown origin.



V- Nature _____ before the trees

- *see the entirety rather than the minutia*



V- Nature can't see the forest before the trees

- *see the entirety rather than the minutia*



Unknown origin.



V- Nature

have your head _____

- *absent-minded*



V- Nature

have your head **in the clouds**

- *absent-minded*



Adapted from the American “head in the air,” used around 1900.



V- Nature make hay

- *act when given the opportunity*



blind perfs



V- Nature make hay **while the sun shines**

- *act when given the opportunity*

Farmers would cut hay on sunny days, as rain would spoil it. Noted by John Heywood in 1546, “When the sun shineth, make hay.”

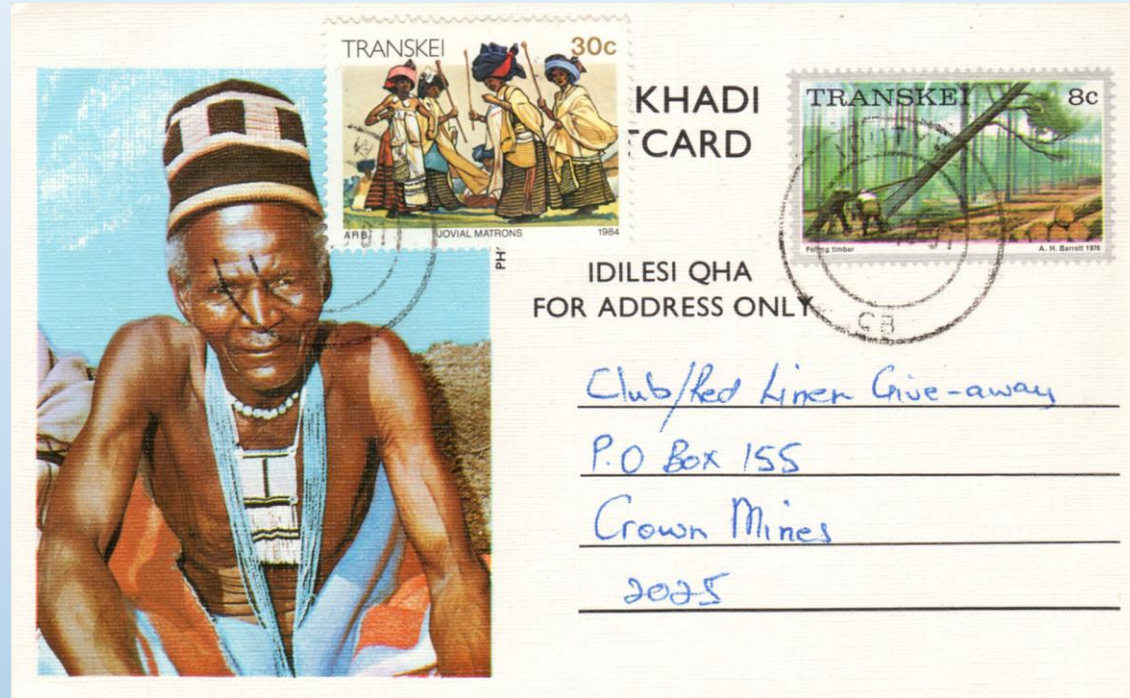


blind perfs



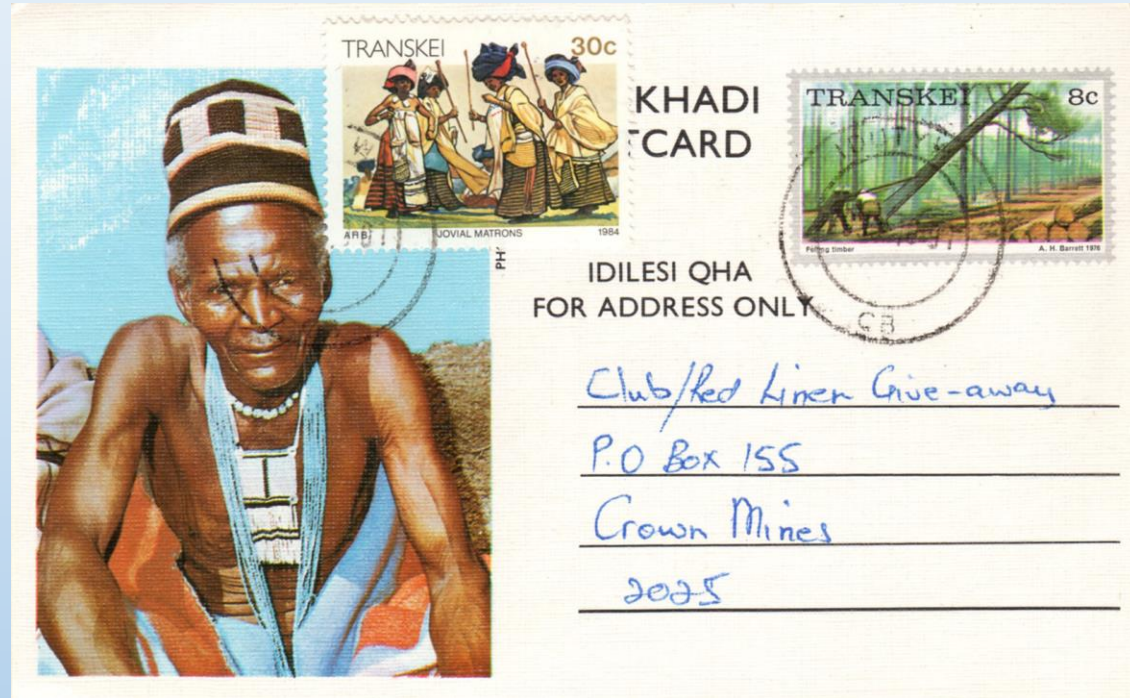
V- Nature saw _____

- *snore*



V- Nature saw logs

- *snore*



Early 20th century phrase of unknown origin, but used mostly by cartoonists.



V- Nature _____ out of a molehill

- *turn a minor issue into a major one*



V- Nature **make a mountain** out of a molehill

- *turn a minor issue into a major one*



From early Greek and French expressions, adapted in 1548 by Nicholas Udall in *Paraphrase of Erasmus*, “The Sophistes of Greece could... make an elephant fly and a mountain out of a molehill.”



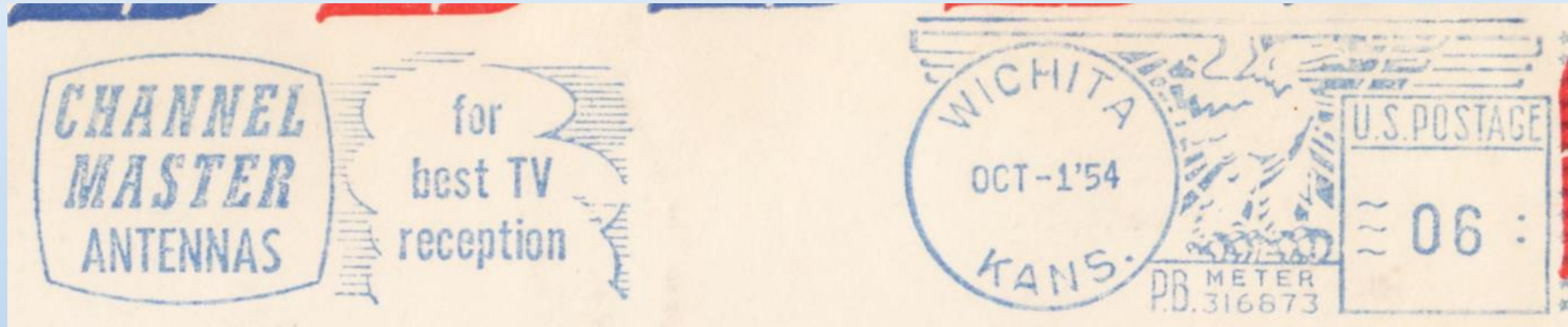
V- Nature _____ the limit

- *unlimited*



V- Nature the sky's the limit

- *unlimited*



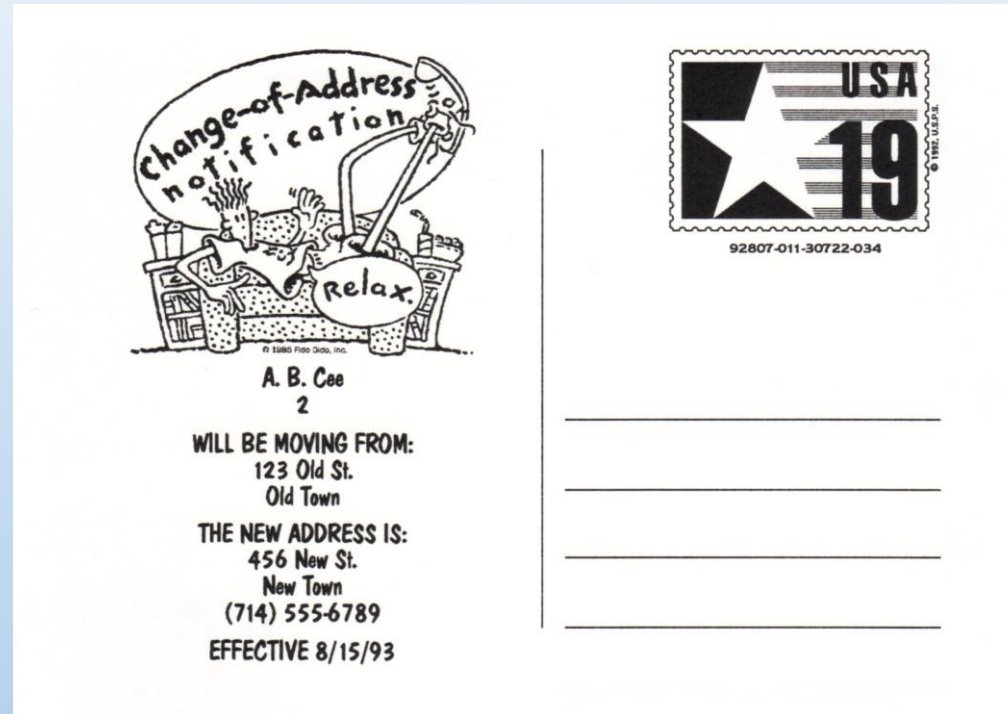
Written of by Cervantes in *Don Quixote* in 1605, “No limits but the sky.”



V- Nature

hitch your wagon _____

- *aim high*



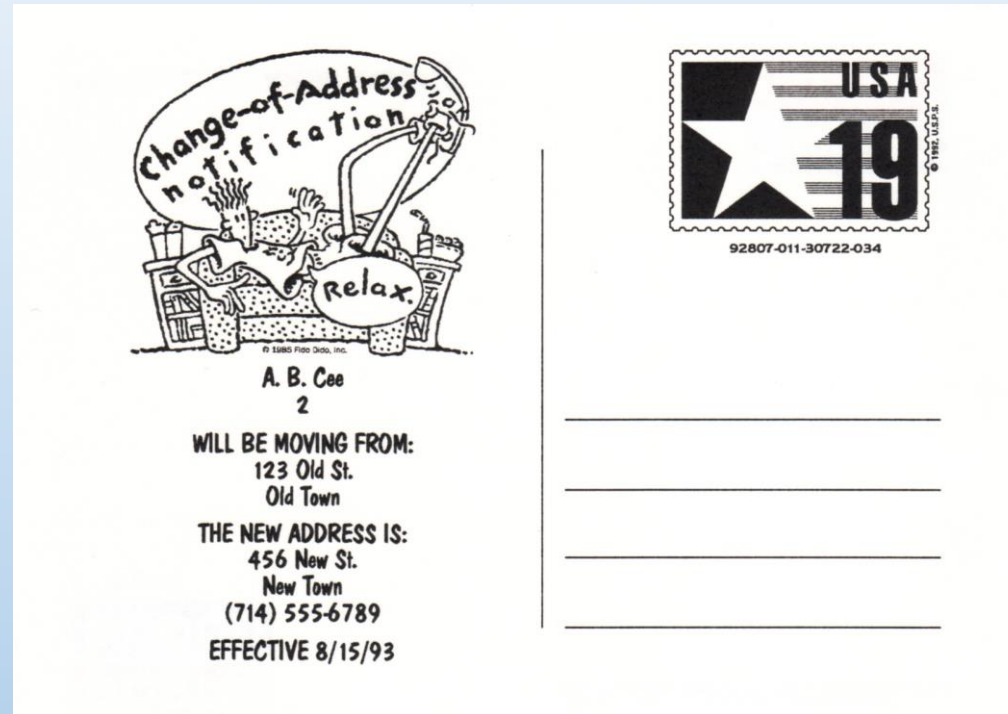
USPS Postal Buddy card



V- Nature

hitch your wagon **to a star**

- *aim high*



USPS Postal Buddy card

Originated by Ralph Waldo Emerson in his 1870 essay on Civilization in Society and Solitude.



V- Nature _____ mark

- *maximum achievement*



V- Nature high water mark

- *maximum achievement*



Those flooded make note of the water's level. Mentioned in a letter dating to 1814 from the Earl of Dudley, "The high water mark of the English faction is very much below the ebb of French violence."



This is the end of Part V- Nature.

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