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Frankly Speaking –

Where Did That Name Come From?

by Frank Jordan

Ever wonder where some of our best known companies got their name? What corporation got its name from the First Mate of the ship Pequod? Or what popular product is named after a “super dog?”

Let’s start with Google, named after the word signifying a 1, with 100 zeros behind it – “googol.” In the 1930s, the mathematician Edwin Kasner asked his nephew to create a word for this number and the boy, Milton Sirota, generated “googol.” When creating the search engine corporation, the word was altered

slightly to “Google” representing the source of an infinite amount of information.

WD-40 became a reality in 1953 when the Rocker Chemical Company began developing a rust-prevention solvent for the aerospace industry. The name “WD-40” signifies the product is for water displacement and took 40 attempts to perfect.

What about Starbuck? One of the founders of the coffee empire was a huge fan of the book, Moby Dick, featuring the fabled ship, Pequod. His two partners thought the name too difficult to pronounce and all settled on the name of the First Mate, “Star-buck.” Now you know!

GAP is a popular clothing store chain that opened in 1969 with the business plan to meet the unique clothing demands of customers between childhood and adulthood. The period was named by these creative marketing folks to be, “the generation gap,” thus the shortened stores’ name – Gap.

What about the name of the most popular headache remedy ever, “aspirin?” We have to go

back to 1899 when the German company Bayer trademarked the word “aspirin” as a composite of the scientific name of the drug; “A” for the acetyl group. The “spir” attributes derivation from the source plant genus “spiraea, and “in” was a common ending for drug names during that time. Boring!

Then there is “Jeep” with an almost unbelievable story behind the name. Let’s go back again, this time to 1936 and the incredibly popular comic strip, “Popeye.” “Eugene the Jeep” was a character in “Popeye.” In fact “Eugene the Jeep” was a dog that could walk through walls, climb trees and fly. When the U.S. military provided soldiers with an amazing new all-terrain vehicle in the early 1940s, the vehicle so impressed that it was named “Jeep,” after the super dog!

Have you had a bag of “Smarties” lately? Probably not, but if you’ve eaten M&Ms recently, you have the U.S. brand name for “Smarties” sold in Britain. Chocolate-coated pellets coated in sugar were popular in England as “Smarties,” but the name was already copyrighted in

the United States. When Forrest Mars and partner, R. Bruce Murrie, bought the U.S. rights to “Smarties,” Mars and Murrie used their initials for the new brand name, “M&Ms.” You can figure out “Mars Bars” yourself.

Scotch Tape is based on a product that didn’t initially put enough adhesive on their tape due to penny-pinching management who employees called “scotch” for being too tight with production funds. When additional cash enabled enhanced adhesive and stopped complaints, the nickname at Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing stuck around and “Scotch Tape” was born.

When you next use your Nike sports gear, you are celebrating the Greek Goddess of victory, “Nike.” The “Nike” name was selected in 1971 by shoe designer, Jeff Johnson, for the name of the new small sports shoe company in Beaverton, Oregon.

Frankly speaking, what would you name your new company, because it can’t be any more unique or even weird than these famous namesakes now known worldwide?

OBITUARY

• **CATHERINE KOLARIK**

Catherine Frances Valcoviak Kolarik, 96, of Dayton passed away peacefully on August 28, 2026, in Liberty, Texas. She was born April 21, 1930, in Eastgate, Texas, to Steve Valcoviak and Mary McClosky Valcoviak.



Catherine was a lifelong member of St. Anne’s Catholic Church in Eastgate and was a deeply spiritual woman whose faith was an important part of her life. She raised her children with the belief that Sunday morning was a time for the entire family to get up and go to church together. She took great pride in serving her church and, alongside a dear friend, volunteered each year to clean the church for a month. Her faith, devotion, and example left a lasting impression on her family.

Catherine was no stranger to hard work. Coming from a family involved in the cotton farming business, she spent many years picking cotton. She proudly passed that strong work ethic on to her children, always leading by example. Her competitive spirit was well known

within the family, as she often worked to see if she could pick more cotton than everyone else when they headed into the fields.

A lifelong resident of the Dayton area, Catherine was married to the love of her life, Ike Kolarik, for 51 years before his passing. Together, they built a life centered around family, faith, hard work, and hospitality.

Catherine loved being outdoors and was happiest when she was busy. She enjoyed mowing the grass and washing cars, and family members knew that if they left their car parked at Catherine’s house for any length of time, they would return to find it cleaned and shining. She believed in the simple things in life and passed those traditions on to her children, including the old-fashioned practice of hanging clothes on the line to dry.

Her love for her family was often expressed through food and hospitality. Whenever Ike planned one of his fishing trips, Catherine would prepare a homemade breakfast for family and friends who were going along. If the group was leaving in the early morning hours, Catherine would be up as early as 2:30 a.m. making sure everyone had a hearty, homemade

meal before heading out.

She was a wonderful cook and baker, especially known for her delicious pecan pies and homemade yellow cakes with coconut icing. Her family especially looked forward to Thanksgiving and Christmas gatherings at her home, where her turkey and dressing were always a treasured part of the celebration.

While Catherine cherished her time with all of her children, one of her greatest joys was being “MeMe” to her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She treasured every moment spent with them and created memories that will continue to live on through the generations.

Catherine was preceded in death by her parents, Steve and Mary Valcoviak; her beloved husband, Ike Kolarik; sons, Gary Kolarik and Dennis Kolarik; brother, Eugene Valcoviak; and sister, Barbara Stegent.

She leaves behind a loving family to cherish her memory, including her sons, Gerald Kolarik and wife Carol, Arnold Kolarik and wife Leah, Paul Kolarik and wife SueAnne, and Craig Kolarik and wife MaryLee; daughters, Charlene Railsback and husband Ted, and Juanita Zaruba and husband Kent; brother-in-law, George Kolarik and wife Toddice; and sisters-in-law, Mary Ann Thamm, Barbara Ann Meche, and Mary Bell Valcoviak. She also leaves behind her grandchildren, Kathy Parker and husband Robert, Julie Mangum and husband Dallas, Amy Singer and husband Kyle, Kelli Kolarik, Kristen Risch and husband Bobby, Zach Kolarik and wife Ashley, Erik Kolarik and wife Crystal, Dylan Kolarik and wife Katelynn, Dr Tania Kolarik and Tanner Hilyard, Kaitlyn Craft and husband Jackson, Lindsey Stegall, Hannah Ray, Carson Kolarik, Mindy Kolarik and great-grandchildren, Kaylee Parker, Kamryn Parker, Keaton Parker, Matthew Mangum and Brooklynn, Luke Mangum, Clark Mangum, Cole Davidson, Collin Singer, Lane Kolarik, Carli Kolarik, Cori Kolarik, Madison Zaruba, Ava Risch, Phillip Risch, Peyton Risch, Greenlea Risch, Ethan Kolarik, Lainey Kolarik, Everett Kolarik, Emmett Kolarik, Emma Kolarik, Camille Kolarik, Chase Kolarik, Hayden Kolarik, Hayes Craft, Bodhi Craft, Henry Short, Kelsey Bear and great-great grandchildren, Kendall Mangum, Matthew Mangum Jr., and Mylah Martinez; also a host of extended family members, and friends who will forever remember her love, strength, faith, and generous spirit.

Catherine’s life was a testament to faith, family, hard work, and the beauty found in life’s simplest traditions. She gave freely of herself – to her church, her family, and anyone who walked through her door. Her homemade meals, spotless cars, hard-working hands, competitive spirit, and unwavering love for her family are memories that will be treasured for generations to come.

Visitation was held Wednesday, September 2, 2026, from 5-8 p.m. at Pace-Stancil Funeral Home in Dayton, with a Rosary at 7 p.m.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held Thursday, September 3, 2026, at 10 a.m. at St. Anne’s Catholic Church in Eastgate, with Father Peter Nguyen presiding. Burial will follow at Eastgate Cemetery.

The Kolarik family would like to extend a special thanks to Magnolia Place for their excellent care and love for Catherine. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Anne’s Catholic Church, Eastgate.

Jay H. Knight, County Judge
Liberty County, Texas

When Trains Move, Texas Thrives

by **The Honorable Jay H. Knight, Liberty County Judge**

Submitted by Griffin Communications, Alexandra Rhone

Every day the strength of our economy depends on something most people never see or even think about: the steady, reliable movement of goods that keeps farms productive, businesses operating, and communities growing. In places like Liberty County, that movement is not abstract; it is the lifeblood of our local economy. The benefits of freight rail are extensive, and the new and improved rail network from a combined Union Pacific-Norfolk Southern will serve as a foundation for Texas’s – especially Liberty County’s – continued economic growth. Picture bustling farms, oil companies, and natural resource industries flourishing in Liberty County, supported by a modern, efficient freight network. This future is well within reach because of the proposed UP-NS merger.

Freight rail is a cornerstone of our economy, safely and efficiently moving the goods that power our industries, support our farmers, and connect our communities to markets across the country and around the world. However, our nation can no longer rely so heavily on trucking as the primary mode of freight transportation. Increasing congestion, rising costs, and safety concerns underscore the need for a more balanced and resilient system. It is time for the United States to realize the benefits of freight rail more fully.

Though currently under federal regulatory review, the UP-NS merger merits strong support. It presents a unique opportunity to strengthen and modernize the American freight rail network. By establishing a true transcontinental railroad connecting the U.S. coasts and key economic regions, this merger would streamline the currently fragmented rail network, reducing inefficient transfers and unnecessary stops, improving service reliability, and significantly reducing transit times.

Freight rail offers clear advantages in capacity, cost, and safety. A single rail car can carry the equivalent of four truckloads, and shipping by rail can cost more than \$100 less per ton. In addition to these eco-

nomic benefits, rail is a safer mode of freight transportation. In 2025 alone, there were 153,800 reported trucking accidents compared to just 1,728 railroad accidents. Shifting more freight to rail not only reduces costs but also enhances public safety and reduces strain on our already-busy highways.

For Liberty County, the benefits are especially significant. Approximately half of our land is considered prime farmland, producing essential crops such as rice, cotton, grain, potatoes, corn, vegetables, and fruit, along with livestock including hogs, beef cattle, goats, and poultry. These agricultural producers depend on reliable transportation to bring their goods to market.

In addition, our county plays an important role in the energy and natural resource sectors. The production and shipment of iron ore, sulfur, oil, and natural gas are vital not only to our local economy but also to our country’s energy security. These industries also require dependable freight systems to remain competitive and meet growing demand.

The proposed UP-NS merger will also drive new investments in both rail infrastructure and the industries that rely on it. A more connected and efficient rail network will attract new businesses, support expansion, and open access to new domestic and international markets. Improved connectivity to ports and major distribution hubs will better position businesses in Liberty County and across Texas to grow their geographic reach, increase revenue, and strengthen long-term economic resilience.

This merger is about more than railroads; it’s about securing the future of our transportation system, supporting economic development, and ensuring that American freight rail remains globally competitive. It represents a strategic investment in infrastructure, safety, and sustainability.

When trains move efficiently, the economy – locally and nationally – moves with them.

LeadHERship Summit subject of Dayton Rotary meeting

DAYTON - Dayton Rotary Club President Elizabeth Robertson welcomed the club and guests for another outstanding program. Rotarian Geoff McCracken led the group in the opening prayer, followed by Rotarian Ken DeFoor with the pledges.

Rotarian Dr. Jessica Johnson introduced the two distinguished ladies who presented the program – Sherri Schmidt, who leads efforts in organizing the 2026 LeadHERship Summit and Dr. Rachel Alex, one of six featured speakers at the LeadHERship Summit.

Schmidt began the program with a short video showcasing last year’s LeadHERship Summit. She related that the LeadHERship Summit is an all-day conference that is highly interactive and engaging for women of all ages. It will feature six impactful sessions, making for a truly transformational day. There will be networking opportunities, breakfast and lunch, prizes, elected female officials participating in the program, and many fun activities throughout the day. Students from local school districts as well as some Lee College students will be sponsored. Additionally, two scholarships will be awarded at the conclusion of the day.

Event title sponsors include Trinity Valley Chamber of Commerce, Lee College, En-

tergy, and Liberty Dayton Regional Medical Center along with numerous other sponsors. The Summit will take place on September 29 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Dayton Community Center. There is still time to purchase a ticket or reserve a table.

Dr. Rachel Alex, founder of the Dr. Rachel Alex Legacy Center, shared an inspiring and impactful story about her journey through breast cancer and The Pink Table Foundation, a place where women heal, lead, and thrive. She invited the club to save the date for the inaugural Pink Table Brunch on October 3 at the Goose Creek Training Center. Survivors,

caregivers, healthcare professionals, and the community that makes healing possible will be honored in addition to celebrating Dr. Alex’s one-year cancer-free anniversary. This event is open to anyone who has experienced a life-changing event. For more information, call 832-786-1161 or email info@thepinktablefoundation.org.”

Members of the Dayton Rotary Club asked several thoughtful questions of both of the inspiring women. President Robertson concluded the meeting by referencing the 4-Way Test.

Pictured below are guest speakers Dr. Rachel Alex and Ms. Sherri Schmidt



DAYTON ROTARY CLUB
L-R: Dayton Rotary Club guest speakers Dr. Rachel Alex and Sherri Schmidt.

Two area students graduate SHSU

HUNTSVILLE - Two area students received degrees during the 2026 summer semester at Sam Houston State University. **Madison Holman**, of Liberty, received a BS - Bachelor of Science, Human Performance & Wellness Management. **Bailey Williams**, of Liberty, received a BS - Bachelor of Science, Health Sciences.

LIBERTY GAZETTE
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We meet Sunday night at 5 p.m. and Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.

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We'd love to see you soon. We've saved you a seat!

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