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[TbaDiva@aol.com](mailto:TbaDiva@aol.com). Do it today!

The science fiction crystal  
ball is a tad fuzzy.

Don't lie down or the dog  
will pee on you.

Go fish!

I'll remember you.  
*Submitted by Jaguars!*

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## "Elvis has left the building." Who said it first?

December 27, 2002

Dear Cecil:

No quotation dictionary gives the origin of the common phrase "Elvis has left the building." Who said it first?

— Nicole A., Palo Alto, CA

Funny you should ask. The guy who said it just left the building himself. Horace Lee Logan, founder and longtime producer of *Louisiana Hayride*, the country-music radio show that gave Elvis his big break, died October 13 at age 86.

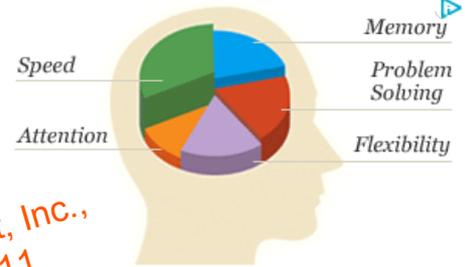
In 1954 Sam Phillips of Sun Records sent Logan a demo recording of the 19-year-old Elvis singing "That's All Right, Mama" and "Blue Moon of Kentucky," touting this white kid who sounded black. Elvis was a radical departure from the country crooners who were the staple of *Hayride* lineups at the time. (To give you an idea, one of the acts that preceded Elvis on his first night was a yodeler.)

But Logan decided to take a chance. On October 16, 1954, Elvis debuted on the show, which was broadcast live on KWKH, a 50,000-watt station in Shreveport, Louisiana, that reached 28 states. The studio audience responded politely to the young singer—he had yet to develop his trademark hip wiggle or sultry sneer—but Logan and company saw his potential and signed him up for a regular gig. Soon teenage girls discovered him and Elvis was on his way.

After two years of touring the south and southwest and drawing increasing national attention, Elvis bought out his contract with *Hayride* for the unheard-of sum of \$10,000, with the stipulation that he give one last performance, which turned out to be on December 15, 1956. By this time he was verging on superstardom. Ten thousand kids jammed the youth building on the fairgrounds in Shreveport and screamed at the top of their lungs for the duration of the King's 45-minute show. (According to KWKH disc jockey Frank Page, it was sometimes hard to tell if Elvis was singing, or even if the band was playing.) After Elvis had given his final encore and left the stage, the crowd headed for the exits, even though many other *Hayride* acts were still waiting to perform. Logan took the microphone and pleaded with Elvis's fans to return to their seats: "Please, young people . . . Elvis has left the building. He has gotten in his car and driven away. . . . Please take your seats."

The words became part of the Elvis legend and were repeated at many subsequent shows. Now they're a catchphrase whose meaning, usually tinged with irony, is clear to all: the show's over, the curtain has fallen, the sun has set, that's all she wrote, the fat lady has sung, our work here is done, move along, nothing more to see, disperse, beat it, turn the page, hit the road, don't forget to tip your waitress, pack it up, turn out the lights, *das ist alles*, time's up, toodle-oo, *exeunt omnes*, class dismissed, back to work, don't let the screen door hit you where the good Lord split you, end of story, that's all there is there ain't no more, so long, hasta la vista, you don't have to go home but you can't stay here, later gator, 30, buh-bye, get lost, *ite missa est*, the end, finito, Scotty, beam me up.

QUESTIONS WE'RE STILL THINKING ABOUT



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## Recent Additions:

Why do we call it the "bathroom," even when it has no tub?

*A Straight Dope Classic by Cecil Adams*

What would it be like walking around on a cube-shaped planet?

*By Cecil Adams*

Did New York water pressure drop due to toilet flushing after the Super Bowl?

*A Straight Dope Classic by Cecil Adams*

Why do outhouse doors have half-moons on them?

*A Straight Dope Classic by Cecil Adams*

Are there really "lost cosmonauts" stranded in space?

*A Straight Dope Classic by Cecil Adams*

Can you open an airliner emergency door while the plane is in mid-air?

*A Straight Dope Classic by Cecil Adams*

Does the average American use more energy than a blue whale?

*By Cecil Adams*

What does the "K" in Kmart stand for?

*A Straight Dope Classic by Cecil Adams*

In "Blinded by the Light," what exactly is the lyric following the title phrase?

*A Straight Dope Classic by Cecil Adams*

Why are there holes in the prongs of electrical plugs?

*A Straight Dope Classic by Cecil Adams*

What did people use before toilet paper was invented?

*A Straight Dope Classic by Cecil Adams*

Are smaller elementary-school class sizes better?

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Dear Cecil:

I go camping a lot and sometimes people like to waste my matches by throwing them in the fire. Do you know if they have invented fire resistant matches? If so where can I find them? -- ISeeUOO

Dear Cecil:

Is there a recipe for baggly eyes? If so, can you forward it to me? --lilmoomoo

Dear Cecil:

In my personal and family development class (home ec) my teacher said that salt and pepper are married, so that's why they always have to stay by each other. If they are, then one has to be the husband and the other the wife. All of the people I've asked have agreed that the pepper would be the husband and the salt the wife. Well, what if the fork, knife, and spoon were a family. Which would be the dad, the mom, and the kid, and would the kid be a boy or a girl? Also, what if thunder, lightning, and rain were a family, how would that go? --Molly Moxie

Dear Cecil:

what would happen if a giant alien came up and ate the sun, would it die? what would happen to us. Would it eat us too or would it be too full from the sun. Is there any nutritional value in the contents of the sun or any of the planets of the matter. --D Guarna

Dear Cecil:

Does any one group or individual, anywhere, own rain? Or claim to? --Saqib R., Los Angeles

Dear Cecil:

Subj: donald duck. Can you send me the hearing of him saying any of that? --theallen

Dear Cecil:

At what temperature will my eyeballs freeze? --Randall

Cecil replies:

So, Randall. I take it you're new to Chicago?

-- Cecil Adams

[COMMENT ON THIS ANSWER](#)

By Cecil Adams

Does anyone ever actually get the house, car, etc., offered in those big sweepstakes?  
*A Straight Dope Classic by Cecil Adams*

Why does smoking make you want to go to the bathroom?  
*A Straight Dope Classic by Cecil Adams*

I want to get my nipples pierced. Are there health risks? Plus: sperm trees of Los Angeles  
*A Straight Dope Classic by Cecil Adams*

Why do I start coughing when I clean my ears with Q-tips?  
*A Straight Dope Classic by Cecil Adams*

How are you supposed to use hand sanitizer?  
*By Cecil Adams*

Did Communist saboteurs sneak a hammer and sickle into the design of the Kennedy half dollar?  
*A Straight Dope Classic by Cecil Adams*

Can you make big money stuffing envelopes at home?  
*A Straight Dope Classic by Cecil Adams*

Can I mail a brick back to a junk-mail firm using the business reply envelope?  
*A Straight Dope Classic by Cecil Adams*

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