



Apology by rite can go wrong

By Kathleen Kellehe
Los Angeles Times

Sorry for interrupting the morning ritual, but if you could just take a minute to read this. ... Oh, you're late, and your coffee is cold? Jeez, sorry about the coffee, I hate when that happens. ... I don't want to make you late, forgive me, it's just that ...

Many people — especially women — hear such protests when they apologize for the weather, bad food or problems with the air conditioning. But sometimes what comes across as self-beltitting is actually "ritual apology" — a kind of conversational grease for the wheels of communication.

"I'm sorry" doesn't necessarily mean — in the literal sense — "I goofed." It often serves as a verbal nod of acknowledgment that something regrettable has occurred without assigning blame, or it is used as a mutual face-saving device.

"There are two kinds of ritual apology," says Georgetown University linguist Deborah Tannen, who wrote about ritual apology in her "Talking From 9 to 5" (Avon Books, 1994). "One is 'I am sorry that happened to you' recognition of the other person's experience. The other one is where you actually do apologize and it could or could not be literal, but it is one step in a two-step ritual. ... I take one part of the blame and you take the other part and we restore the balance of power."

Used to demonstrate understanding and compassion, the ritual apology is standard at funerals ("I am so sorry about Mary's death") or to express regret over an illness.

Ritual apologies — like other conversational rituals — work best when both parties assume the same premise about its purpose, Tannen says. When used to restore balance, the ritual apology depends on the benevolence of others not to take the self-abnegation seriously. When a conversational partner takes a ritual apology literally, it leaves the person uttering "I'm sorry" in "a one-down position," Tannen says.

"Say your husband was supposed to pick you up on a certain corner and he wasn't there," she suggests. "He says you didn't make it clear where he was to go. You say, 'I'm sorry I wasn't clear,'

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Rob Zaleski's "Up Close" is on vacation.

DATELINES

MONDAY,
JUNE 23, 1997

Today is the 174th day of 1997 and the third day of summer.

TODAY'S HISTORY: On this day in 1846, the saxophone was patented by Antoine Joseph Sax.

On this day in 1967, President Johnson and Russian Premier Kosygin met and agreed not to let anything happen that would lead their countries to war.

On this day in 1989, the New Kids on the Block were almost evicted from their hotel for bombing guests with Kool Aid-filled balloons.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS: Edward VIII (1894-1972), English king-abdicator; Alfred Kinsey (1894-1956), sex researcher; Bob Fosse (1927-1987), director-choreographer; June Carter Cash (1929-), singer, is 68; Wilma Rudolph (1940-1994), track-and-field great; James Levine (1943-), conductor, is 54; Ted Shackelford (1946-), actor, is 51; Clarence Thomas (1948-), Supreme Court justice, is 49.

TODAY'S SPORTS: On this day in 1963, Jimmy Piersall hit his 100th major league home run.

TODAY'S QUOTE: "Never contend with a man who has nothing to lose." — Baltasar Gracian

TODAY'S WEATHER: On this day in 1969, over nine inches of rain caused devastating floods in Red Boiling Springs, Tenn.

SOURCE: 1997 Weather Guide Calendar; Accord Publishing, Ltd.

TODAY'S MOON: Between full moon (June 20) and last quarter (June 27).

More SNACKERS than slackers

By Debra Carr-Elsing
The Capital Times

Birds do it. Bees do it. But no one loves doing it more than Americans. There are snackers in every age, sex and demographic group.

Even when we're using our computers to surf the Internet, we're a nation of snackers.

The top five surfing snacks are: popcorn (24 percent), pretzels (23 percent), potato chips (17 percent), tortilla chips (14 percent) and cheese puffs (9 percent).

While cruising the information superhighway, computer buffs can even do some snack surfing at the home page site of <http://www.snax.com> to catch the newest snack information provided by the National Potato Promotion Board and the Snack Food Association.

Here's another little tidbit: The more time folks spend online at their computers, the more likely they are to munch while cruising.

Did you also know that low-fat snacks are a booming market these days? Expect even greater growth as more low- and no-fat potato chips items are introduced.

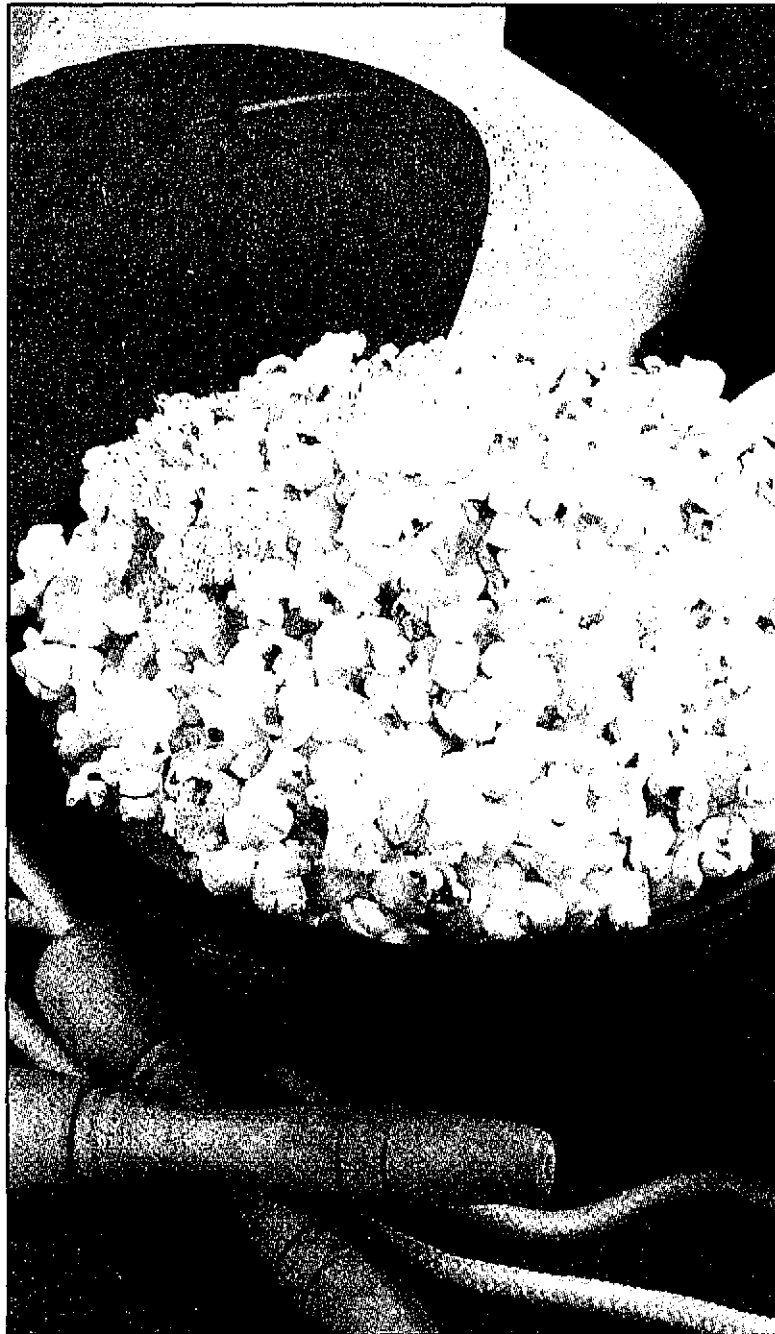
Last year, new products included sweetened chips made from root vegetables, new varieties of fat-free caramel popcorn, naturally low-fat gourmet turkey jerky, a wider selection of baked rice snacks, and savory biscotti flavored with sun dried tomatoes, herbs and garlic.

Industry experts predict that in the future, consumers may see snacking innovations such as salsas and dips for cookies, crackers and pretzels; new potato chip flavors such as crushed red pepper and olive; snacks fried in gourmet oils; and meat snacks made from venison, ostrich, alligator, pheasant and fish.

Low-fat snacks are the fastest-growing segment of the industry, with about 6 percent of the \$60 billion market. These "better for you snacks" — such as pretzels, baked potato chips and low-fat popcorn — are attracting people who may not otherwise snack, researchers say.

There are more fun food facts waiting to be discovered.

For example:
■ Spaghetti noodles range



FILE PHOTO

According to a recent survey, a lot of people snack while surfing the Internet, and the most popular snack they reach for while using their computer is popcorn.

from thin angel-hair strands that cook extremely fast to the thick-er vermicelli. There's also the standard spaghetti No. 8, of course. In general, the higher the number on the package, the thinner the strands.

"Spaghetti" in Italian, by the way, means "strings."

■ Keeping vegetables fresh is no trick. Simply store them in your refrigerator's "crisper" drawer to keep veggies from dry-

ing out — and losing both their crunch and their nutrients.

Too much moisture, however, can speed spoilage, particularly in lettuce and other leafy greens. So if the vegetables are wet, soak up the excess by wrapping them in a paper towel or tucking the towel inside their plastic bag. And, if the bag is not perforated, don't seal it.

■ The next time you crave an ice cream sundae, use chocolate

syrup instead of fudge topping. There are about 150 calories and 6 grams of fat in two tablespoons of fudge topping, but only 80 calories and a trace of fat in the same amount of chocolate syrup.

■ Sugar goes to your head. Here's how: The body breaks down carbohydrates into glucose, a sugar that fuels various cell processes. The simple sugar also plays a key role in complex cognitive functions such as memory, according to researchers at the University of Virginia.

In one study, for example, a group of people with Alzheimer's disease were tested for their ability to recall stories, words and faces after drinking a glass of lemonade. Those who drank lemonade sweetened with glucose had better recall scores than those whose drink was sweetened with saccharin.

Glucose appears to trigger hormonal reactions that earlier studies had linked to memory formation. Researchers hope this growing understanding of the biological mechanisms behind the whole process will eventually lead to effective treatments for memory disorders.

■ Nutritionists have long pointed out that 2 percent "low fat" milk is a misnomer. Food labeling laws mandate that a low-fat food contain no more than 3 grams of fat per serving, but 2 percent fat milk has nearly 5 grams per cup. The name is perfectly legal, however. Milk was exempted when the low-fat standards were implemented in 1994.

That's slated to change this year, though, with the passage of new regulations that will alter the way 2 percent fat milk, as well as other versions of the calcium-packed beverage, must be labeled.

Soon, 2 percent low-fat milk will be called "2 percent reduced-fat milk" (containing 121 calories and 4.7 grams of fat per cup), 1 percent low-fat milk will be "light milk" (102 calories and 2.6 fat grams per cup), and skim or non-fat milk will be pegged "fat-free milk" (86 calories and less than 1 gram of fat per cup).

■ To cut down on sodium, don't lean so heavily on
See FACTS, Page 3D

FDA warns of toothpaste 'dangers'

By Don Oldenburg
The Washington Post

Last month, as 8-year-old Molly Statt stood in the bathroom brushing her teeth, something on the back of the tube of Crest caught her attention. She stopped brushing.

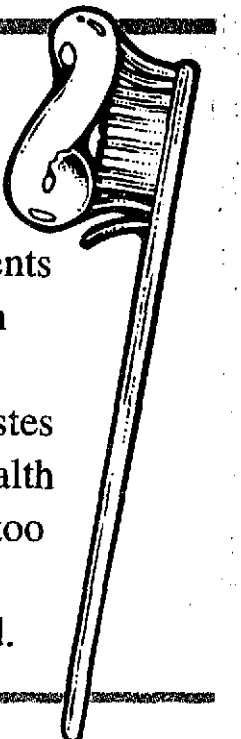
Looking up at her father standing beside her, she asked, "Is this poison?"

"Of course not," Paul Statt reassured his daughter.

"Then why does it say 'poison' on it?" she asked.

Statt looked closer at the label. In small print were warnings he hadn't noticed before, including one that read: "If you accidentally swallow more than used for brushing, seek professional help or contact a poison control center immediately."

3
ingredients
found in
most
toothpastes
pose health
risks if too
much is
ingested.



Caught off guard, he didn't have a good answer for Molly. For a week or so afterward, she didn't want to brush with toothpaste. Now she is back to using it, but Statt worries that she's confused about the safety of toothpaste and about the truth of poison labels.

"When did they start putting a poison warning on toothpaste tubes?" he asks.

Like most people, the Petersburg, N.H., resident assumed that an over-the-counter health care product like toothpaste must certainly be as safe as the water we drink. But it's not. That's the message of the new
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Once scorned, artist's work now adorns Manhattan

Associated Press

More than a decade after the artist was confronted for scribbling on public property, the largest-ever retrospective of Keith Haring sculptures marches along 22 blocks of tony Park Avenue.

Ranging in height from 12 feet to 30 feet and weighing as much as 18 tons, the 14 steel sculptures in primary colors are exhibited together for the first time. Six were executed by artisans, following Haring's instructions, after he died in 1990 from AIDS-related illnesses.

Many of Haring's most famous motifs are represented — dancing figures, pyramids, barking dogs — and his playful, even cartoonish sculptures seem appropriate amid the diesel fumes and speeding taxis of Park Avenue.

"There is something about the simplicity of these figures that has an energy. It's very compelling. You definitely have a visceral response to them," said Susan K. Freedman, president of the Public Art Fund, which co-sponsored the exhibit.

One of the steel sculptures is near the Plaza Hotel and the Fifth Avenue entrance to Central Park. The others are along the median strip on Park Avenue in midtown. They will remain until Oct. 10.

"They're accessible. They're very straightforward. They're in-your-face," Freedman said. "And

they have an exuberance. Some even have a slight edge to them. "They're New York."

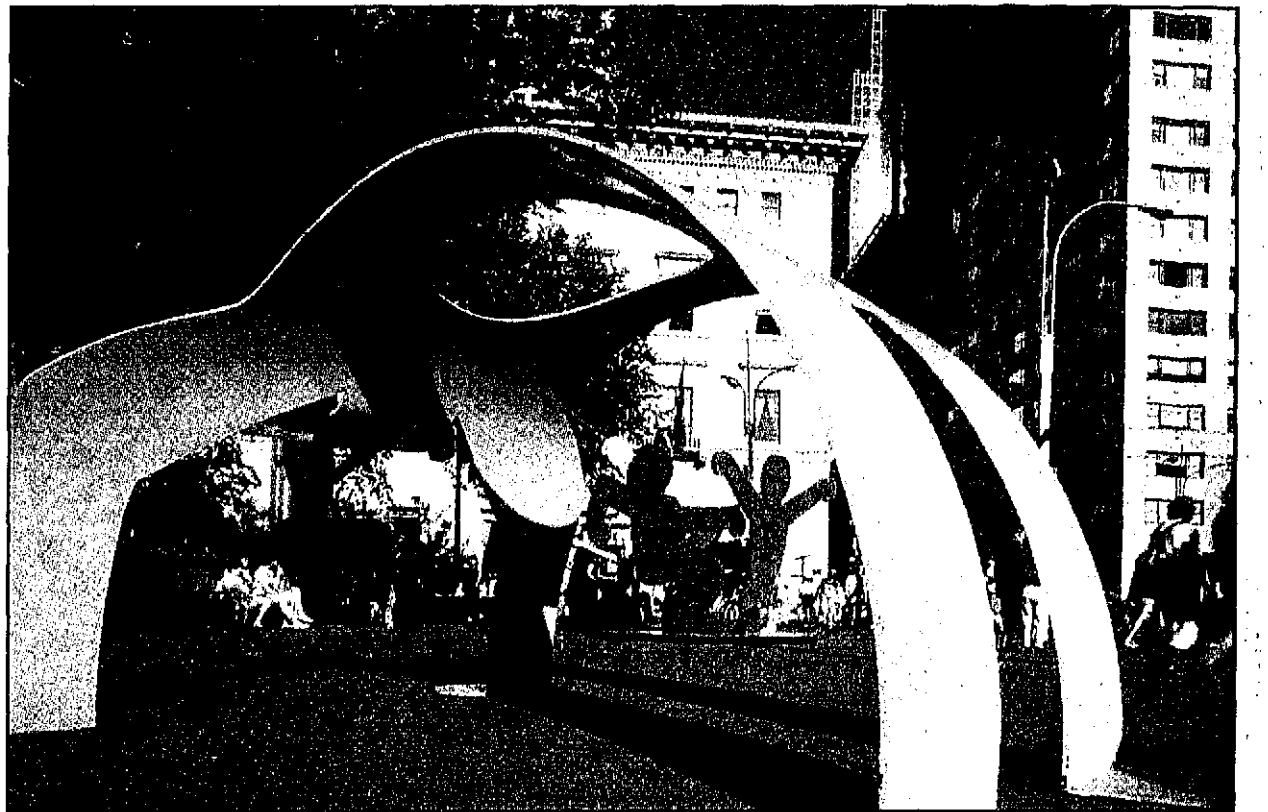
Coca-Cola officials are putting the finishing touches on a Las Vegas museum adjacent to a 100-foot-tall Coke bottle that will showcase the company's 111-year history.

The 28,000-square-foot "World of Coca-Cola Las Vegas" features Coke lore through interactive exhibits, a theater and a "fantastic fountain," composed of five 25-foot-long screens that feature a montage of images, with 1,000 Coca-Cola bottles popping jets of water that dance to the music of the video.

The first two floors of the four-story facility have been open since May 1. Thousands of tourists, attracted by the towering Coke bottle at the entrance, have viewed Coca-Cola memorabilia featured on these two floors.

The top two floors, set to open July 8, will feature the museum. The museum will take guests on a walk through time, with a streetscape telling the history of the soft drink. Entertainers dressed in fashions of the times will walk out of the scenes to tell stories about life in each decade. The street scenes include a bank in Atlanta in 1886, where the secret Coke formula was stored.

Also featured is a theater where people from around the world share their favorite experiences,



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Keith Haring's whimsical "Yellow Arching Figure" appears alongside "Three Dancing Figures" at Doris C. Freedman Plaza at 5th Avenue and 60th Street in Manhattan.

covering topics from sports to history, culture and folk art.

The museum will be Coke's second. A similar project opened in Atlanta six years ago.

Deborah MacCarthy, director of the Coca-Cola attractions group,

said in an interview that the Atlanta museum was opened in response to public interest in the soft drink.

"People would come up to our headquarters and ask to see artifacts and memorabilia, so we

decided to build a museum," she recalled.

As for expanding the concept to Nevada, she said, "Las Vegas is the fastest-growing tourist market in the United States and we want to be where our consumers are."