



THE RIDER REPORT

VOLUME 17, ISSUE 7
FEBRUARY 2016

A PUBLICATION OF RIDER & ASSOCIATES, INC. REPORTING & TRANSCRIPTION SERVICES

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Is Bottled Water Safe?

Amid the outrage and outcry for safer tap water stemming from the lead pipe revelation in Flint, Mich., there is also concern about bottled drinking water. After all, half the American public consumes bottled water and most of them drink it regularly.

While the Food and Drug Administration strictly regulates bottled water, there are occasional slip-ups including last summer at two Pennsylvania bottling plants where the E. coli bacteria was discovered there.

The largest study of its kind was conducted in 1999 by the National Resources Defense Council which tested 103 brands of water and found that one-third had contamination issues. Since then, the FDA has been more diligent in testing for chemical or bacterial contaminants.

In fact, bottled water regulations are many, and the companies are more vigorously regulated than tap water. Not only are the sources more closely scrutinized, the plastic in the bottles, themselves, are much more stable than years ago.

They are so well constructed that the FDA considers them to have an indefinite shelf life.

The different water taste that varies from brand to brand are due to the water source and the additives of

minerals and the different amounts.

The FDA has established definitions for different types of water:

Artesian: Water from a well tapping a confined aquifer (layers of porous rock, sand and earth containing water) where the water level stands above the top of the aquifer.

Mineral water: Water containing more than 250 parts per million total dissolved solids originating from a protected underground water source. It must have constant levels and relative proportions of minerals and trace elements at the source. No minerals may be added to the water.

Purified water: Produced by distillation, deionization, reverse osmosis or other process that meets the definition.

Sparkling: Water that contains the same amount of carbon dioxide that it had at emergence from the source after treatment and possible replacement of carbon dioxide.

Spring water: Water that may be collected at the spring or through a bore hole. It's any water that comes to the surface. ■

Strange Collector Names

If you are of a certain generation, you collected stamps and coins growing up. It looked good on the resume when, as a hobby, you listed "numismatist" (collector of coins) or "philatelist" (collector of stamps).

Now if you really want to stump someone in a trivia challenge, go answer these collector questions:

Who collects teddy bears? **An arctophile**

Who collects fine books? **A bibliophile**

Who collects butterflies or moths? **A lepidopterist**

Who enjoys fine wines? **An oenophile**

Who collects matchbooks? **A phillumenist**

Who collects postcards? **A deltiologist**

Who is an expert in flags? **A vexillologist** ■

Don't Skirt Issues

We're taught by many sources to avoid direct conflict, such as a bully in class or a boss at work, but in a new book: "Broken Open: How Difficult Times Can Help Us Grow," author Elizabeth Lesser suggests that confronting adversity may offer a better long-term outcome.

"When we resist change and loss, we bring more pain onto ourselves. We become hardened, angry, resentful," says Lesser. Ignoring a situation and getting over it means avoiding an outcome that may fester inside.

Rather, she and other behavioral psychologists recommend to face the circumstance head-on, acknowledge it, and feel the emotions connected to it which more often brings resolution and a clean slate. More specifically:

Observe, don't obsess "When we rehash the stories of our loss or how we were wronged over and over, we're choosing victimhood over growth and liberation," says Lesser. We need to acknowledge our experience for what actually happened and not ruminate.

Feel Don't deny pain or frustration or sadness. Understand it and let it flow. When you pretend not to feel the emotion, despair and hopelessness build. Work through the pain, identify it and be attentive to it.

Grow Be the narrator, not the story. Unfortunate, unfair situations happen to everyone. Learn the lesson and be prepared to mature from that experience. "There have been times in my own life," says Lesser, "when a loss or a change overwhelmed me, and I wanted to run from my feelings, my behaviors, my sense of shame or blame. But instead I turned to them and asked what they had come to teach me. And in that turning, the difficulties helped me re-evaluate who I was, what I wanted, where I going on my life journey."

We either "move with life or swim against it," Lesser says. "Neither is easy, but only one way leads to freedom." ■

Top Country in the World...It's Not the U.S.A.!

The Olympics are just a few months away in Rio de Janeiro, and though we may haul in the most gold medals and have the loudest sounding chant: "USA, USA!" the votes are in from the U. S. News & World Report inaugural "Best Countries" survey.

America won't make the podium this year. Instead, give Germany the gold; Canada, the silver; and Great Britain, the bronze. The project, combining research resources from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and global brand consultants, BAV Consultant, ranked 60 countries across 24 categories with 16,000 people taking part in the evaluation from 36 countries in the Americas, Asia, Europe and Africa.

The United States did rank first in power and influence. Sweden had the most top spots, ranking best in citizenship, raising kids and green living. ■

Teresa's Thoughts



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Need an appellate transcript prepared from a Clark County court proceeding?

If you have been one of the attorneys caught in some very confusing language, and not finding your favorite court reporting agency (Rider & Associates, Inc., of course!) on the "court-approved transcriptionist" list, know that it is being addressed.

The Washington State Court Reporters Association has been very busy this legislative session working on clarifying this issue. It is, and always has been my position that a Certified Court Reporter with the Washington State Department of Licensing is certainly an approved transcriptionist.

It appears that the Senate Law and Justice Committee has clarified the House Committee's intent for us to be fully recognized and included as approved transcriptionists in the court language.

I am expecting this misinterpretation by some county administrators to be cleared up very quickly!

Convenience Stores by the Numbers

Here are the top 10 convenient stores by the number of locations in the U.S. and Canada:

1. 7-Eleven: 8,273
2. Circle-K:..... 7,276
3. Speedway: 2,760
4. Casey's General Stores: 1,896
5. CST Brands/Corner Store: ... 1,318
6. A-Plus, MACS/Tigermarket Stripes, Aloha (Sunoco, Inc.) 1,309
7. Murphy USA, Murphy Express 1,296
8. AmPm..... 970
9. Kroger: Turkey Hill, Kwik Shop Quik Stop, etc..... 790
10. Suncor Energy: Petro-Canada, Neighbours, SuperStop..... 750

Source: Convenience Store and Fuel News