

# Strange BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

- It was award-winning Canadian novelist, poet, essayist and literary critic Margaret Atwood who made the following sage observation: “Your romantic tragedy when you were 19 becomes a funny anecdote by the time you’re 45. And then, 30 years later, you can’t remember their name.”

- In 1819, some Native peoples in the United States got quite a surprise. Fearing trouble from tribes, a group of western river explorers traveled in a steamboat that had been modified to resemble a fire-breathing serpent.

- After the disaster of the Exxon Valdez, the oil tanker’s former captain, Joseph Hazelwood — who evidently had been so drunk that he was passed out in his bunk when the devastating collision occurred — was hired by the New York Maritime College. His job? Teaching students how to stand watch.

- At one time in New York City it was against the law to play pinball.

- Tombstones weren’t always used to record information about the deceased’s life; they were originally just large, unmarked slabs of stone placed atop a fresh grave — a barrier to ensure that no undead creature or ghastly spirit could escape to trouble the living.

- The woman who was declared the female winner of the 1980 Boston Marathon had the title stripped from her after officials noticed her absence from any of the photographs or video footage from the middle of the event. It seems she veered off course, killed a little time around town, then rode the subway a spot less than a mile from the finish line, rejoining the race at the very end.

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**Thought for the Day:** “A man who has never gone to school may steal from a freight car; but if he has a university education, he may steal the whole railroad.” — *Theodore Roosevelt*