

# ET CETERA

## Noise pollution called harmful

**Associated Press**  
Noise is the most inescapable form of pollution — and it is hazardous to your health, according to an article in the March issue of Science Digest.

Studies show noise pollution can harm the ears and reduce learning ability. There even are indications that it can injure the brain.

Audiologist John Mills of the Medical College of South Carolina believes the brain is "the most significant area in need of further study." He reports that in several animal experiments, 65 decibels of sound — the noise level of an air conditioner — damaged the brain stem.

Noise can interfere with learning. The California Department of Health Services reported children in schools on loud streets score well below their socioeconomic counterparts in quiet schools.

Even a modest level of noise can be troublesome. Two British psychologists, reporting last year in the Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, found that suburban traffic noise of about 46 decibels — comparable to the hum of a refrigerator — impairs sleep.

Environmental noise can be more damaging than the blast of an explosion, Science Digest reported. Ruptured eardrums can be at least par-

tially repaired by surgery, but the damage caused by high noise levels over time can be irreversible.

While the Environmental Protection Agency's \$14 million noise-abatement program was scrapped four years ago, much noise pollution can be hushed by common sense.

Stereo headphones top the list of controllable noisemakers. A study by ear, nose and throat specialist Phillip Lee of the University Hospital in Iowa City, Iowa, showed that teenagers who use stereo headphones for three hours suffer temporary hearing loss, especially when the headphones are played at high volume.

"People should not turn them up above a normal conversational level," Lee said.

Neurobiologist Barbara Bohne, of the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, suggests limiting the duration of noisy activities.

"If you have to cut wood with a chain saw, do it for an hour one Saturday and another hour the following week, rather than for two hours at once," she says.

Ear plugs and muffs can reduce noise by as much as 25 decibels, Science Digest reported.

## Army red tape detains awards 40 years

# WW II vet finally gets medals

**Associated Press**  
TEXAS CITY — After 40 years and yards of red tape, Charles W. "Bill" McCartney has finally received the medals he was awarded in World War II.

"These medals are something that will make my grandkids proud of me," said McCartney, 59. "They can look at them and say, 'This is what my granddad done.'"

McCartney won a Distinguished Service Cross, a Purple Heart and eight other medals while serving with Company C, 328th Regiment of the 26th Army Infantry.

He received seven of the awards from the Department of the Army earlier this month. But McCartney isn't about to complain.

"Better late than never," he said. He said he wrote the Army several

times, but without success.

"The Army told me some papers were misplaced when I was discharged, and they had no record of my medals," McCartney said. "They said they are backlogged with cases similar to mine and it takes a long time to sort out the paperwork. I've heard of some guys who lost an arm or leg in combat and still don't have their Purple Heart."

McCartney's company was awarded the cross for rushing against the Germans in Luxembourg on Jan. 11, 1945.

A citation states McCartney was shot in the shoulder, but while his wound was being dressed, he cleared his gun in preparation for more action. He continued to fight, destroying two more machine gun nests.

## It's official now, Cut and Shoot

**Associated Press**  
CUT AND SHOOT — A town hall suffering an identity crisis has settled a long-standing controversy over a community never quite certain of its own name.

Documents have proven the tiny town east of Conroe is Cut and Shoot — with the 'and' fully spelled. So the structure is officially the Cut and Shoot Town Hall.

The rustic log cabin looks like anything but the municipal government meeting place that it is.

"People thought it was nothing but a beer joint, right there by the fire station," alderman Gene Douget says.

So, at a meeting a few months ago, he suggested a sign to clear up any misconceptions about the hall. But misconceptions about the spelling of the town's name were not as easy to clear up. Various sources refer to it as Cut and Shoot, Cut'n Shoot, Cut & Shoot or Cut'N' Shoot, and there are probably others.

"We started getting the sign together, so we thought we better get it right," Douget says.

The city fathers consulted the

not-so-ancient chronicles and spoke. They checked the charter, drafted in 1969, and found the town spelled Cut and Shoot.

The words, "Town Hall—Cut and Shoot, Texas," now grace the hall's unpainted cedar exterior. Looking at the 30-foot-by-40-foot hall, it is easy to see what might have caused the confusion about the building.

"You know the old Western saloon with the porch on it?" Douget says. "It looks just like that."

And thanks to the sign, residents need no longer wonder where their town hall is.

"A lot of people wanted to know where the town hall was," he says. "It's been sitting there all the time."

They need no longer wonder how to spell their town's name, though a host of references offer conflicting advice on the correct form.

The town's community center shows the municipality's name spelled correctly, and so do many maps. But the town's fire station has the wrong spelling on its garage doors, as do phone book listings Cut and Shoot number

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