Over the Back Fence

Have Broom, Will Travel

NEAR THE END of a bus tour, I purchased a broom in Sepulveda, a charming village north of Madrid, Spain. A woman with our United States Air Force overseas group looked at me strangely and asked, “Don’t you have a regular broom?”

A bit piqued, I defended my purchase. “It’s to decorate my fireplace,” I said. “I even plan to take it back with me when I return to the States.”

“But you can’t do that,” a young sergeant told me. “Regulations won’t permit it. You can’t ship plants or materials made of brush.”

It happened to be the day before Halloween, and a bright retort occurred to me. “Well, then,” I said, “if I can’t take it back, I’ll just ride around on it tomorrow night when the moon is high.”

The sergeant still had the last laugh, exclaiming, “Oh, that’s different, if it’s something for professional use…”

—Sylvia M., Santa Maria, California

Paying Their Respects

ONE THANKSGIVING Day, as we were eager to eat dinner at my daughter-in-law’s home, I noticed we had neglected to light the candles atop the holiday table.

As my husband reached over to light the candles, my granddaughter

Courtney asked us, “Is today the turkey’s birthday?”

Before I could answer, her cousin Jennifer piped up, “No, silly, his funeral.”

—Deana S., Flushing, Michigan

Questions to Ponder

FROM THE “oldies but goodies” department of jokes, Robert B. of Savoy, Illinois wonders…

Why is lemon juice made with artificial flavor and dishwashing liquid made with real lemons?

Why don’t you ever see the headline “Psychic Wins Lottery”?

Why didn’t Noah swat those two mosquitoes?

Why is the person who invests all of your money called a broker?

Why don’t they build an airplane out of the stuff used for that indestructible black box?

Simple Solution

MY YOUNGEST sister recited this parody between acts of a home talent show when she was 5 years old. I’ve never seen it in print any time since then.

—Doris R., Fargo, North Dakota

The Village Blacksmith

Under a spreading chestnut tree
The stubborn auto stands.
The smith an angry man is he
With trouble on his hands.
The carburetor seems to be
The cause of all his woe.
He tightens half a dozen bolts,
And still it doesn't go.
He sits beside the road to give
His brain a chance to cool
And ponders on his training
At the correspondence school.
And then he starts his job once more
And just by chance 'tis seen
The cause of all his trouble is
He's out of gasoline.