

Home Country

Be Careful Of Knowledge

If they ever give a Nobel Prize for reading about science, our guy Bert Underwood would be a shoo-in. His own career had been strictly non-scientific, but his retirement absolutely reeked of cutting-edge discoveries, which he read about and tried to pronounce.

It was like that the other night when the Mule Barn closed. We had taken our wives down to split either a chicken-fried steak the size of a saddle blanket, or a fish and chips large enough to feed a cavalry regiment. We stepped out into the chill of the night and

looked up at the many stars.

"Nice night for neutrinos," Bert said. His wife, Maizie, groaned quietly and looked for something in her purse. "Neutrinos, Bert?"

Doc said.

"You know what neutrinos are, of course, Doc," Bert said.

"I think that's the chess team in Fairweather, Doc," Steve threw in.

"You're wrong, Steve," said Mrs. Doc. "Those are the Machismos."

"So the neutrinos ... aren't they dogs that have been fixed?"

Bert was ready to



Slim Randles

bust a gut. "Are you kidding? You don't know what neutrinos are? You don't study astronomy?"

"Well, no, actually..." Bert smiled in the darkness. "A neutrino," he pronounced, "is a sub-atomic particle. It doesn't have an electrical charge, and it flies around at the speed of light going through things. The word neutrino means 'small, neutral one'."

"Just like Gilbert's Chihuahua. He charges around going through things... and I'm pretty sure he's been neutered."

"I don't know why I even bother bringing up these scientific

things," Bert said, in despair.

"Me neither," said Dud.

"You probably don't know about charmed quarks, either, I'll bet."

"Charmed, I'm sure," said Steve.

Doc made wing-flapping gestures. "Quark, quark ... QUARK!"

Bert got in the car and drove off.

Sometimes drive-by knowledge can hurt innocent bystanders.

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