April Trivia Answers

1. What state has the longest name?

Extra credit: Which state had the longest name until November 2020?

Answer: The Commonwealth of Massachusetts (29 letters). The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is a close second, with 26 letters. The Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia tie for third with 20 letters. Maine is, of course, near the bottom of the list.

Extra credit: When Rhode Island changed its name to State of Rhode Island in November 2020, it fell to the middle of the list. Its original name, The State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, was the longest by far with 48 letters!

2. What is a funambulist?

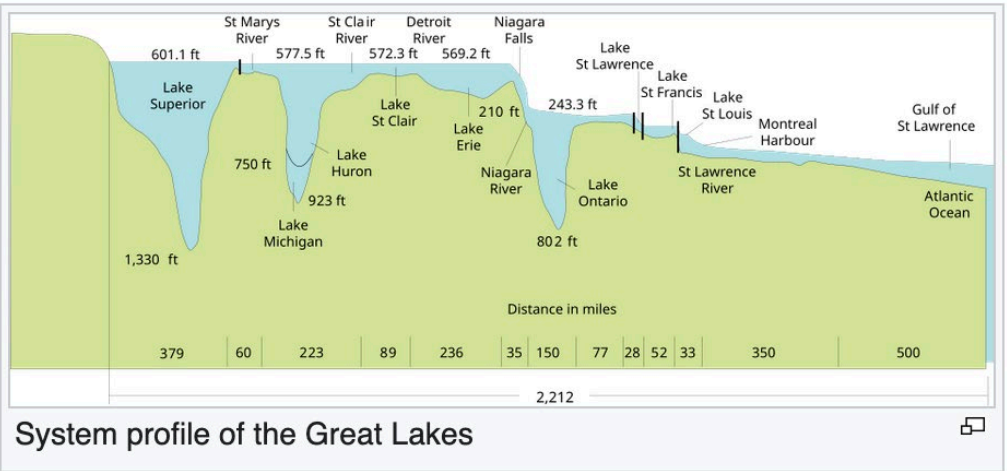
Answers: According to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), the term funambulist was first used in 1793 to describe tightrope walkers. I was surprised that they existed so long ago! The word comes from the Latin *funis*, which means rope, and *ambulare*, which means to walk.

3. Which of the Great Lakes do all the other Great Lakes flow into?

Extra credit: List the order of lakes through which water moves from the other Great Lakes.

Answer: Lake Ontario is closest to sea level and the farthest east, so the other lakes all flow into it. The Great Lakes are the largest group of freshwater lakes on earth when compared by total area (94,250 square miles) and have 21% of the earth's surface fresh water by volume.

Extra credit: Water flows downhill and east-ish from Lake Superior to Lake Michigan and Lake Huron, then Lake Erie, and finally Lake Ontario. From Lake Ontario the water empties into the St. Lawrence River and the Atlantic Ocean.



(CHART: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Lakes)

Did you know that Lake Michigan and Lake Erie might not be separate lakes? They are not separated by a stream or river, just by the Straits of MacKinac (see photo below), and they have the same elevation and species. Hydrologically they are one lake, but culturally they have been considered separate. We remember learning about them with the HOMES mnemonic, but perhaps it will need to be changed to HOES or SOME. What do you think?



(PHOTO: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Michigan%E2%80%93Huron)

4. Can you name the 4-corner states, the ones where you can be in all four states at one time, and the 3-corner states?

Answer: Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona are the four-corner states. Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma are the three-corner states.

5. What was Edmund Muskie's middle name?

Answer: Sixtus, Latin for polished. Muskie (1914-1996) was born in Rumford, Maine. He was a first generation American who served as a U.S. Representative, Governor of Maine, a U.S. Senator, and our 58th Secretary of State. He authored and managed the 1963 Clean Air Act and the 1965 Water Quality Act - leading to his nickname of Mr. Clean. It's also a good match for his middle name's meaning.

6. Where is the oldest and largest electric railway museum in the world?

Answer: Seashore Trolley Museum in Kennebunkport, Maine. The National Trust for Historic Preservation lists the museum as a Distinctive Destination. The Museum has been in operation since 1937 and has more than 250 vehicles from almost every major city in the U.S. that had a streetcar system. You can ride the old trolleys (perhaps from where you grew up or have lived), see where and how they are restored, and learn about the history of rail transportation. It's also the destination for one of our Staycations this summer. Check with the OLLI office if you have questions and/or or might be interested in joining us this summer… or head down on your own if you are intrigued.

The question that is making its appearance in the Trivia column for the third time is #5, Edmund Muskie's middle name.