

# COMMUNITY/STATE

## It's OK to experiment with words

### WEEK IN WORDS



**KDM** Jared Griffin

I have to admit that several of us had a good laugh at the KDM headline on Tuesday: "Kodiak man says meth was for human experiments."

I mean, what's worse: admitting to making meth, or admitting to experimenting on humans with meth?

Experiment has had the same meaning in English since the middle of the 14th century: referring to some kind of observing or testing of phenomena. Before that, preceding the Enlightenment, experiment, from the Old French *esperment*, meant a

practical knowledge related to magic.

The Latin root is *experimentum*, meaning trial or test, a noun from the base word *experiri* meaning to test or to try. We also get our word *experience* from the same root, meaning a way of learning by trial. Which makes sense: We experiment in order to gain experience.

Except with *meth*, of course. I'm not sure that's a kind of experience or experiment I would personally enjoy.

Breaking the word down further, we see the prefix *ex-*, meaning out of, and the base word *peritus*, meaning tested.

*Peritus* was developed from the Proto-Indo-European root *per*, which meant to try or to risk. You hear the same root in the word *peril*.

At the heart of experiment and experience is *peril*, a risk-taking that could prove dangerous and hazardous like, say, oh, I don't know, building a meth lab in an auto repair shop, by way of example.

*Meth*, as we all know, is shorthand for *methamphetamine*, a pharmaceutical derivative of *amphetamine*. *Amphetamine* itself is short-

hand, too, for *alphanethyl-phenethylamine*. It's a drug developed first in 1887 (named, at the time, *phenylisopropylamine*), intended to be a heart stimulant. In the 1930s, pharmacists modified it into *amphetamine* as an inhaler (called *Benzedrine*), discovered that it also treated *narcolepsy*, and widened its use among soldiers in WWII to, well, enhance soldiers' performance on the battlefield, even American soldiers.

We thought we were getting closer to our dreams of a real-life Captain America. Then we found out how addicting it is.

The etymology of some of these chemical terms embedded in the long-hand version of *amphetamine* are, to be honest, well beyond my expertise, as they often concern the base structure and particular relationships of certain elements.

But I can talk about *meth*. *Meth* is specifically short for *methyl*, which is also short for *methylene*. It was coined by two French chemists – Jean Baptiste Andre Dumas and Eugene Melchior Peligot – who discovered the chemical after experimenting with wood alco-

hol in 1834. They named it after two Greek words: *methy* and *hyle*.

*Methy* is the ancient Greek word for wine, likely used by the French chemists to represent *methylene's* intoxicating effects. *Methy* was an important word in Europe, as it was the root of *mead*, the fermented honey beverage of medieval lore. The PIE root is *medhu*, meaning sweet drink.

The second half of the word, *hyle*, is the Greek term for wood, at least in this context we presume, referring to the wood alcohol the chemists use to develop *methylene*.

However, in Greek philosophy, *hyle* referred to something much greater than wood: the very stuff of everything physical, the raw material of the universe, the substance of, well, substance. It was Aristotle who applied the analogy of wood to *hyle* to make the concept of universal raw material easier to understand. And this idea became the foundation of the theory of *alchemy*, that, for example, if you could access the raw material of, say, coal, then you could manipulate it and turn it into gold.

We're not there yet, but as long as we have Kodiakans attempting to turn cold medicine into a dangerous psychotic, we'll always be trying to outdo the ancients.

A more positive modern adaptation of ancient traditions is the music genre of *gypsy jazz*, which will be showcased by the Rhythm Future Quartet, a four-piece gypsy jazz band from Boston, this Sunday at the Gerry C. Wilson Auditorium.

*Gypsy* is the English spelling of the Middle English *gypcian*, which is short for *Egyptian*, where the English (erroneously) thought these people came from. No one really knows of *gypsies'* origins. The French word is *bohémien*, (from *Bohemia*); the Spanish is *Flamenco* (from *Flanders*). In fact, *gypsies* call themselves *romany*, a plural adjective form of *rom*, their word for man. Likely, the word comes from the Sanskrit *domba*, meaning male member of a low caste of musicians.

The Rhythm Future Quartet are probably not members of a low caste. But their experimentation with jazz will surely be worth the experience.



Associated Press

The Federal Communications Commission recently approved a request by Australians Richard and Sharon Burns to increase their interest in a number of radio stations, including those that broadcast from this site shown in Juneau.

## Australia pair are first foreigners to own radio stations in the US

By BECKY BOHRER  
Associated Press

JUNEAU (AP) – An Australian couple with roots in Alaska has bought more than two dozen radio stations in three states, marking the first time federal regulators have allowed full foreign ownership of U.S. radio stations.

The Federal Communications Commission recently approved a request by Richard and Sharon Burns through their company Frontier Media to increase their interest in 29 radio stations in Alaska, Texas and Arkansas from 20 percent to 100 percent.

The agency long took what some viewed as a hard line in limiting foreign ownership under a 1930s law that harkened to war-time propaganda fears. But in 2013, it acknowledged a willingness to ease up after broadcasters complained the rules were too restrictive of outside investment.

The Burnses are citizens of Australia but have lived and worked in the U.S. since 2006, on special visas offered for Australians.

A family who owned six of the Alaska stations provided the opportunity that brought the couple to the U.S. The family wanted someone with international experience

to operate the stations and help move the company forward, Richard Burns said. The stations in the Lower 48 were purchased later.

The Burnses' request to acquire full ownership was unopposed. The acquisition includes AM and FM stations and relay stations known as translators that help provide reception.

Richard Burns said he and his wife consider Alaska home and are pursuing U.S. citizenship.

"Our life is here in Juneau, Alaska, every single day," said Burns, who serves on the board of the Juneau Chamber of Commerce and in 2010 was named its citizen of the year.

Sharon Burns co-hosts a morning show on a Juneau country station the couple owns, and does on-air work for two of their other stations in southeast Alaska and one in Texas, her husband said. Richard Burns is the stations' CEO and a host on their Juneau classic hits station.

The federal law restricting foreign ownership dates to the 1930s and initially was seen as a way to thwart the airing of foreign propaganda during wartime, according to the FCC.

It restricts to 25 percent foreign ownership or voting interests in a company that holds a

broadcast license when the commission finds that limit is in the public interest.

In 2013, in response to broadcasters, interest groups and others who considered the commission's application of the law too rigid, the FCC clarified it has the authority to review on a case-by-case basis requests exceeding that threshold, and it is open to doing so.

The commission last year adopted rules for publicly traded companies following a case involving Pandora Media and questions about its level of foreign ownership as it pursued acquisition of a South Dakota radio station.

Then-FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler said the case underscored the need for more clarity for broadcasters and investors in the review process.

It's unclear how many other foreign citizens have a stake in U.S. radio stations. The FCC said it does not keep a comprehensive accounting because stations generally don't have to disclose smaller or nonvoting interest holders.

Lisa Scanlan, deputy chief of the FCC's audio division, said that as part of its public interest analysis, the commission consults with executive branch agencies that

do independent reviews on issues including trade and foreign policy, national security and law enforcement.

Jessica Gonzalez is deputy director and senior counsel for the group Free Press, which has concerns about media consolidation. She said she's not opposed to the Burnses' case. But she said the larger the company, the more skeptical she becomes.

"I'm not fond at all of the idea of giant foreign companies or giant domestic companies buying up a bunch of radio stations," she said. "It's problematic."

She said an owner's nationality doesn't make a difference to her. "It's just a matter of whether or not they are actually going to serve their community," she said.

Richard Burns agreed. He said it's critical for radio station owners to be invested in the communities they serve.

He cited his wife, who does her show from Texas when she's there. Around Christmas last year, Sharon Burns delivered cookies to and spent time with first responders.

"If you're a good radio operator, I don't think it matters if you're foreign or not, as long as you engage in the community and you understand it," he said.

### ABOARD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

an internet connection, or for those who want to complete the semester's coursework at their own pace.

Dr. Reid Brewer, the program's coordinator, said he got the idea for the courses years ago while working with fishermen in Dutch Harbor. A lot of the fishermen were interested in learning more about fisheries and fisheries management.

"I kind of got the idea there that it would be very cool if fishermen could do a degree at sea. They're always transiting to the fishing grounds, or they get stuck in weather, but an iPad seemed like a cool idea to get that information to somebody."

The idea was made possible through a Department of Labor grant, and courses were developed "that had engaging content but also had the rigor of taking a three-credit college course," Brewer said.

The program launched in fall 2015 with one course and has since grown to include six course options. He said he hopes to add a seventh course in the fall 2017 semester.

About 70 students are taking the iPad courses this spring, Brewer said.

The iPad courses can be applied toward an occupational endorsement, a certificate, or an associate degree in fisheries management or salmon enhancement.

Courses were offered in the fall 2016 semester and again in the spring semester that is ongoing. Registration is now open for summer and fall 2017.

"These courses have the working student at the forefront," Ashley Burns, outreach coordinator for UAS Fisheries Technology said. "It's for people who don't have the ability to be in the classroom, who don't have the ability to sit down and log in to an online class at the

same time every week. So, it really offers students that flexibility to be able to advance in their education."

### Fisheries at Kodiak High School

The KHS program – a partnership between the UAS Fisheries Technology program, the At-sea Processors Association and the high school – allows students to take Fisheries of Alaska, a three-credit course exploring the fishing industry and the biology, research and management of Alaska marine life.

Students in the program are also enrolled in *Careers in Fisheries*, a one-credit course that brings in 13 speakers over the course of the semester to discuss their profession with the students. Each speaker represents a different segment of the fishing industry.

"It's a really cool, diverse course that exposes students to not only the diversity of fisheries in the state, but also how they're similar and different in how they're managed and how they're fished. With that information, they could potentially say, 'This is an interesting subject, this is an interesting field to get into,' and that's kind of why we pitched that course," Brewer said.

There are 13 KHS students currently enrolled in the courses.

KHS is the first school to offer the course, but Brewer said he hopes the program will expand to other high schools in the state.

"Being introduced to the inner workings of the fisheries industry in high school prepares students to be better informed members of fishing communities later (in) life, whether or not they decide to pursue a career in the industry," said APA executive director Stephanie Madsen.

*Snoderly can be reached at (907) 512-2624. Follow her on Twitter, @KDMjoann*

