

Island Tweets

La Gomera, located in the Canary Islands, is trying to ensure that its ancient language will live on. About a decade ago, its government mandated that Silbo Gomero, a native language of the island, be a compulsory school subject in all primary schools. Silbo Gomero, or the Gomeran whistle, replaces the Spanish language with whistling. It consists of six sounds: two vowels and four consonants that reportedly make up around 4,000 words.

When cell phones, cars and computers didn't exist, islanders used the whistling language to communicate with each other through the island's deep valleys and steep ravines. The sound is said to travel up to 2 miles. No one is certain of the language's origins, but it is believed to have originated from settlers from Africa, where other records of whistled languages exist.



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Whistle While You Work

Believe it or not, there are some people who use their whistling talent to earn a decent living. While some people have a hard time whistling, these professionals practiced, cultivated and perfected their talent and made a living from performing.

● **Ronnie Ronalde**, a famous whistler/musician/yodeler was at the height of his career during the 1940s and 50s. He performed at Radio City Music Hall, had BBC Radio shows and a weekly TV show titled, "Meet Ronnie Ronalde."

● Perhaps the most famous musician who can include *whistler* on his resume, among other talents, was **Bing Crosby**, who was inducted to the International Whistlers Convention Hall of Fame in 1987.

● In addition to his famous whistling in "The Fishin' Hole" (theme song to *The Andy Griffith Show*), **Earle Hagen's** musical talent included trombone for big bands in the 30s, writing arrange-



Bing Crosby

ments for Frank Sinatra, working at 20th Century Fox and creating many TV themes and scores.

● **Fred Lowery** was a professional whistler who was blind. During his career, he performed at Carnegie Hall and the White House.

"Come on get smart,
tune up and start to
whistle while you work."

From Disney's Snow White
and The Seven Dwarfs

JULIA FREEMAN-WOOLPER

Name That Tune

Whistling sometimes takes the place of lyrics and guitar melodies in many songs. *Rolling Stone* magazine came up with its list of the 15 best whistling songs of all time. We've listed some here, in no particular order.

🎵 "White Christmas" (Bing Crosby, 1942)

🎵 "The Fishin' Hole" (theme to *The Andy Griffith Show*, Earle Hagen and Herbert Spencer, 1960)

🎵 "Dock of the Bay" (Otis Redding, 1968)

🎵 "Jealous" (John Lennon, 1971)

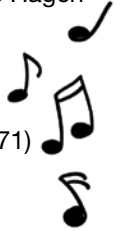
🎵 "Don't Worry, Be Happy" (Bobby McFerrin, 1988)

🎵 "Patience" (Guns N' Roses, 1989)

🎵 "Winds of Change" (Scorpions, 1991)

🎵 "Young Folks" (Peter Bjorn and John, 2006)

🎵 "Home" (Edward Sharpe and The Magnetic Zeroes, 2010)



Congratulations to **Melanie Sanders** of the Panhandle Chapter for her winning caption, which appears below the photo.

November Safety Photo of the Month



And here we have the seldom seen in the wild "scladderffold."

Photo by Rick Wall,
East Texas Chapter



If you have a cartoon, anecdote, joke or interesting safety item you'd like to submit for publication on this page, send your contribution to professional_safety@asse.org. Submissions will not be returned.