



MAKING OUR WAY - A McMahon/Cheyne Podcast Quiz Show (Season 1; Episode 22) - 4/10/24

Today's hosts:

Jan McMahon
Rob McMahon
Deanna Cheyne
Jim Cheyne

[music]

JIM (voice-over)

Jan and Rob, Dee and I got together to play some games - quizzes, trivia, some general knowledge stuff, but most about experiences we've had. Today's episode includes segments on how much we think like the general public in our version of Family Feud, how much we think like our spouses in the Not-So-Newlywed Game, how well we know our way around the planet we've traversed, and how well we know how that planet relates to the cosmos. Plus, in a Cheyne Reaction segment, I will vent some frustration about the conspiracy mania around the recent eclipse. Oh, people. So, let's get started.

[quiz show music]

JIM

Okay, this is Family Feud. Are you ready?

JAN

Ready.

DEE

Yes!

JIM

Here's how this is going to work. This is not like a competition with - this is exactly like a competition. This is a competition. So, I'm going to read a statement. So, you'll write down your answer, and then if that matches what the audience did, I'll tell you how many points that is. *[music ends]* You write down the number of points. We've got a running total of our points, and there may even be bonuses along the way. This will be eight questions long. Dee, are you ready?

DEE

Yes.

JIM

Jan, are you ready to play the Feud?

JAN

I am so ready.

JIM

Rob, are you ready to play the Feud?

ROB

Woo-hoo!

JIM

All right, there we go. This is Family Feud, and my first question is, on the board, name something people might do only once a week. Dee, do you have an answer?

DEE

Mow their lawn.

JIM

Mow their lawn. That is worth 12. Give yourself 12 points. Jan, do you have an answer?

DEE

Church.

JIM

Go to church is worth 15. Give yourself 15 points. How are you writing this down with your wrist as it is? Oh, you're using your laptop.

DEE

I'm doing good, yep.

JIM

Excellent. Rob, something people might do only once a week.

ROB

Laundry.

JIM

Laundry is the number one answer: 27. All right, here we go. Number two. Name something you might see a commercial for during a baseball game. Name something you might see a commercial for during a baseball game. Jan, what do you have?

JAN

I said betting.

JIM

Betting?

JAN

Betting, like gambling.

JIM

Or like sheets? No, nothing there. Rob?

ROB

Beer.

JIM

Beer. Give yourself 4 points.

ROB

4!

DEE

That was mine.

JIM

It is yours, too, so you get 4 points, too.

DEE

Okay.

JIM

Okay? Number three. Other than feet, name something that runs. Other than feet, name something that runs. Ready? Pens are down. Rob.

ROB

Noses.

JIM

Give yourself 8 points. Dee.

DEE

A car.

JIM

A car. Give yourself 24 points. Jan.

JAN

Water.

JIM

Give yourself - that's the number one answer.

DEE

Oh my gosh!

JIM

Give yourself 37 points.

ROB

What!?

JIM

And put an asterisk next to that.

JAN

Asterisk.

JIM

Because there will be bonus points if you match the number 1 answer.

JAN

I love having asterisks. Okay.

JIM

Number four. Name qualities of a bad boss. Not names, qualities of a bad boss.

JAN

Oh, I have to change mine now. Okay.

JIM

Okay, D.

DEE

They think they're always right and they won't accept criticism.

JIM

I'm going to say oblivious and that's going to be 13 points. Jan?

JAN

Arrogant.

JIM

Arrogant. Not one of the answers they gave.

JAN

I'm not surprised.

JIM

Okay. And Rob.

ROB

Micromanage. That's the number 1 answer. 29. Other answers were incompetent, angry, and irresponsible. Name something with teeth. Jan?

JAN

Shark.

JIM

A shark. I'm going to put that as an animal and that's 66 points. Number one answer. Rob?

ROB

I said crocodile.

JIM

66 points. Number one answer with an asterisk. Dee.

DEE

A puppy golden retriever.

JIM

An animal. 66 points. We all did very well with that. Other answers, way less popular, were a comb, a saw, a zipper, and people. Three more to go. Number six, name something that you might eat with crackers. Rob?

ROB

Hummus.

JIM

Hummus is not one of the answers given.

JAN

Zero. Just a big fat zero.

ROB

Who is this audience? Oh, my gosh.

JAN

Well, I...

JIM

The Family Feud audience. Dee.

DEE

Cheese.

JIM

Cheese. 24 points. Jan?

JAN

I said cheese also.

JIM

24 points. The number one answer? Soup. Number seven...

DEE

Oh, I guess so.

JIM

Number seven. Name hot things. Name something that is hot. Dee?

DEE

Fire.

JIM

Fire. 26 points. Number one answer. Jan?

JAN

Coffee.

JIM

Coffee. 24 points. Very good. And Rob?

ROB

The sun.

JIM

The sun. No one put the sun. No.

ROB

Who is this audience?

JAN

I don't know, but they don't eat hummus either.

JIM

And number eight. Final question. Name something you keep in your car. It's actually quite a long list here. But when I thought of it, my answer wasn't there. Name something you keep in your car. Jan?

JAN

Spare tire.

JIM

Spare tire. 15 points. Well done. Rob?

ROB

Sunglasses.

JIM

It says spare clothes or shoes. So I'll give you 5 points for that.

ROB

Okay.

JIM

All right. Dee.

DEE

Napkins.

JIM

Napkin. How close is that to a first aid kit?

DEE

No. It isn't.

JAN

No!

JIM

Okay. The number one answer was money or coins. Followed by food, water, first aid kit, spare tire, map, jumper cables, spare clothes, shoes, a gas can, and a flare. Okay. So now use your phone or something and calculate your answers. And your asterisk, you get 15 points for every asterisk you had.

JAN

Okay.

DEE

Was it car number three? Something that runs?

JAN

No, because that was water.

DEE

Oh, fire, fire. That was the number one answer, wasn't it?

JIM

Listen...

ROB

No.

JIM

...this being a crowded theater, you're not allowed to shout that falsely.

DEE

No, that was the number one answer.

JIM

Yes.

DEE

Yes. I am very competitive.

ROB

I did this three times. I got three different answers.

JIM

Okay, pick the high one.

ROB

The biggest one.

JAN

This is my problem, too.

DEE

See, Rob cheats.

JIM

I don't think I have any math questions on any of the quizzes today.

ROB

Good.

JAN

211.

JIM

211.

ROB

Oh, gosh.

JIM

Slightly higher than Rob's highest. What'd you get?

DEE

199.

JIM

All right. Actually, this works out perfect because the grand prize goes to Jan. You get to sing a duet with Sandy McMahon. And it's - Dobney - and it's going to be Ebony and Ivory.

JAN

I'm ready. I'll call her.

JIM

That's our grand prize. Okay. That was Family Feud. Did anyone get hurt?

JAN

No.

JIM

All right. We're going to go on to the Not-So-Newlywed game.

JAN

Oh!

JIM

All right. This is where we're either going to enjoy ourselves or this could be the end of the broadcast as we know it. All right. You're going to write down what your own response for yourself is, and also what you think your spouse is going to say. So tonight you're going to cook your spouse's favorite meal. What's on the menu?

JAN

So I'm putting my own?

JIM

You put your own that he has to guess, and then you're putting what you think his favorite meal is.

DEE

Pip is trying to chew my pen while I write.

JIM

Okay. Do you have your answers down, Dee?

DEE

Yes.

JIM

So, Dee, you're going to cook my favorite meal tonight. What's on the menu?

DEE

Meatloaf.

JIM

Mom's meatloaf is right. I'm going to cook for you. I'm going to cook - though I've never done it - lobster.

DEE

Yes.

JIM

Okay. That one was easy. Jan?

JAN

Yes. What am I cooking for Rob?

JIM

Jan and Rob are now on. So, Jan, what are you going to cook for Rob?

JAN

Meatloaf.

JIM

Meatloaf.

DEE

Oh, cool.

JIM

Is this Effie Mae's?

JAN

Effie Mae's.

ROB

Mother Effie Mae's.

JIM

Isn't that the best? The recipe - we've got it on the board right in there. And what are you going to make for Jan?

ROB

Mother Effie Mae's meatloaf.

JIM

Made with?

ROB

With crumbles.

JIM

With crumbles.

JAN

Yes. Exactly.

JIM

Okay. So a vegetarian meatloaf. So, Mom's meatloaf got three out of those four. All right. In the old days, you know, you're switching around the channels, right? And a movie comes on, you've seen it a thousand times, but you're still going to pause and watch it. What is that movie that you're going to watch? Rob and Jan. Rob, Jan's going through the TV. She stops because there's a movie on that she's just going to watch, even though she's seen it before. What is it?

ROB

"White Christmas"?

JIM

Is that what you had said?

JAN

No.

JIM

What did you say?

JAN

I said, "When Harry Met Sally."

JIM

"When Harry Met Sally." Okay, Jan, what is Rob going to pause at?

JAN

I said "Silverado."

ROB

I had "White Christmas."

JIM

"White Christmas."

JAN

It's April. What is that?

ROB

I know, but I can't...

JIM

All right.

ROB

Any time I want that.

JAN

Actually, that works. It's true.

JIM

Dee, what am I going to stop and watch?

DEE

"The Godfather."

JIM

That's exactly right. Any of the three, even the third one. What is Dee going to stop at? I put down "Muppets' Christmas Carol."

DEE

Okay, I put down "Christmas Movies."

JIM

I think that passes. I think we win.

ROB

I don't.

JAN

No, no, no, no.

JIM

That's okay. I'm Bob Eubanks.

JAN

"Christmas Movies" is a whole genre.

JIM

That's right. All right. Where was the first trip the two of you took together? Just the two of you. So let's start with Dee.

DEE

"Argentina."

JIM

Yeah.

JAN

She's right, isn't she?

JIM

Yeah, I put "Smokeys." Jan and Rob?

JAN

Okay. Well, what I said was "Mackinac Island," because that's where we went for our first anniversary.

ROB

Oh, oh well.

JAN

Did you say "Rocky Mountain"?

ROB

I said "Disney World." Because we never went to Rocky Mountain on our own that early.

JAN

We did in 1980.

JIM

All right.

ROB

No.

JAN

Yes, we did.

ROB

Yes, we did, because we were going to...

JAN

Yes.

ROB

I quit.

JIM

I'm sorry. Okay. Now, this next one, you get a text from your spouse that reads, "I'll meet you at 2 p.m. at our favorite spot." No more information. Where will you be at 2 o'clock if you are in Rocky Mountain National Park? Dee?

DEE

Hmm?

JIM

That's not really our place. We've been there before, but where would you go if, okay, "I'll meet you at our favorite spot." You get that text from me. Where are you going to go?

DEE

Bear Lake?

JIM

Bear Lake is what I put down.

DEE

Oh, see, I just pulled something out of the sky.

JAN

Your - out of your butt.

JIM

Jan and Rob. Jan.

JAN

I said Bear Lake.

ROB

I said Bear Lake.

JIM

Bear Lake seems to be the place. There are many, many, many places with memories, but Bear Lake seems to be the "if you haven't gotten a picture there, you haven't been to the Rockies."

JAN

Exactly.

JIM

Right?

ROB

It's true.

JIM

All right. How about this one, then? Great Smoky Mountain National Park.

DEE

I know.

JIM

Rob, what'd you pick?

ROB

Cades Cove?

JAN

YES!

JIM

Cades Cove.

JAN

Excellent.

JIM

Good. Where in Cades Cove?

ROB

One of the churches. I can't remember which one.

JIM

The first one?

ROB

Yeah.

JIM

Where we met the guy...

ROB

Yeah.

JIM

...who was a descendant of one of the residents there?

JAN

That's the Methodist Church, I think.

JIM

Methodist. Very good, Jan. Dee, where would we meet?

DEE

The rock where we take our photos.

JIM

The boulder in front of Park Headquarters, which is no good during the summer.

JAN

Hot.

JIM

No. Everything's in full leaf and you can't see anything. It just doesn't make a good picture. But with all the leaves down at Thanksgiving time, it's the spot. All right. We're going to meet at our favorite spot. Two o'clock in Paris, France.

DEE

Oh.

JIM

Jan?

JAN

I said Notre Dame.

JIM

Notre Dame.

ROB

Notre Dame.

JIM

Notre Dame. Dee?

ROB

I thought - I was thinking Eiffel Tower.

DEE

I almost said Notre Dame, but I said Saint-Chapelle.

JIM

Saint-Chapelle is beautiful. My favorite spot is Le Procope. That goes way back. There's a table there where Voltaire would sit.

JAN

Yes.

JIM

Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Rousseau.

DEE

Mm-Hmm.

JIM

This is supposed to be where coffee was introduced to the continent. Not sure that, but they'll claim that. And it's a restaurant.

JAN

Is that the restaurant in "Midnight in Paris"?

DEE

Oh, it might be.

JIM

I don't know. It's in Saint-Germain. It's on the left bank.

JAN

No, but in the movie.

JIM

I know that. I don't know. I don't know. All right. So those are kind of like, okay, that would be fine. You could do that. Now, let's go with emergency. It's a zombie apocalypse. No communication is possible. You're in the same city, but you don't know where your spouse is. So where would you go to find your spouse if you were in Washington, D.C.?

DEE

National Cathedral.

JIM

National Cathedral is what I put down. That's where I would go. Rob?

ROB

American History Museum?

JAN

I said Library of Congress.

DEE

Oh, yeah.

ROB

Oh. I meant the American History section of the Library of Congress.

JIM

All right. Same thing, but now you're in London, England.

DEE

Oh.

ROB

Oh, geez.

JAN

Oh, okay. Well...

DEE

I got to really think.

JIM

That's right nearby where, like, a statue of Nelson might be.

DEE

What?

JIM

Never mind. All right. Rob, where would you go?

ROB

The British Museum.

JIM

British Museum.

JAN

Are you kidding me?

ROB

That's where I would go.

JIM

Jan, where would you go to find Rob?

JAN

I would not go to the British Museum. I would go to Westminster Abbey.

JIM

Westminster. Very good. Very good.

DEE

That's a good answer.

ROB

Yep. I like that one better.

JAN

I know.

JIM

It could have been St. Paul's. It could have been Whitechapel. It could have been any place. Dee, what did you select?

DEE

The London Tower.

JIM

The Tower of London. Right by the bridge. That's a very good - that is excellent. I said Trafalgar Square.

DEE

See, I would have thought you would have said Westminster Abbey after Jan said it, and I said, "yeah, the siblings would do that."

JAN

We would.

JIM

Well, I didn't even think about it. I just picked a spot and went... Okay, one more.

ROB

Well, if you need me, I'll be at the British Museum.

JIM

That's right. Last one, Chicago, Illinois. The reason I'm doing this is because, way back in the day when we would go, like, to Disney World or something, and then your parents, "Okay, go ahead. We'll meet you at a certain spot."

ROB

Yeah.

JIM

Because there's no communication and how are you going to find where your family is. It could be in a mall. You know, what store would you go to? Any place. "Okay, if we get separated, we'll meet here."

ROB

Yeah.

JIM

A good thing to say to your family. So, Chicago, Illinois. Dee. Where would I find Dee?

DEE

Chicago Institute of Art.

JIM

The Art Institute of Chicago. Jan?

JAN

Museum of Science and Industry.

JIM

Science and Industry.

ROB

Yep.

JAN

What did you write? Did you write Field Museum?

JIM

No, I wrote the Art Museum.

JIM

Art Institute.

DEE

So the three of us would be there.

JAN

I said this because of our childhood.

ROB

Yeah.

JAN

That's where we always went.

JIM

The - Is it Erik Larson that wrote "Devil in the White City"?

JAN

Yeah.

JIM

It was about Holmes and the exposition that was there. The Field Museum is one of the buildings that was built, right?

JAN

Yeah.

JIM

All right, so that is...

JAN

Well.

JIM

...the Not-So-Newlywed game. Okay. The word is news. N-E-W-S. That is North, East, West, South. What is the farthest north you've ever been?

JAN

Barrow, Alaska.

ROB

Yeah, Barrow, Alaska.

JIM

That's north of the Arctic Circle, isn't it.

ROB

Yeah.

JIM

That's way up there. You were there when you were in Alaska?

ROB

We were right on the Arctic Ocean.

JAN

1980.

JIM

Yeah. Dee, what's the farthest north we've ever been?

DEE

I would say Alaska. I wouldn't be able to name specifically.

JIM

I don't think we went that far into Alaska to match, I think it's Stockholm, Sweden.

DEE

Oh, yeah. That's right.

JIM

I think that's the farthest north we were. Okay, so Stockholm. What's the farthest east? Now, here's how we're doing it. The prime meridian is in Greenwich.

ROB

Mm-Hmm.

JIM

Okay, so east means to the right of that.

ROB

Okay.

JIM

And all the way around. So it doesn't mean 180 degrees, it means International Date Line. So, closest you've come to the International Date Line going east.

JAN

Um.

ROB

That would be...

JAN

Well, because I was going to say Istanbul, but I'm not, I'm not measuring it right.

ROB

I think Tanzania might be further east.

JIM

You're right, it might be. I was thinking Istanbul for you guys, too. Yes, that would have been Arusha or Mount Kilimanjaro. Good. Dee, what's the farthest east you've been?

DEE

Is it Prague?

JIM

It could be. I think it's more likely to be Budapest, and then you go west to the north, you'll hit Vienna, then you go northwest, you'll hit Prague. So Budapest, I think.

DEE

Okay.

JIM

For me though, it was in Rhodes.

JAN

Yeah.

JIM

Rhodes is just off Turkey, which geologically would make it Asia, but geopolitically it's part of Europe. All right, how about west?

ROB

West.

JIM

And I know your answer for this. What would my answer be?

JAN

Well, I'm not sure. I was going to say the Pribilofs.

ROB

I think so.

JIM

I was going to say that, too.

ROB

Or Hawaii. I don't know which one.

JIM

No. Pribilofs are way over there.

ROB

All right, Pribilofs.

JIM

You're in the 170s plus.

ROB

St. Paul.

JAN

St. Paul in the Pribilofs.

JIM

Or St. George is the other one, too, right?

JAN

Yup.

ROB

Yup.

JIM

And St. Paul is the farthest, the farther west. So for us it would be when we were going in Kauai, and we're going around to the coast, when we're on that boat going around that side of the island, that's as far west as I've ever been.

DEE

So that's farther west than British Columbia?

ROB

The Napali coast.

JIM

Yeah.

DEE

Okay.

JIM

All right, and then that leaves south.

JAN

São Paulo is the farthest south, yeah.

JIM

São Paulo is the farthest south. I think for us it's Buenos Aires.

DEE

That's what I was going to say.

JIM

Yeah. Okay, well that's our trivia for that. Can you name the southernmost national capital city?

ROB

Honolulu.

JAN

What?

JIM

No, national capital city.

ROB

Oh, national capital, sorry.

JIM

Sovereign state, sovereign country. The southernmost national capital city is Wellington, New Zealand.

JAN

Okay.

JIM

This one was a surprise. How about the northernmost national capital city?

ROB

Oslo?

JAN

That's got to be Greenland. Norway.

ROB

Reykjavik.

JAN

No, Greenland.

JIM

It's very close to Greenland, but it's actually Reykjavik.

ROB

Reykjavik.

JIM

Iceland.

JAN

Really?

JIM

Just by a smidgen over the Greenland capital.

JAN

Oh, I see.

JIM

It's a name I cannot pronounce. [Nuuk.]

JAN

Okay.

JIM

The easternmost national capital city by proximity to the [Inter]national Date Line. Got it? Nuku'alofa in Tonga.

JAN

Okay.

JIM

Now, going west. You've been there.

JAN

Really?

JIM

The westernmost national capital is Quito, Ecuador.

JAN

Oh, be darned.

ROB

Really?

JIM

Yeah. Because all the North American national capitals are farther east. And there's nothing else from that - all the other bits of land that are out there are owned by other countries.

ROB

Right.

JAN

Okay.

JIM

So it turns out Quito.

JAN

Thank you.

JIM

There you go. What's the weirdest national capital city you've ever been to?

ROB

Oh.

JAN

Oh.

ROB

That's easy.

JAN

Brasilia.

JIM

I put this in just to say it. Brasilia was the most bizarre city.

ROB

Oh.

JIM

Can you - Rob, describe it. What is that city like?

ROB

It was a city without a heart.

JAN

It was like "The Stepford Wives."

ROB

There were no birds. There were...

JIM

Did we see - was it birds or squirrels? We saw nothing.

ROB

We didn't see anything.

JAN

No, there were no animals.

ROB

Didn't hear anything. It's all laid out in, you know, all the churches are here and all the banks are here and all the, you know.

JIM

It's laid out like an airplane.

ROB

Yeah.

JAN

Yeah.

JIM

Right? And up at the cockpit is where they have the governmental buildings.

ROB

Right.

JIM

Interesting architecture. Very interesting stuff. But, yeah, if you want to do shopping, you had to go to a certain...

ROB

Right.

JIM

...arm of it. And it was designed because, you know, "Where are we going to put our national capital? Is it going to be São Paulo or Rio? Well, that's just coastal. What about the rest of the country?" So it was picked to service those inland, too. But it's an invented city that was just so bizarre.

ROB

Yes.

JAN

You can see the value of a city developing over time...

ROB

Yes.

JAN

...when you go there because it never felt like it had a soul.

ROB

No.

JIM

Right. Right. So I want you to do an educated guess on this one, Okay? This has to do with celestial geography. That actually doesn't make sense. "Geo" means earth. Celestial...

ROB

-ography.

JIM

-ography. Let's shrink the solar system down so that the sun is the size of an orange. Let's put the orange on your kitchen table in Safety Harbor. Mercury would be about 10 feet away. Venus about 19 feet away. Earth would be about 26 feet away. Going on and on. I finally figured it out that if you were to stretch it out as the cry flows...

ROB

Oh!

JIM

As the crow flies - tell me, Rob, do crows fly in a straight line?

ROB

Um, sometimes. Other times they don't.

JIM

Okay. As the crow flies, you go straight. Uranus would be about where that ugly flag is. The guy who has the...

ROB

Yeah.

JIM

...American flag tattered, faded, hanging kind of from one loop.

ROB

At half mast.

JIM

Half mast. Just kind of whatever that statement is. That's about where Uranus would be. Neptune just a little bit out on that road. Pluto would be about where Sun Groves used to be. Here's the question. Where would you put Alpha Centauri? The closest star system, Proxima Centauri, would be the closest star. Where would you put - you know, Star Trek, they're there in an instant. Commercial break, come back, they're at a different star. So the closest star to Earth with that scale. The sun the size of an orange. Pluto is down, just down the street.

ROB

St. Petersburg?

JIM

St. Petersburg. I put it, I put this orange - I was thinking about putting it in the orange bowl in Miami.

ROB

Right.

JIM

And then doing yard lines.

ROB

Yeah.

JIM

But then I used Safety Harbor so that I could say Proxima Centauri would be in Bar Harbor, Maine.

JAN

Oh my gosh.

ROB

Whoa.

JIM

1374 miles away.

ROB

Yeah. That makes sense.

JAN

That's amazing.

JIM

And that is our closest solar neighbor.

JAN

This is why I can't think about these things. It's too much.

JIM

That's how much nothingness there is in space. Which planet is closest to Earth most of the time?

DEE

Venus?

JAN

That's my guess, but I have a feeling it's a trick somehow.

JIM

Not so much a trick, but you understand that they move. So what planet would be the closest to Earth most of the time?

JAN

I'd still go with Venus.

JIM

Go with Venus?

DEE

Mm-Hmm.

JAN

But Rob's going to say something different.

ROB

Mars.

JIM

Mars? The answer is Mercury.

ROB

Mercury.

JAN

Oh, because it does that...

JIM

Mercury, because it's so tight into the sun.

ROB

Yeah.

JIM

And so where everything's orbiting - in fact, and it turns out to be 47% of the time, Mercury is our closest planet neighbor. In fact, Mercury is the closest planet to all the other planets most of those planets' times. I heard that. I couldn't believe it.

JAN

I have heard that before. It somehow didn't come to my mind. Okay.

[music]

JIM (voice-over):

Since we're quizzing each other on celestial objects, I'd like to add one other item. If you're listening to this recording, it means that I am dead... Wait. That's the wrong script. Oh, here we go. If you're listening to this recording, it means you survived the solar eclipse of Monday, April 8th. The Apoc-Eclipse. Now, what do I mean by that?

First, let's establish that eclipses are perfectly natural, regular, well-understood events. Solar eclipses occur every 18 months on average. They're fascinating to watch, but they are not spooky harbingers of doom. They're really quite useful. Total solar eclipses allow us to see the Sun's corona, collect data, and make better predictions about things like geomagnetic storms, which can really mess with our electronics, so it's good to know when and how to prepare for one. And even though we understand solar eclipses - it's kind of basic public school stuff - my social media feed lit up with all sorts of apocalyptic nonsense. Did yours? It occurs whenever something rare or unusual happens. More if the number six is involved.

For instance, remember the eclipse on August 21st, 2017? Did you know that that eclipse was exactly 6 years, 6 months, 6 weeks, 6 days, 6 hours, and 6 minutes before Monday's event? I mean, it isn't, but it sounded good. First of all, turning a month and a half into 6 weeks just to get the number 6 in there is a little, yeah, not honest. Then the time between the two events is actually like 6 years, 7 months, one week, 4 days, 0 hours, and 7 minutes, but all those shiny 6 sure got people's attention.

It was also claimed that the United States has 7 towns named Nineveh, and the path of totality would pass over all 7, plus 1 more Nineveh in Canada. And as we know, 7 and 8 are special biblical numbers, and Nineveh is in the Bible, so there you go. A map could have helped here. There are indeed 7 towns in the U.S. named Nineveh and 1 in Canada, but only 2 of them got a total eclipse, the one in Indiana and the other one in Ohio. The 5 Ninevas and the 1 in Canada got only a partial eclipse, as did most U.S. cities in the contiguous 48 states.

Here's another one. The paths of the two eclipses - 2017 and 2024 - did you know the paths form a cross? And a cross means Jesus, so there you go. Well, sure. Every solar eclipse path that crosses a previous path makes a cross. In fact, every road

intersection or every construction cross beam or every line that crosses another line makes a cross. Crosses are everywhere, if you know where to look. Did you know that cross stitching was invented as a form of penance for wayward nuns in Sicily? I mean, that's not true, but it could have been. Sometimes it isn't the message 2 crossed lines give us, but the meaning we give them.

But wait, this path cross is above Little Egypt, Illinois, and Egypt is in the Bible, so there you go. Yes, that section of Southern Illinois is known as Little Egypt, and some places are named after Egyptian towns, like Thebes or Karnak or Cairo. By the way, people from Illinois, like myself, pronounce it "KAY-row," Illinois, not "Cairo," which might sound funny to outsiders, but at least we know that the "S" in Illinois is silent.

But wait, there's more. Carbondale, Illinois is right in the middle of that "X marks the spot" spot, and Carbondale is named for the element carbon, get it? And a carbon atom has - wait for it - 6 electrons, 6 protons, and 6 neutrons: 666. Yeah, finding 666 everywhere is something of a hobby - really an obsession - for some people. We find patterns and meanings in all sorts of things, and our cleverness in doing so almost always outmatches our ability - or our willingness - to just check the facts. What was it Ralph Hodgins said? Some things have to be believed to be seen.

For instance, Monday's eclipse did indeed cross the path of the 2017 eclipse at Carbondale, Illinois, but no one mentioned that it also crossed the path of the more recent 2023 eclipse at Kerrville, Texas. And did you know that Kerrville was founded on the shingle manufacturing industry? And did you know that I haven't gotten my shingles vaccine yet, which is way too much of a coincidence for me. So I gotta head to the pharmacy. I hope I'm not too late. Gotta go. For now, we are making our way.

Until next time.

[music ends]