

Gender Benders

If the English language were to ascribe a gender to non-living things, as a few foreign tongues do, what would some of the everyday items we use be? A writer named Bill Larson, published in a magazine of the *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, has some suggestions:

- Ziploc bags are male, because they hold everything in, but you can see right through them.
- A tire is male, because it goes bald and it's often over-inflated.
- A hot-air balloon is male, because to get it to go anywhere, you have to light a fire under it, and, of course, there's the hot-air part.
- Sponges are female, because they're soft, squeezable and retain water.
- A web page is female, because it's always getting hit on.
- A subway is male, because it uses the same old lines to pick up people.
- An hourglass is female because, over time, the weight shifts to the bottom.
- A hammer is male, because it hasn't changed much over the last 5,000 years, but it's handy to have around.
- A remote control is female (and you thought it would be male, didn't you?). But consider this: It gives a man pleasure, he'd be lost without it, and while he doesn't always know the right buttons to push, he keeps trying.

Interesting game, isn't it? Maybe you have some of your own. Try them out at a party. There's no telling what wisdom may come to light.

--Beecher Hunter