



Happy National Punctuation Day!

BY GINNY MILLER

Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal

Tupelo, MS

September 24, 2006

TUPELO — Yes, apostrophe fans, today's National Punctuation Day. No, it isn't on your calendar, but it should be.

Jeff Rubin of Pinole, Calif., is the founder of National Punctuation Day. He has a Web site devoted to the proper use of commas and semicolons and such, and sells programs and products promoting the same.

A column in the Sept. 10 Education section of the Daily Journal mentioned Rubin's work, and readers responded with punctuation — and grammar — pet peeves of their own.

"You asked what punctuation drives us crazy," Caroline Pugh wrote in an e-mail that provided a few examples. (Note the correct colon usage.)

Example 1: Today is a nice day, I think I'll go for a walk. (Comma splice: My senior English teacher, God rest her soul, would have written a very large "F" on our paper if we had done this.)

Example 2: Rabbit's for sale (This one makes me so mad I can't even talk about it.)

Example 3: The issue concerning high gas prices are to be taken up tonight at the meeting. (Subject-verb agreement)

Example 4: Eat at our restaurant, where food is at it's finest. (I see this all the time, and it makes me crazy!)

Another gentle reader, former Saltillo Primary School teacher Nancy Nunley, wrote that she was previously unaware of National Punctuation Day. But, "I think that this is a great idea."

Nunley retired in May after teaching 29 years. Her pet peeve is when people confuse MS and Ms. "It really bothers me when someone places a period after the abbreviation for a state," she wrote. "I have seen those that choose to be a Ms. use MS!"

Nunley plans to send Rubin's information to her friends who are still teaching, and Rubin, meanwhile, reports he has several Punctuation Playtime bookings at schools in the San Francisco Bay Area.

"I hope to offer the program on DVD, with all of the support materials, to school districts throughout the country later this year," he wrote the *Daily Journal* in an e-mail, adding thanks for "promoting good writing skills and literacy."