

You Don't Say

"Gesundheit!"

Early German immigrants introduced us to "Gesundheit!" (meaning "Health!") but the expression really became popular around 1910 when many Yiddish-speaking Ashkenazi Jews came to the United States. Practically every culture wishes you good health or God's blessings after you sneeze. Did you ever wonder why?

Some speculate that your heart stops beating—just for a moment—when you sneeze. This is, in fact, not true, but you may experience the sensation of your heart skipping a beat.

Other reasons for wishing someone God's blessings after a sneeze are rooted in superstition. During the Middle Ages, people believed that the soul might be expelled from the body during a sneeze. Or, if you were a bad person, a sneeze might release the evil spirits that you harbored and endanger others.



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Fred Ott, one of Thomas Edison's assistants, sneezed on Jan. 7, 1894, and he is still going through the motions some 115 years later. Prepared for publicity purposes in Edison's Black Maria studio in West Orange, N.J., the "Edison Kinetoscopic Record of a Sneeze" has a runtime of 5 seconds and is our earliest existing copyrighted motion picture.

Curious Kids

Where Learning Is Cool

Does your child need extra help in school but dread the thought of working with yet another teacher? Peer2Peer Tutors might be just what you need. This local company

was the brainchild of Winston Churchill High School graduate Erik Kimel, now 23 and a graduate of New York University.

The idea for the business was born in a calculus class at his Potomac high school. The proverbial light bulb went on over Kimel's head: These students could help their struggling peers. Kimel placed a small ad in a local paper, and his tutoring career was launched.

After leaving for college, Kimel turned to client Ann Connelly to help

manage his long distance business. Together, they grew the business, offering reasonably priced tutoring and paying jobs for area high school students.

Since 2004, more than 800 students have worked for Peer2Peer Tutors. In addition to being financially compensated, tutors build valuable experience for college applications. Eighty-five percent are typically accepted into their top choice university. Each year, 40 to 60 tutors in the D.C. metro area are graduating seniors, and many qualify for college scholarships.

Peer2Peer also supports clients in their transition to college—helping with the college search, connecting clients with former Peer2Peer tutors at prospective colleges, working with clients to compose college application essays, building resumés and improving clients' study skills.

Supporting the tutors are Management Operations Mentors (MOMs). Lynn Gertz and Susan Clarkson are the MOMs for Montgomery County. Gertz is a retired Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) teacher and Clarkson's background is in special education.

Rates for Peer2Peer tutoring run \$35 to \$45 per hour, and all MCPS (and many private school) classes are supported. The company has recently expanded into Howard County, Md.; Fairfax, Va.; Philadelphia, Pa.; and Westchester County, N.Y.

Kimel is a member of the Montgomery County Business Roundtable for Education (MCBRE), making Peer2Peer the only member with a direct link to the students MCBRE serves. Visit www.Peer2Peertutors.com for more information.

