



Best known for his "INVENTION" cartoons which use a string of outlandish tools, people, plants and steps to accomplish everyday simple tasks in the most complicated way, Pulitzer Prize winning cartoonist Rube Goldberg's drawings point out that people are often overwhelmed by over complicating their lives.

Rube Goldberg's "INVENTIONS" continue to inspire the many local and regional RUBE GOLDBERG MACHINE CONTESTS culminating at the "University National Contest" which is held annually at Purdue University. This National Competition, featuring "winners" from local contests at universities and colleges all over the country, garners growing international and domestic network TV, print and other media coverage. High and middle school science classes and clubs throughout the U.S. are now also holding regional and state-wide RUBE GOLDBERG MACHINE CONTESTS. A "National Contest" for high schools is planned for the near future.

Rube's work has been immortalized in every media from a recent U. S. postage stamp to the many RUBE GOLDBERG sites on the Internet; (at last count almost 3,000 "references" to Rube are on the Web). A new book titled: RUBE GOLDBERG: INVENTIONS! was recently published by Simon and Schuster. It joined a collection of Rube's INVENTIONS as a book of postcards in color which has also been very well received. ViaCom's Nickelodeon with Paramount Films has a Rube Goldberg live action feature film in development, as well as a biographical documentary film for television.

During the past year Rube Goldberg has been part of shows presented at the Smithsonian Museum, the Williams College Museum of Art, and the new Tang Museum of Art at Skidmore College. Plans are in the design stage for an interactive exhibit that will tour Children's Museums and Science Centers throughout North America over a three-year period. Rube Goldberg fans will also see more of Rube in the national with stories about, and cartoons by Rube in many publications with numerous and regular 'mentions' in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Time Magazine, Newsweek, USA TODAY, Scientific American, etc. They all continue to talk about, and laugh with the wonderful drawings and "INVENTIONS" of RUBE GOLDBERG.

Rube Goldberg's "INVENTIONS" have become such a part of the English language that just their mention brings instant recognition, a laugh, and an image of the most convoluted way to do something simple. Rube a graduate engineer from the University of California at Berkeley, uses his engineering, story-telling, and drawing skills to make sure that the "INVENTIONS" work, even though they might need very patient and dedicated people, animals and plants to accomplish the inventor's goal. The "INVENTIONS" are always very funny, and do make you laugh as you learn a thing or two about how easy it is to make simple, everyday tasks "complicated".

BIOGRAPHY

Rube Goldberg (1883-1970) was a Pulitzer Prize winning cartoonist, sculptor, and author. Reuben Lucius Goldberg (Rube Goldberg) was born in San Francisco. His father, a practical man, insisted he go to college to become an engineer. After graduating from University of California at Berkeley, Rube went to work as an engineer with the City of San Francisco Water and Sewers Department. He continued drawing, and after six months convinced his father that he had to work as an artist. He soon got a job as an office boy in the sports department of a San Francisco newspaper. He kept submitting drawings and cartoons to his editor, until he was published. An outstanding success, he moved from San Francisco to New York drawing daily cartoons for the Evening Mail. A founding member of the National Cartoonist Society, a political cartoonist and a Pulitzer Prize winner, Rube was a beloved national figure as well as an often-quoted radio and television personality during his sixty-year professional career.



Through his 'INVENTIONS', Rube Goldberg showed difficult ways to achieve easy results. His cartoons were, (as he said), symbols of man's capacity for exerting maximum effort to accomplish minimal results. Rube believed that there were two ways to do things: the simple way and the hard way, and that a surprisingly number of people preferred doing things the hard way. Rube Goldberg's work will endure because

he gave priority to simple human needs and treasured basic human values. He was sometimes skeptical about technology, which contributed to making his own mechanical inventions primitive and full of human, plant and animal parts. While most machines work to make difficult tasks simple, his inventions made simple tasks amazingly complex. Dozens of arms, wheels, gears, handles, cups, and rods were put in motion by balls, canary cages, pails, boots, bathtubs, paddles, and even live animals for simple tasks like squeezing an orange for juice or closing a window in case it should start to rain before one gets home.

Rube's drawings depict absurdly-connected machines functioning in extremely complex and roundabout ways to produce a simple end result; because of this RUBE GOLDBERG has become associated with any convoluted system of achieving a basic task. Rube's inventions are a unique commentary on life's complexities. They provide a humorous diversion into the absurd that lampoons the wonders of technology. Rube's hilarious send-ups of man's ingenuity strike a deep and lasting chord with today's audience through caught in a high-tech revolution are still seeking simplicity. Hardly a day goes by without The New York Times, National Public Radio, The Wall Street Journal or some other major media invoking the name Rube Goldberg to describe a wildly complex program, system or set of rules such as our "Rube Goldberg-like tax system".

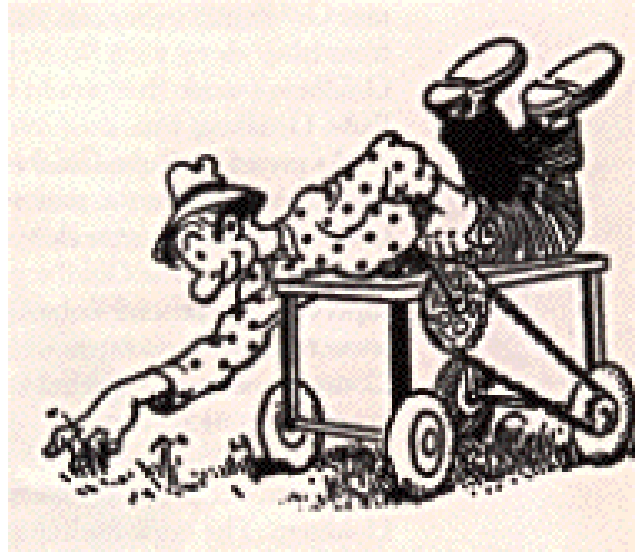


The annual National Rube Goldberg Machine Contest at Purdue University as well as the increasing number of state-wide high school contests, which are covered widely by the national media, brings Rube's comic inventions to life for millions of fans. The work of Rube Goldberg continues to connect with both an adult audience well versed in the promise and pitfalls of modern technology (can anyone over 40 program their VCR?) as well as younger fans intrigued by the creativity and possibility of invention.

RUBE GOLDBERG MACHINE CONTEST

The 2002 Rube Goldberg Machine Contest National Challenge is to select, raise, and wave a national flag...in twenty or more steps! The Rube Goldberg Machine Contest brings the ideas of Pulitzer Prize-winning artist Rube Goldberg's "Invention" cartoons to life. Named after, and inspired by the cartoonist Reuben Lucius Goldberg, this Olympics of Complexity is designed to pull students away from conventional problem-solving and push them into the endless chaos of imagination and intuitive thought. To be specific, groups are given an elementary challenge: something as simple as peeling an apple or, sharpening a pencil or putting toothpaste on a toothbrush. But instead of just "solving" the problem, students have to make the solution as complicated and as convoluted as possible. In fact, the more steps - there's a minimum of twenty - the better the Rube Goldberg Machine. And what a machine! An assemblage of ordinary objects, mechanical gadgets and the oddest odds and ends are linked together mechanically to somehow get to the desired goal.

Rube Goldberg drew his "Inventions" as contraptions that satirized the new technology and gadgets of the day. His drawings, using simple machines and household items already in use, were incredibly complex and wacky, but somehow (perhaps it was because Rube was a graduate engineer) the "Inventions" always had an ingenious, logical progression as they worked to finish their task. The annual National Rube Goldberg Machine Contest held at Purdue University in Indiana is organized by the Phi Chapter of Theta Tau, the National Student Engineering Organization, who host ten to twelve college and university teams from across the US. Winners of the high school statewide and regional contests are also invited to run their invention machines at the National.



Recent past challenges have been:

- 1987 Put Toothpaste on a Toothbrush
- 1988 Adhere a Stamp to a Letter
- 1989 Sharpen a Pencil
- 1990 Put the Lid on a Ball Jar
- 1991 Toast a Slice of Bread
- 1992 Unlock a Combination Padlock
- 1993 Screw a Light Bulb into a Socket
- 1994 Make a Cup of Coffee
- 1995 Turn on a Radio
- 1996 Put Coins in a Bank
- 1997 Insert, and Then Play a CD Disk
- 1998 To Shut Off An Alarm Clock
- 1999 To Set a Golf Tee and Tee Up a Golf Ball
- 2000 To Fill and Seal a Time Capsule with 20th Century Inventions
- 2001 To Select, Clean and Peel an Apple

