



CLASSIFIEDS | HOMES | JOBS | AUTOS | APARTMENTS

# Arizona Daily Star

102 degrees F

FRONT PAGE | TUCSON | OPINION | BUSINESS | SPORTS | ACCENT | CALIENTE

Tucson, Arizona Sunday, 10 August 2003



- ▶ CALENDAR
- ▶ WEATHER
- ▶ MEMPHIS
- ▶ NORTHWEST
- ▶ COMICS
- ▶ FUNERAL NOTICES
- ▶ NEWSLINKS

SEARCH



- LAST 7 DAYS OF THE STAR
- STAR ARCHIVE
- BIG DEAL CLASSIFIEDS

Google SEARCH



MONDAY

SATURDAY

- CONTACT
- SUBSCRIBE

## Trolley: noun - see also 'Tucson'

By Rhonda Bodfield  
ARIZONA DAILY STAR

New Orleans had a streetcar named Desire.

St. Louis had Judy Garland singing about clanging trolleys and dingling bells.

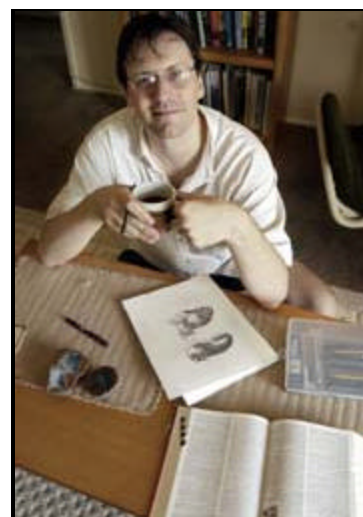
San Francisco is better known for cable cars, but has long had a bustling trolley system.

But it's Tucson, with its dinky mile of line and part-time runs, that has one of its trolley cars immortalized in one of the most widely consulted books in the land: Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition.

It's right there in a black-and-white sketch next to the definition of streetcar: "A vehicle on rails used primarily for transporting passengers and typically operating on city streets."

OK. It doesn't actually *say* Tucson anywhere on the illustration.

But artist Jeff Middleton, who did the 230 new illustrations for the updated edition, couldn't help himself from scratching out a copy when he happened



**Jim Davis** / Staff  
*Jeff Middleton* did the 230 drawings for the dictionary's new edition.

### Hop aboard

- The trolley runs down Fourth Avenue to the UA every Friday from 6 p.m. until 10 p.m., Saturday from noon to midnight and Sunday from noon to 6 p.m.

- Friday and Saturday, fares are \$1 for a one-way trip for adults and 50 cents for children, who are often encouraged to ring the

upon the Tucson trolley while visiting relatives here in the spring of 2002.

Middleton, who lived in Tucson while getting his graduate degree in library sciences at the University of Arizona, said his thoughts were often in Arizona, even during the two years he worked on the dictionary project in Massachusetts.

bell. On Sundays, the cost is 25 cents.

• For more information, go to [www.oldpueblotrolley.org](http://www.oldpueblotrolley.org) or call 792-1802.

Here, Middleton also found the model for devil's claw, otherwise known as a plant species in the Southwestern United States and Mexico "that has edible pods yielding a black sewing material used in basket making." He also slipped in "peccary" - more commonly known here as javelina - and made sure that sketches of roadrunners, coyotes and prickly pear made the cut as well.

Tall and soft-spoken, Middleton is clearly the guy who did the drawings. You can tell by the chaise longue in his apartment: It's the exact same one in the dictionary.

Middleton said the streetcar was particularly intriguing because of its connections to Tucson and Japan, where Middleton went to school. He now decorates his apartment with Japanese screens and lanterns.

### **"I think that's fantastic"**

The old Tucson trolleys, which ran from 1906 until 1930, were turned into chicken coops or destroyed, so we've adopted ours. The one that's in Merriam-Webster - changed ever so slightly but identifiable by the curved top - served Osaka and Kyoto before being snapped up by Old Pueblo Trolley in 1992.

"Wow, we're famous," said Al-Amawi, who owns Salt Crystal Palace, 521 N. Fourth Ave., where the vintage trolleys pass every weekend. "I think that's fantastic. People are always excited when they see the trolley, and they always want to go on it. It's a kick."

"Yep, it looks like the one we've got out here," said Martín Fontes, who serves up tacos and tostadas from his Fourth Avenue restaurant, Martín's Comida Casera. "That's great. I'd like to see Tucson get more national attention."

Richard Guthrie, president of Old Pueblo Trolley, said he was flattered that the artist picked Tucson for the rendering. But he's not sure if he'll rush out to get the new dictionary. He just replaced his 1951 version, which he bought as a college freshman, a few years ago.

Merriam-Webster's makes some editing changes every year but does large overhauls about every 12. The last update was in 1993.

The new version added 10,000 words to catch up with current lingo -

including "Frankenfood" for genetically engineered food; the Yiddish interjection "oy" to express exasperation; and "Goth" to describe those young people in dark clothing with dramatic makeup and dyed black hair.

Even without the new dictionary, you may see more of the streetcars. The light-rail transportation plan going to voters in November would set aside 6 percent of the proceeds from increased sales and construction taxes to help fund the trolley expansion into the Rio Nuevo Downtown redevelopment district.

Middleton, 38, moved back to Tucson a week and a half ago, working again in his field of choice, library sciences, at Central Arizona College in Coolidge. He's doing some sketching on the side, working on becoming a cartoonist. But he's glad to be back in a place with a slower pace and where tailgating isn't quite the art that it is back East.

"When I first came here, I thought it was brown and dusty. There was no water, no bay, no ocean," he said. "When I was in Massachusetts, maybe it was nostalgia, but I kept remembering the pink clouds and blue sky and palm trees and saguaros.

"You can't get it out of your blood."

*\* Contact reporter Rhonda Bodfield at 807-7789 or at [rhondab@azstarnet.com](mailto:rhondab@azstarnet.com).*



Find anything and everything on StarNet by visiting our site map:  
[www.azstarnet.com/sitemap](http://www.azstarnet.com/sitemap)

Subscribe to the [StarNet Newsletter](#) to receive news bulletins and an e-mail each weekday with links to the top new content on StarNet.

All content copyright © 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003 AzStarNet, Arizona Daily Star and its wire services and suppliers and may not be republished without permission. All rights reserved. Any copying, redistribution, or retransmission of any of the contents of this service without the expressed written consent of Arizona Daily Star or AzStarNet is prohibited.

[CALENDAR](#) | [Front Page](#) | [Tucson](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Business](#) | [Sports](#) | [Accent](#) | [Entertainment](#)  
[CALENDAR](#) | [WEATHER](#) | [NEIGHBORS](#) | [NEWSLINKS](#)