Southern exposure: Dear Smiley: Only in the South! Upon awakening on a cold December morning in southwest Mississippi, 2-year-old Madeline Griffin was astonished to see snow falling and a lawn covered in white.

Having never seen this before, she immediately went into the bedroom of her parents, John and Kelly Griffin.

She exclaimed to her mom, “Get up, Mommy, it’s raining grits!”

Bud and Carroll Glasgow
(Grandparents)
Amita

An earthy celebration: Dear Smiley: I heartily recommend to your unique way we brought in the new year: plowing the earth for the spring planting.

We call it “Midnight in the Garden of Gourd and Weevil.”

John Engelsman
Baker

Sandy homesick blues: Dear Smiley: My wife and I really enjoy our connection to the homeland with your web site on the Internet. It is truly a breath of humid air in the middle of the desert.

You know, Smiley, outside of Karl Malone, there just aren’t too many people out here who understand our Southern folk.

First of all, I raised a few eyebrows here at work by calling up “The Advocate.com” on the of computer.

After I observed some rather shocked faces, I quickly remarked, “NO... it’s not THAT Advocate.”

Then a group in our promotions department at work gathered around the screen, and noticed The Advocate OnLine logo. They asked, “What’s that LOBSTER there for?”

PLEEEZE! Give me strength, and send gumbo!

Cecil and Jill Carville
Sandy, Utah

The Kiwi solution: Dear Smiley: Regarding the practice of putting Kitchen Bouquet on a piece of furniture to cover a scratch, I can suggest a much better way, and with no taste for a pet to scratch it again.

Tell the man to cover the scratch with brown paste shoe polish.

I learned this trick many years ago from a Hays Town (the noted architect).

Many of the picture frames he has in his own home have been shoe-polished and hand-rubbed to a glowing golden patina which cannot be obtained without the rubbing, which he has done himself.

Your man should try it.

Richard McDowell
Baton Rouge

A well-trained youth: Dear Smiley: During Thanksgiving, my 10-year-old son, Paul, and I rode Amtrak from Hammond to Fargo, N.D., for two main purposes:

1. So Paul could play in the snows.
2. For me to visit my 50th state.

The round trip was more than 3,000 miles, and we were on the train for more than 60 hours.

We had one layover in Chicago for about three hours each way, and guess what my son wanted to do during this rest period?

We had to ride the Metro, which goes around the Loop in downtown Chicago.

When I asked Paul why he didn’t want to ride another train after a 17-hour train ride, his reply was, “Well, Amtrak is diesel powered and the Loop train is electric powered.”

Leslie Tassin
Baton Rouge

...and Kool-Aid raises funds for indigent menthol cigarette smokers: Dear Smiley: A cousin and a Gator fan down in Tampa sent me this...

The next time anyone who was as confused...