

MY TWO CENTS

Stupidity isn't a crime - don't abuse the privilege

Remember a few weeks ago when I said that if you do something stupid there is almost always a witness? At the risk of being redundant, my family is an endless source of faux pas. I may not always witness the act, but when I hear about it I am more than willing to share it with my readers. After all, laughter is good for what ails you.



Nikki Thompson-Arko
Special to The Chronicle-News

In all fairness, I will start with me. The last time I went to town I decided to clean up a bit. I put on my best skirt, sweater and dressy flip-flops. I decided to try something different with my hair. But the hairspray wasn't holding. I shook it and tried again, shook it again and tried it again. In frustration I searched for an expiration date. It wasn't outdated...it was...bird molting spray.

Due to my recent diagnosis I

have been working hard to change my lifestyle. My positive progress has impacted my wardrobe. My mother refers to my long colorful skirts as my "hippie skirts." Most have ties in the waistband but the one I was wearing the other day had an elastic waistband that had become much too loose. The skirt dropped onto my hips when I reached for the door-knob. When I stepped up into the house I stepped on the front of my skirt, which immediately pulled it down, around my ankles. I thought the kids were going to fall to the floor laughing. Thank goodness it happened here and not in public!

I knit - a lot. I also sew. I am terrible about holding my supplies such as the straight pins and knit markers in my mouth. For some reason I can remember that the pins are there. But I can't count the number of times that I have forgotten that the tiny circular knitting mark-

ers were still in my mouth. After swallowing most of them I decided to buy larger ones. It should have made a difference - but it didn't!

My dad was always very calculating and meticulous his whole life. So it has been quite funny that this isn't the case later in his life. By the looks of some of the trucks around town, forgetting to put the tailgate down when backing up to a gooseneck trailer is more common than one would think. My brother, Robert, was neither amused nor comforted. I'm not sure why? I guess it may have been because it was Robert's truck that Dad was driving when he folded the tailgate in half.

Dad has also been teased for years for sawing his sawhorses in half and for pulling the cord out of his drill by pulling it along the roof after hounding us for years about pulling anything by the cord. He spliced

the cord and duct taped it to the handle of his drill. When Dad put the roof over my front porch he brought his trusty drill. Dad started hollering for us to plug the extension cord back in because his drill wasn't working. Not only had the cord pulled out again, it was shorting out and blew the breakers for the whole house. It took us a minute to figure it out but we had a good laugh about it when we discovered the problem.

I doubt that Robert will ever tease Dad about his cutting his sawhorses in pieces again. Robert informed Dad that he would be over after church to use the welder. Dad asked why and Robert grinned and said that he had been cutting boards on his wheelbarrow. He said he heard a shrill noise and assumed that he hit a nail and continued to cut. It wasn't a nail; it was the wheelbarrow. All Robert could say is that it wasn't really his fault -- it should have thrown more sparks.

Your feedback is always welcome at nikkiarko@yahoo.com.

Options for care during senior years

Trinidad's Legacy administrator talks on subject at Chamber lunch

By MIKE GARRETT
The Chronicle-News

Signs, symptoms and what to look for as people enter their senior years and how to prepare those seniors for their later years had a captive Trinidad & Las Animas County Chamber of Commerce luncheon audience for The Legacy at Trinidad administrator and speaker Eliza Ingoldby recently in TSJC's Pioneer Room.

Some signs of aging and needing extra care are obvious and some are subtler, according to Ingoldby, administrator of Trinidad's newest and only upscale assisted living facility.

The Legacy at Trinidad is located at the southern end of Santa Fe Trail Drive.

Ingoldby, who spent some 10 years taking care of her own parents in their later years and has been in the geriatrics field many years in preparation for her current position. She discussed 14 signs and symptoms for care givers and children to look for in their aging patients and parents.

Those signs include: loss of memory (a check of the room found most people raising their hands on that one), loss of the senses, inability to cognitively make sound decisions, frailty and generalized weakness, loss of weight and no appetite, inability to manage medications, decreased lung capacity and an increased need for oxygen, loss of balance and or decreased reflexes and mobility, loss of urinary-bowel control, inability to drive and be safe in general public situations, decreased interest in social activities, inability to perform activities of daily living, increased signs of disease like high blood pressure and diabetes, and emotional distresses or increased depression due to the loss of above signs.

Ingoldby then discussed alternative living choices for a failing senior population, costs, assessing and selling assets and Medicaid/Medicare eligibility.

"Inability to manage medications is a big one. This is what I have a lot of people come to my facility for," she said. "They're just not eating, they don't remember how to take their medications correctly and they're starting to get frail and weak."

"The biggest factor I hear from families after we start to help manage their seniors lives are, 'Oh, my God, I can't believe the differences in them. Just simply getting food in their bodies, giving them their medications correctly and getting liquids in them and getting them on a regular schedule is the most amazing transition.'"

Another big eye opener, she said, is the inability to drive and be safe in general public situations. "I have more people who still insist they can drive."

Failing seniors have alternative living choices. Financial obligations are a first key consideration, she said, noting that seniors trying to make that transition into assisted care first need to call the Department of Human Services office for details.

"Some families wait too long because there really is a time line in which you really need to

"I have several people in my facility who are getting a free ride because they have long-term care insurance."

Eliza Ingoldby
administrator at
The Legacy

prepare a senior for those later years. For instance, if you want to try to sell a house and get that asset out of a parent's name and deed it over to the children, you need to do that early," Ingoldby said. "It's so sad when I have a lot of families come into my facility and they can't afford to pay for the facility and then can't afford to pay for anything else. But they have this huge asset house they're waiting to try and sell. Then the transition of getting a person help just doesn't happen."

Too many people today still don't have a retirement plan or long-term care insurance, she added. "I have several people in my facility who are getting a free ride because they have long-term care insurance."

Seniors and their families also have to know which assisted living facilities accept Medicare and Medicaid. The Legacy accepts Medicaid but eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis, she said. "Regulations and standards really depend on a person's situation. Homes can become exempt from the application and families can be penalized if you try to get that house under the application. You have to be very careful as to what you claim as an asset."

Ingoldby pointed out that Medicaid asks applicants to dwindle all of their assets down to \$2,000 just to qualify for the application process.

She said a lot of people still don't realize how expensive long-term care costs are. Keeping a frail elderly person in their own home 24-7 under the supervision of a caregiver costs around \$10 an hour or \$7,275 a month. Assisted living facilities' minimal charges can run \$2,000 to \$6,000 a month. "We've had people come down here from Denver and their minimum rate is \$6,000. It just depends on the home. Some accept Medicaid and some accept Medicare, some accept insurance and

some don't."

Nursing homes with a rehab center like the one in Raton charge \$5,500 a month for a semi-private room, Ingoldby said. Rehab centers may be able to rehab a patient to the point where they can eventually return home. Other homes with lock-in units that specialize in Alzheimer's and dementia patients can be more expensive. Eligibility-rated veterans homes like the one in Walsenburg run from \$2,500 to \$4,200 a month, she also noted.

Caregivers and children need to be able to recognize the life stages their loved ones are starting to go through and begin to prepare them accordingly, she said.

Fall Festival draws great weather & crowd

By TIM KELLER
The Chronicle-News

What a difference a day makes. Where last year's inaugural event was held on a cold windy day in late October, Saturday's Second Annual Des Moines Street Fair drew perfect fall weather and appreciative crowds of locals and travelers to the open field between Studio C and Jones Trading Post on the town's main drag.

Last year's event moved into the shelter of the Des Moines Village Hall. Saturday, someone could have done well with a sun-block concession as many people milled outside in the bright sun for hours, drawn by many booths under a big-top tent and other booths and events scattered around the large grass field.

While many travelers between Texas and Colorado stopped when they saw all the activity, two couples traveled long distances just to enjoy the week-end of activities known loosely as the Volcano Triangle Fall Festival, including a Mandala Center concert, Folsom spaghetti feed, and the Capulin Volcano Run half marathon.

Dee and Ray Hyde-Begany drove up from Truth or Consequences for the weekend, beginning their tour of events at the Des Moines Street Fair. Larry Matlock and Susan Nelson drove in from Española. Both couples learned of the weekend festivities through The Mandala Center newsletter, and both stayed at The Mandala Center. Matlock said, "This is my first time east of Raton." Smiling, he continued, "I didn't know there was anything east of Raton!"

The Des Moines Street Fair included a petting zoo provided by Kelly and Sunny Hill of Folsom; a karaoke stage that remained busy and loud all day, provided by Jones Trading Post; fresh buffalo chili and other products from Spahn & Friends Buffalo of Trinchera, and a display from nearby Capulin Volcano National Monument, manned by Kim Struthers and a new ranger, Raton's Dorothy Best.



Mother-daughter team Kelly and Sunny Hill were one of the best karaoke acts of Saturday's Des Moines Street Fair.

Photo by Tim Keller



A goat stands watch over the Des Moines Street Fair Saturday. The petting zoo rivaled the Karaoke stage for most popular attraction.

Photo by Tim Keller

ON THIS DAY IN TRINIDAD

By COSETTE HENRITZE
The Chronicle-News

50 years ago - 1959

DeMolay Mothers Club met at the Masonic Temple Monday evening for the regular meeting, which opened with the Mother's Prayer being repeated in unison.

President Mary Dell Dickinson presided over the short business meeting. A "thank you" was voiced to all those who helped make the recent rummage sale a success. Plans for the coming DeMolay installation were discussed.

The nomination committee gave a report on the following officers: president, Ida Sue Foster; vice president, Alice Choate; secretary, Claire Hawton; treasurer, Madeline Bickerton; chaplain Helen Hibbs; publicity, Antoinette Dickinson; cards and flowers chairman, Dorothy Armstrong; sergeant-at-arms, Leona Clifford.

The meeting closed with the Mother's Creed and during the social hour refreshments were served by hostesses Dorothy Hughes and Antoinette Dickinson.

75 years ago - 1934

Hard work, perseverance, and devotion to a widowed mother have brought reward to Joseph S. Cardinale of Valdez, who, by persistent effort as breadwinner of the family, has

equipped himself to enter the International Y.M.C.A. college at Springfield, Mass.

When Joe Cardinale was six years old his father was killed in a mine explosion at Primero, leaving a family consisting of the mother and six children, five girls and Joe, the only boy. The family was left without means, and the mother was given the job of janitor at the C.F. and I. Co. Y.M.C.A. building, and Joe helped help his mother then.

When Joe was the years old he took over the job of janitor and began to be self-supporting, the breadwinner of the family. He went to school, was a good student, and graduated from the Primero high school in 1928, then becoming assistant to the Y.M.C.A. secretary at Valdez.

During high school, Joe not only was a good student but was also an athlete, playing football and baseball and he won honors performing with the track team. He had many friends and was popular with the teachers because of his willingness to help out whenever needed.

It has long been known that Joe's ambition was to go to college. This month his hopes were realized. The college to which Cardinale is going is situated midway between New York and Boston. Springfield "Y" college is the outstanding school in America that specializes in physical and health education. More than twenty countries are represented in the stu-

dent body. The freshmen class this year numbers 180.

Joe's friends and employer gave him a send off party and presented him with a fine traveling bag and best wishes for success.

100 years ago - 1909

A. Newman, the panoramic photographer, returned home last evening with the handsomest and most valuable picture that he has taken in many years, the scene of the opening of the Gunnison tunnel at the psychological moment when the water flowed into the opening of the tunnel and out to the Uncompahgre valley.

Mr. Newman sent his picture all over the country and it will be given world-wide publication. He had a chance of getting the best picture of the year of President Taft in Pueblo but an obstreperous policeman grabbed his camera as it was revolving in front of the stand where the president was posing and threw it over the fence, in spite of the fact that Newman had been asked by the fair association to take the picture, which was to have been a famous advertising picture.

The policeman was laboring under the delusion that he was doing something really beneficial to the fair people and the president, but he spoiled one of the best films that the revolving camera has ever taken.

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