

Remembering how technology used to be

Today's kids have the "Smartest" telephones of all time. No debate there. And I invite them to take a trip with me back 60 or 70 years to get some kind of feel for this thing we cherish so openly.

When I was growing up our telephones were thought to be as far advanced as they could ever get. I was born in November of 1934 and probably became aware of telephones when I was around five or six years of age.

Believe it or not, but I remember telephones that allowed you to listen to other people's conversations. Granted, it wasn't the thing to do but the word "temptation" pretty much won out. If they were naming telephones back then, like they do these days, those probably would have been called something like the "Informer." You knew every bit of gossip along your party line.

People with these telephones were assigned rings. Your phone might have three rings if the call was for you, four if it was for the neighbor north, or two if it was for the neighbor south. Etc. When the phone rang in our uncle and aunt's farm home (Ambrose and Adelia Brungardt) we would quickly turn around to watch whoever answered it to see if they were listening in or taking a call for them. At times we were given the phone to briefly listen to the conversation on the other end. Wow, that was always a big deal! The phone consisted of a large wooden box, with two bells on the front along with a protruding thing to speak into. The receiver was on the left and on the right was a crank to get the operator's attention. You needed to do that every time you wanted to make a call.

We didn't have one of those "informer" in our house in town. We had a different kind of telephone. When you took the receiver off the hook a voice would say, "Number please." You would give the operator the number you wanted to call and she did the rest. I remember yet today that my Dad's work number was 262 and our home number was 986.

Just when we thought the telephone company could offer nothing more, low and behold they came up with the dial telephone. Yes, a DIAL telephone. You didn't need an operator anymore, all you did was take the receiver off the hook, listen for a sound, then take your finger and dial the number you wanted. They won't be able to top that....we thought.

Well, fast forward. Today's telephones do too much. Seemingly too much talking just to be talking. And they give you news. They provide weather forecasts. You can exchange pictures with family or friends. Play games. Watch TV. And more. To an older person like me, I just look and shake my head in disbelief. But that's okay I guess, because older people are supposed to exercise and shaking one's head over these advanced technologies would be one form. See, there's a health benefit built in!

The remarkable thing about today's telephone is that just about everybody has one and they take it every where they go, kind of like Mary's little lamb. And no matter the age, it seems there's a phone involved. They tell me that the first word new babies now say is, "taafone." We've gotta' thank Alexander Graham Bell for the phone and also Graham Crackers.

With today's phones, you determine what kind of available sound or sounds you want to draw attention from a caller. Mine is called "Newage Tone." It's a snappy little thing, grabs my attention, pronto!

Ooops, gotta' go! My pants pocket is vibrating (someone is calling). Yes, you can have your phone do all sorts of crazy stuff in your pocket.

End of history lesson on one of our most popular items.

Here are a few things I thought about while relaxing in the recliner with a cup of hot coffee the other morning:

1. Where does President Obama sneak to when he wants to smoke?
2. You can't escape seeing pictures of Sarah Palin. She's all over the place. But the place I hope I never see her picture is at the post office!
3. Is it just me or have you noticed some awfully loud television commercials? I wonder where the Federal Communications Commission is. If I recall correctly, the FCC established a rule (or whatever it is they establish) a few years back that said commercials can be no louder than the sound coming from a regular program. Helloooooo, FCC!
4. Keith Olbermann has called it quits at MSNBC. Thank goodness. I thought his "Countdown" show had become sarcastically hateful the past couple of years. But don't worry about Keith, he was under a four-year \$30 million contract. He isn't going to starve!
5. Mitt Romney, Ron Paul and Tim Pawlenty were the top three vote getters (in that order) in a straw poll taken at the recent New Hampshire Republican Party statewide gathering. Sarah Palin was tied with two others in fourth place.

I still bet when the smokes clears, Romney will be the party's presidential nominee in 2012. I feel it in my bones.

I am going to begin, in my next column, using some of your comments as they apply to the stuff (oh, how I love that word) I write. If it's OK for me to use your name and city, please let me know; if you'd rather I just use your initials with no city name, let me know. I'm getting some real interesting stuff and would like to share it with all of you. Join the responders. Thanks in advance. And for benefit of my new readers, my e-mail is <mailto:milehitom@hotmail.com>milehitom@hotmail.com

One of my grandsons asked me the other evening how old I was. I told him I really didn't know. He told me to look in my underwear. "Underwear?" I quizzed. "Yes grandpa," he said, "mine says I'm 4 to 6."

Have a good evening!

Stop
Look
Listen
Tom Dreiling



Getting all hyped up for the big game

Here's something that may have escaped your attention (if you live under a rock): It's Super Bowl weekend!!!

The Pittsburgh Steelers versus the Green Bay Packers!

I'm plenty excited because here are my current favorite teams: the Steelers, the Packers, always the Chiefs, the Chargers, the Patriots, the Buccaneers, and the Broncos!

There are a variety of reasons I like certain teams. Some of it is geography: the Broncos and the Chiefs. Some is players I like on the teams: the Chargers, the Buccaneers and the Packers. Some is a combination of those things plus respect for the dynasty: the Steelers and the Patriots!

I enjoy seeing players from KSU do well, thus Jordy Nelson has made me a Green Bay fan. Sometimes he struggles and we think he's done. He is such a long shot anyway. What's not to love about his story: a college walk-on from a small town in Kansas to a second round draft pick! During the playoffs he contributed significantly to Green Bay's success. It affirms everything we are told about the value of hard work!

Blue Jay fans remember Jordy from State Basketball in 2003! There is another life lesson we can draw from that semi-final game: Going in everyone knew who Jordy Nelson was. And he was great. But our TEAM won!

This is not to criticize superstar players.

This Too
Shall Pass
Nancy
Hagman



Players can't help it if we single them out and pin our expectations on them. Hype is a part of sports we seemingly can't escape. It is the only part that makes me glad football will be over for a few months. Or will it? There's the Combine, the draft, the camps, the preseason-----

At our house we figure out the games we want to watch. If the game is scheduled to start at 7:00 we sit down at 7:00. In many cases these days the start times are odd; five or ten or even fifteen after the hour. It's a problem because if you turn to another channel you may get engrossed in a show that ends at the half hour and miss kickoff.

But at least networks are more honest when they say a game starts at 7:10 or whatever because the games never start at the appointed time. We always have to listen to someone carry on about something that doesn't amount to a hill of beans!

It's sort of like reading this column (though at least you can quit reading anytime).

We can attempt to avoid pre-game, post-game and halftime but how do we

avoid the hype? Sometimes during a timeout a sideline reporter will begin an interview with a former player, a big time program donor, or some other celebrity. These interviews end up lasting into the game. Recently I went into another room during such a break thinking I would come back and watch when I heard the return to live action. After a considerable length of time I checked to see what had happened. The game had long since commenced but the audio was the cute gal on the sidelines doing an interview.

The most astounding moment of the recent playoff season for me was when the game announcers were doing promos for "American Idol". The guys seemed to be real big American Idol fans. One even said something like "the only bad thing is they have us talking about this way too early! I'm ready to watch now and it doesn't start for two weeks!"

That's rich! A sportscaster thinks American Idol is over hyped! What is it Susan Sarandon says in the sports movie Bull Durham? "The world is made for people who aren't cursed with self awareness!"

Ah, well---hype or no, the Super Bowl is here. If we can believe them, kick-off is 5:30 CST! I've already got the freezer stocked with wings and tater skins! And I'm going out on a limb here and predicting the outcome, one of my favorite teams will win!

There's something to be said about instinct

I am a firm believer in 'trusting your gut' as some might say. I believe it is a God given talent, one we all possess and one intended to guide us through our lives. No matter what you call it, most of us cannot deny having these feelings at one time or another. In recent years, however we frequently set these instincts aside in favor of a more scientific approach. We have come to trust tests, authorities or the experts. To be sure there is a place for those things, but there is also a place for intuition.

Most of us have at sometime, a sense something is wrong with our body, but we really can't describe it. Over the course of many years I have learned to trust that feeling. I may not be able to diagnose the problem but I can identify its existence. Fortunately over the years I have had a number of doctors who believe in that still small voice, but once in a while I have come across one so enamored with technology and skills, they forgot the patient they were treating.

Many years ago while living in Nevada one of our older children was on medication for a seizure disorder. Each

Phase II
Mary Kay
Woodyard



time I would call the neurologist to say something wasn't right, he would order a blood test and increase the medication. Finally I decided to take our son to our GP, a wise old gentleman from Nebraska. He said to our son, "Let's go for a walk down the hall."

When they returned Dr. Peters said to me, "He's overmedicated. I'm calling the neurologist."

The neurologist told him the lab tests didn't indicate that. To which Dr. Peters replied, "I don't give a damn what your tests show, if you'd talk to him you could tell." Fortunately Dr. Peters trusted his instincts.

My mother had an uncanny ability to know when something was going on in our lives.

When Jack and I were first married she called one Saturday evening and asked, "Did you go flying today?" I am the ultimate in white knuckle flyers and didn't go up with Jack when he flew the light airplane. For some reason however that particular Saturday afternoon I did. But how did my mother know? She would say "she had a feeling". Some would say it was coincidence, but I know my mother had motherly intuition.

Sometime I will tell you the story of the 'Voice' telling me when and where to have our son's life saving surgery. Thank God, my husband is as much a believer as I am.

This is not to say we should ignore experts and tests, but it is not necessary to set aside our own gut instincts or to feel intimidated by others when we express these feelings.

A book which examines intuition and our sometime resistance to it is, Blink, by Malcolm Gladwell. His appealing writing style and the amount of research he includes makes this a fascinating book. No pun intended, but check it out.



Thumbs up to Kelley Shearer and Bobby Annon for the helping hand when you pushed us out of the snow. It was greatly appreciated. Emailed in.

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