



Opinion

Elder driving, how not to get caught in the net

Let's talk about a subject that has split many families, and how this 'Man of the Plains' avoided getting caught in that net.

Elder driving. Yep, driving when you really shouldn't be.

This always causes a heated exchange between a parent and the kids. As an example, let's say Mom has passed on and Pop is up there in age and he sometimes navigates his machine in a fashion that causes concern. Or, there might be a slip of the tongue about some weird experience while driving. These are tell-tale signs that the time has come for Pop to hang up the keys.

"But that's not fair! How would I get around?" he will ask, with a stern look that makes you feel guilty for even bringing up the subject. Church, groceries, visits, card club, and the list of reasons for hanging onto the keys goes on.

You need to be prepared and have answers that make sense. And don't think those six hated words, "You're getting too old to drive," will carry any weight. It won't. Expect a chilly reception from "old Pop" after you drop the "too old to drive" bomb on him. It'll take a while, quite a while for him to allow those words to sink in. And then again, he just might resent the suggestion and continue driving.

The roadways are packed with aging drivers who shouldn't be part of the pack. You'll spot them. Slowing everything down, or pretending to be part of the racetrack mentality. And there is always that thought in the minds of others: "Well, there's another one of those 'shouldn't be' drivers."

How did I avoid the family confrontation?

I hung up the keys myself.

I had noticed things just weren't always making a lot of sense while behind the wheel. I was 75 at the time. Some of the

examples of "why I shouldn't be driving" included:

1) A need to blink rapidly and then squint my eyes to bring whatever I was looking at into focus.

2) Noticing things that weren't there and not noticing things that were. That explains why sometimes I would suddenly stop, and then look around and wonder why.

3) Pulling up to a curb to stop, then suddenly experiencing a bit of confusion because my foot failed to automatically engage the brake and instead hit the accelerator and I would jump the curb.

Those three personal experiences stick in my mind and played a major role in my decision to lock the pickup doors, hang up the keys and make other plans as far as transportation was concerned.

The brain controls our every move. And when things are going along smoothly, there's no hesitation. But when the brain forgets to alert the rest of the body of its plans, that's when trouble starts. And you can find yourself in all kinds of unfavorable, if not down-right deadly, situations.

When I told my two sons what was happening, I know in the back of their minds they wondered, "How do we tell him it's time to get out from behind the wheel?" Well, I answered that question before they had a chance to ask it. I abruptly announced I was going to give up driving. You could almost hear the sounds of relief settling in their systems.

To underscore my intentions, I told them we will put the pickup up for sale. That became their responsibility. I wouldn't know where or how to begin. They determined the best place would be CraigsList. They posted it on a Sunday evening and by noon the next day the pickup was sold. The couple who bought it liked the looks from the photo that accompanied the printed sales pitch.

It was a 2001 Ford Ranger, extended cab, bright red with around 50,000 original miles. The inside looked like it had very little use. I didn't drive much, generally no more than 7,000 or so miles a year. I had an idea what I wanted for the pickup. My sons had another idea. And because of them I made much more than what I was go-

ing to ask for it.

So, since the sale, which took place the first week of September 2010, they, the sons, became my "taxi" drivers and there hasn't been a time or cause that stood in the way.

It was a tough decision to make. After all, when the pickup left the driveway for the very last time, that put an end to nearly 59 years of driving. It hurt and that evening in bed a few tears were shed. But I knew "luck" had been with me but if I stayed behind the wheel, my "luck" most surely would run out.

If you have a mother or father, or maybe even both, still driving and you question their ability to continue doing so safely, approach the issue as lovingly as you can. Don't hurt them. Don't scold them. Hear them out. Then tell them that each time they pull away from the curb in front of their home, you worry yourself sick until they return. That might be food for thought. Good luck.

Here we go again. This time it's Rep. Anthony Weiner, who seems to have a problem keeping his "trash" where it belongs. He's taking some time off now to get treatment for this problem. Why didn't he seek treatment before he became the talk of the country? I think a three-word sign needs to be made and then placed in the area on the front of his pants where it would best be noticed: "Out of Order."

Snippets
"President Obama needs new teleprompters. The old ones aren't 'teleing' him what he needs to hear. ..."

"Leave it up to Newt Gingrich, the first presidential candidate to get fired by his campaign staff. ... Go, Newt, go far away!"

"President Obama says he is closing in on the \$1 billion he needs to get re-elected. ... Would be nice if he could raise that kind of money for the American cause!"

"... After watching the GOP debate Monday night, surely there are others interested in that office. Slim pickins. ..."

"Be careful what you buy! ... The Miami Heat and those trillion dollar players deserve a good round of laughter. Dallas turned out to be the darlings of the NBA. 'Wonderful, wonderful,' as Lawrence Welk would say."



News From the Past

10 years ago - 2001

Steve Schultz, former resident of St. Francis, was installed as the St. Francis Postmaster on Friday. He marked the 19th postmaster to serve in the St. Francis area. The postmaster serving the most years at the St. Francis office was Bion Reynolds. In 1888 the post office was moved from Wano and renamed the St. Francis Post office.

20 years ago - 1991

Lisa Raile and Justin Gardner are the Mason Essay Winners this year. Lisa also placed second in state competition.

Mindy Porter was named DeMolay Chapter Sweetheart at the annual Sweetheart Dance. Other candidates included Tricia Douthit and Charlene Fossett. Susan Bracelin was the 1990 Sweetheart.

Larry Gabel was named 3-2-1A and overall Kansas Coach of the Year by the Kansas Wrestling Association.

Pinewood Derby winners were Jason Wagoner, Kelly Zwegardt and Wes Cooper.

St. Francis Community High School Kansas Scholars were announced last week. The

school also received the State of Kansas Scholars Award for the 1990-91 school. Students receiving the honor are Justin Gardner, Jeremy Busby, Jason Yost, Patty Pittman, Lisa Raile and Tobi Davis.

Leonard Richard is retiring from his position as janitor at the grade school. He was presented a 24-Karat (Carrot) Plate by Carla Lampe, PTA treasurer.

"Best of Show" was earned by Tina Poling at the Northwest Kansas League Art Show held in Atwood.

30 years ago - 1981

Ken Krien and Don Kehlbeck built and installed a new lighted windsock at the Cheyenne County Municipal Airport last week. Krien Farm Supply, Bird City, donated the materials and constructed the new windsock tower and the St. Francis Sand and Redi-Mix Company donated the materials for the base of the tower.

Sonja Hecht, Lane Follett and Nicole Andrist have been selected as the St. Francis representatives to Sunflower Girls State. The American Legion Auxiliary is sponsoring Hecht and Fol-

lett while the St. Francis Rotary Club is sponsoring Andrist. Kris Bartlett is the alternate.

Touslee Ford Sales closed Saturday, Feb. 14, ending 25 years of service in St. Francis.

Martha Reichert has announced the sale of Pla-Moor Recreation to Denny and Judy Davis of Goodland. Martha celebrated her 50th anniversary in business in December.

Patrons of St. Francis School District 297 will be voting on whether to provide, maintain and conduct a supervised recreation commission and to levy an annual tax not to exceed one mill to finance the program.

The Cheyenne County Carnival Committee has accepted delivery of three rides for the home-opened carnival to open at the Cheyenne County Fair this August. Last week an octopus, tubs-of-fun and a Ferris wheel were delivered.

The keys to the St. Francis Montgomery Wards Catalog store were handed over to Mr. and Mrs. Darrel Henderson by Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Forsythe. The Forsythes ran the store since October 1973.

Honor Roll

New and renewed Herald subscriptions: Floyd Larkin, St. Francis; Marie Holzwarth, St. Francis; Noel Rath, St. Francis; Marylin Taylor, Lubbock, Texas; Murlene King, Springfield, Mo.; Norman Zwegardt, Peona, Ariz.; Paul Krueger, Olathe; Norvin Northrup, St. Francis; Robert Hammers, Englewood, Colo.; Bill Smull, Tacoma, Wash.; Margaret Novak, Sioux Falls, S.D.; Delphine Zwegardt, Albuquerque, N.M.; Norman Dorsch, Bird City; Arnold Magley, Bird City; Isernhagen LLC, Fort Collins, Colo.; Oscar Whitman, Wheeler; Carl Werner, St. Francis; Clarence Roberson, St. Francis; Lavern Young, Bird City; Goodland Greenline, Goodland; Terry Hilt, St. Francis; Bev Crane, Hugoton; Bob Burr, Benkelman, Neb.; Sheila Davis, Denver, Colo.; Elmer Schorzman, San Diego, Calif.; Harvey Zwegardt, St. Francis; Roger Zwegardt, St. Francis;

GOD SAYS
Seek the Lord, and his strength: see his face evermore. Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth.
Psalms 105:4, 5

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Casey's Comments
By Casey McCormick
I've been tossing around some thoughts and Father's Day seemed like a good time to try to put them on paper.
The topic in my head is: "What does it take to be a man?"
When I was younger the answer seemed pretty obvious. A man was someone who was tough and could boss people around if needed. Also, you had to be old enough to grow a beard.
As with many things in life, the older I get, the more confusing the world around me becomes. Being strong and in control are some good qualities during times of conflict. But what about the every day, day-to-day moments that make up most of our lives?
So, as well as being the protector, a man has to be able to do more. A lot of it seems to be about just being there. Being there for whatever your wife and kids are doing.
It may not always be the most fun doing the things others want, but the neat part is you're with the ones you love.
I guess being a man has something to do with being involved and having a presence in the days of others.
And having a beard can be a nice bonus.

Church of Christ 332-2380, Pars. 332-3424
502 W. Spencer
Norman Morrow - Minister
Bible Class 11 a.m.
Morning Worship 10 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study 7 p.m.

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church
625 S. River • 332-2680
Fr. Roger Meitl
Sunday Mass 10:30 a.m.
Weekday Mass 8:00 a.m.
Confessions Sat. 4-4:30

First Baptist Church
2nd & Scott • 332-3921
J.W. Glidewell, Pastor
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Service 6:30 p.m.,
Wed. AWANA Club 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

St. Francis Community Church
332-3150
204 N. Quincy Street
www.sfccfamily.com
Pastor: David Butler
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.
Potluck & Communion -
Every 2nd Sunday
Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.

Peace Lutheran Church, AFLC
202 N. College
Pastor Glenn Isernhagen, Interim
332-2928
Worship 9:30 a.m.
Communion 1st Sunday of the Month

United Methodist Church
Church Office 332-2292,
Church 332-2254,
512 S. Scott
Pastor Morita Truman
Early Bird Service 8:30 a.m.
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.

Salem Lutheran Church
332-3002
Pastor Chris Farmer
Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.
Communion Sunday

Solid Rock Baptist Church
412 S. Denison
Welcomes You!
Pastor Allen Coon
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30
Prayer Meeting, Wed 7:30 p.m.

First Christian Church
Pastor Jeff Landers
332-2956 • 118 E. Webster
Bible Fellowship 9:15 a.m.
Church Service 10:15 a.m.

St. Francis Equity

Saint Francis Herald

Knodel Funeral Home
202 S. Benton • St. Francis
785-332-3131

Lraise the Lord