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Forgetting sunscreen a painful mistake

You'd think that being 53 years old, I would learn some basics of life like look both ways before crossing the street, don't take any wooden nickels and wear sunscreen. Well, actually I haven't been run over lately (although I'm sure some are aiming for me) and all the change in my pocket jingles, so that leaves wearing sun screen.

That's right. I look like a ripe tomato thanks to totally ignoring the lesson I've learned over and over since I was in high school. You'd think after the incident at band camp my sophomore year that it would be forever burned (pardon the pun) into my brain to smear some lotion on my skin. It was that summer that I got the nickname "French Fry" which some folks still call me to this day.

It was the heat of summer and I had skinny jaybird legs as white as cottage cheese. I ended up out in the sun all day and by the time I got back to my dorm the damage was done. You could see my legs from the moon they were so bright red. I could barely walk the next day and the rest of the week was sheer agony. And, to beat it all, there happened to be a sun screen commercial on television back at that time with a sunburned kid saying, "I feel like a French fry." That's all it took for the nickname to stick throughout high school and into college. It even got shortened to Fry, a name many of my old buddies and the band leader still call me.

Flash forward more than 30 years later. I'm outside the county building Wednesday down in Warren County waving a sign at early voting. It was a very pleasant day with a nice breeze so it really didn't occur to me to put on any cream. However, somewhere around two I felt a sting on the back of my neck and then someone came up to me.



THAT NEW GUY
by Duane Sherrill

"You're burned," he said, squinting at me, his revelation accompanied by a warm flush on my face. Like locking the coop after the chickens got out, I applied the sun screen. All it did was make my sunburn glow brighter. "What didn't I learn?" I lamented,

vowing to always wear screen no matter what time of year it was.

Then, as if the burn wasn't enough, this weekend I feel that tell-tale sting on my upper lip you sometimes get with overexposure. Not a cold sore! I can't have a cold sore. It's early voting and I'm running for office. How can I ask folks for votes with a big honking cold sore on my upper lip?

Hey, I'm a regular person. I know that when you talk to someone with a cold sore on your lip, all they can see that whole time is that thing. Sure, you try to look away but you can't. It's like it hypnotizes you.

No controversy, no skeletons in the closet, no clandestine cover up. My Watergate may be a cold sore.

Contact Duane Sherrill at news@smithvillereview.com

Unsinkable

On April 15, 1912, the world's worst peacetime shipping disaster took place in the North Atlantic Ocean when the Titanic hit an iceberg on its way from Southampton to New York City.

The Titanic had left five days earlier on its maiden voyage, and it was the biggest ship the world had ever seen as well as the best. It was 11 stories high; it was about 880 feet long, and it weighed over 92 million pounds. One passenger asked a crewman when she got on board the ship if the ship was safe, and he replied, "Lady, God Himself could not sink this ship."

The first voyage of the Titanic was designed for the wealthiest people in the world, with some suites costing as much as \$62,000 in today's money. When the ship hit the iceberg, the collision cut a 300-foot gash in the side of the ship, water started flowing into the ship, and the ship at one point stood up vertically before it began to sink into the ocean.

There were more than 2,200 passengers aboard the ship, but only 1,178 people could fit into the lifeboats. Women and children were allowed to get into the lifeboats first, and there was little if no room for any men.

Back in the early days of the world, a man by the name of Noah was instructed by God to build the biggest boat the world had ever seen up to

that time. In fact, this boat, called an ark, was the boat ever built up to this time in history. Only eight people, consisting of the family of Noah, chose to board the ark, with everyone else in the world making fun of Noah for building a ship when no one had ever seen it rain.

The ark was only about half as long as the Titanic, and it was only three stories high, but it really and truly was unsinkable.

Noah and his family stayed in the ark for about one year after God sent rain upon the earth for forty days and nights. He took two of every kind of animal into the ark, to preserve them for the future, after the flood ended. He took additional animals to later offer as sacrifices of thanksgiving to the Lord for preserving his life and the lives of his families. It took Noah about 120 years to build the ark, and the whole time he was building it, people made fun of him. The passengers on the ark were safe and sound, but all the other people in the world were destroyed as they drowned in the rising waters. The people on the Titanic trusted the shipbuilders, but the people in the ark trusted the Lord.

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GUEST EDITORIAL
by Larry R. Steffe

LETTER TO THE EDITOR POLICY

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No wake zone

If you live near the water, there's a sign you'll see at the entrance to almost every marina. It says "No Wake."

When you take your boat out for a day of fun -- whether it's a speedboat, a cabin cruiser or a yacht -- as you leave and enter the marina, it's important to go slow enough not to create waves that could smash moored boats against the dock, or even swamp smaller boats. It's not just a courtesy to go slowly, it's important safety-wise.

But there's always some fool who thinks the sign doesn't apply to him -- not because he's rich, stupid, inexperienced or illiterate, but because he's selfish.

Some people go through life making wakes, heedless of the damage they do to other people. Alcoholics, drug addicts, sexual abusers, in-too-deep gamblers -- they all share a selfishness that they won't admit to. "It's my life and I'll do what I want," they say, while they heedlessly go around wrecking the lives of everyone around them.

It's not just "your life" if you have children, if you have a spouse, if you have anyone at all who you care about. You're creating a wake that will damage their boats, that may even swamp them entirely. If you were just wrecking your own life, that'd be one thing, but is that ever true?

Imagine a set of parents who won't let their teenage son get a swastika tattooed on his forehead. Or a mom who won't let her 13-year-old date a 19-year-old. "You've wrecked my life!" the kids will probably scream. But who's really wrecking whose

life?

The lesson shouldn't be whether to get an offensive tattoo or whether to have an age-inappropriate boyfriend. The lesson is to start thinking about other people, not just yourself.

Sometimes I wonder why we don't want to let people into this country who have the gumption to walk a thousand miles over dirt roads to get jobs here, but we let this spoiled kid who can afford to buy a \$6 mocha-choco latte and a tattoo, and who thinks he's being treated badly, stay. Do you think he's doing his own laundry? Do you think he's helping out with the chores around the house? What do you think his major is? Moping? Whining? Complaining about the used car his parents bought him to get to school? I'll bet he's fun to be with at Thanksgiving.

We all know people who never grew out of that stage at any age. There's probably one at a bar downtown right now, on his third beer, telling everyone in the place how to solve all the problems in the Middle East, what's wrong with Facebook and that there's only one way to make "real" chili. If only he weren't unemployed and six months behind on alimony and child support, you might believe him.

It seems he can solve everyone's problems but his own. Don't let him on your boat or near your marina. He'll be sure to leave a wake.

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VILLAGE IDIOT
by Jim Mullen