

Commentary... Of a certain age...

By Diane Goble
Columnist

I'm not big on conspiracy theories but I am convinced there is a plot afoot to drive people insane — especially those of us of a certain age. The perpetrators are the people who design protective product packaging for consumer products.

Now maybe younger folks don't find this so alarming, but us older folks are often driven to bizarre behaviors involving a profusion of expletives and the complete destruction of the object encased in this plastic protection.

The ones that say Easy Open are the ones to really watch out for.

Remember those innocent days before that nut-case put poison in the Tylenol bottles? Now it seems the idea is to make it as difficult as possible to open almost anything to prevent unauthorized product alterations.

On many bottles and plastic tubs, once one is able to break through the outside plastic covering using sharp instruments that with one little slip can leave one's digits bloody and bruised, there is

more on the inside sealing the product against the potential abuser. Even when they add a tiny notch meant for the consumer to be able to begin to tear the lid open, like an aspirin bottle or a spice container or a tub of margarine, it isn't enough for arthritic fingers to grab onto, which makes scissors a necessity.

I usually end up taking a sharp knife and stabbing the top, leaving me to peel off several pieces to get to the contents that lie beyond a huge blob of synthetic cotton.

The other product packaging aberration is shrinkwrapping to prevent shoplifting. Good idea, but it also prevents the purchaser from being able to actually use the product once he gets it home because it is so well protected. I took windshield wiper blades back to the store because I couldn't get them out of the packaging. Someone had to design a special tool just to be able to open these hard plastic encasements.

Then there are plastic bags ... once you get the bag open, just try to reseal it. Those little plastic seams don't line up. Oh, they make you think they've lined up but as soon as you pick it up, it comes

apart and the contents spill all over the floor.

I think I was trying to unravel the plastic wrap that had become one with a head of cauliflower when it occurred to me I should make a YouTube video of myself opening packaged goods in the kitchen to show the lengths a person my age has to go through to open almost anything these days.

Don't they bother to test these things before they unleash them on the unsuspecting public? I bought a cone-shaped air freshener with a plastic twist-off top, but my hand couldn't perform the directions. The item was too fat and too smooth for me to grip and turn it to unscrew the cover. I used to buy more items in jars, but I found so many with lids so tight that even when using available tools they have been screwed on too tight for me to open.

About the only time I need to find a man!

If packaging designers would just take their products home and ask their grandmother to open them, they would understand why older folks don't buy their products.

SUPPLY DRIVE: School tools help Sisters youths

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Fiskars pointed scissors, Prang and Crayola watercolor paints (cheaper, low-quality paints are not usable).

- Elmer's glue sticks; yellow highlighters; pens; pencils; crayons; basic calculators; dry-erase markers; white erasers; and colored pencils.

- Backpacks are always needed for all ages.

Student school supplies

distribution for those in need will take place the week of August 22 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Sisters Family Access Network (FAN) office located in the Sisters School District Administration building, 525 E. Cascade Ave.

Sisters FAN distributes school supplies to over 100 financially struggling students/families each year. For many local children the "Tools for School" drive provides their only means of obtaining their necessary school supplies.

Call FAN at 541-549-0155 for more information.

The classic rolls through...



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Hundreds of cyclists headed up the McKenzie Highway on Wednesday in a leg of the Cascade Cycling Classic.

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