



Warning labels are impeding the natural selection process

Ned Hickson

realize that spilling hot coffee on yourself while behind the wheel of a car can lead to a condition commonly known as "The Open-Road Lap Dance."

Taking a deeper look, that condition is really just an extension of the more common rule known as "Cause and effect," which states:

'Cause I'm dumb enough to place hot coffee next to the most vulnerable spot on my entire body, I am, in effect, going to do something even dumber by spilling it there. Probably before I leave the drive-thru.

Though the woman

There was a time when manufacturers included warnings on their products as a way to provide useful information that could potentially save our lives. Or, at the very least, our eyebrows and/or stomach lining.

However, that all changed more than a decade ago when McDonald's had to serve up a McMillion dollars for the lady who didn't

claimed to be unfamiliar with either of these two concepts, she WAS familiar with the judicial system, and how her coffee mishap could lead to litigation and a new home in the Hamptons.

That landmark decision opened the floodgates to a barrage of wrongful injury cases aimed at sending a clear message to American businesses:

We will buy your products. We will use your products. And, God willing, we will hurt ourselves with your products and retire early.

Because of this, manufacturers have been forced to hire consultants who do nothing but sit around trying to think up ways people could hurt themselves with their products. Recently, I was able to gain access to one of these brainstorming sessions (although the

access was limited out of fear I might hurt myself).

While I'm not at liberty to divulge the company's identity, I can tell you there are at least five ways a stupid person can fatally injure themselves with a bar of Irish Spring.

The reason I bring this up is because of an actual, real-life warning label I discovered on the handle of a friend's new baby stroller, which reads: *Always remove child before folding.*

First of all, I'd like to point out that this time-saving tip was NOT included anywhere in the instruction manual. Had he known how much easier the folding process is by simply removing his child first, he wouldn't have spent nearly an hour trying to pry his son loose from the grip of his \$200 stroller.

I'm kidding, of course! He never, at any time, actu-

ally folded up his son inside the stroller. At least not without his son's written consent (which, by the way, an attorney keeps on file).

Ultimately, this experience led to the discovery of more examples of warning labels aimed at those who would otherwise be eliminated through the process of natural selection.

This first example was sent to me by Phillip Rankin of Coral Springs, Fla., who cut out the following warning from a box of Band-Aids: *For serious injuries please seek medical attention.*

That's good advice, at least until Band-Aid comes out with a super-absorbent "severed limb" option, preferably in the less obvious "skin-colored" tone that can be worn by people on the go.

This next one is from Wilma Pettig of Marrietta,

Ga., who found this helpful warning on a box of nails: *Do not swallow nails; may cause irritation.*

And that's just on the way down.

This last warning was on a can of primer in my own home:

Do not spray contents into face.

That's right. If you seem to be going through a lot more paint than you expected (and your retina's are primer gray) try flipping the nozzle the opposite direction.

Good luck out there, everyone!

Oh, and don't say you haven't been warned.

Ned is a syndicated columnist with News Media Corporation. His book, "Humor at the Speed of Life," is available online at Port Hole Publications, Amazon Books and Barnes & Noble. Write to him at ned-hickson@icloud.com.

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Rotary donates to elementary school supplies fund

On Wednesday, Sept. 9, Siuslaw Elementary School principal Michael Harklerode was presented with Fred Meyer Gift Cards in the amount of \$1,225 to be used for school supplies.

The donation was an annual effort by the Florence Area Rotary Club and members.

Rotary members contributed \$1,000 and the club contributed \$225.

Florence Rotary President Crystal Farnsworth, committee chairs Lynnette Wikstrom and Wayne Sharpe and Service Club 1 director Gary Cargill were present for the presentation.

Harklerode said, "This type of support from Rotary is the exact type that our students need. It enables us to assist families in purchasing supplies and clothing in a manner that preserves family dignity. It also helps to replenish our stock of new clothes and shoes that we can replace for kids as needs arrive over the course of the year."



COURTESY PHOTO

SES principal Michael Harklerode (center) accepts a donation of school supplies from Rotary Club President Crystal Farnsworth, committee chairwoman Lynette Wikstrom, committee chairman Wayne Sharpe and Service Club 1 director Gary Cargill.

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