



I'm officially in training for the Extreme Ironing Olympics

Ned Hickson

I have reached the conclusion that most of the world's ironing is now being done by men. I say this because it's the only explanation I have for a sport called "extreme" ironing, which is actually being lobbied by "ironing enthusiasts" for the 2020 Olympics.

And no, Michael Phelps won't be allowed to compete.

It's easy to understand how extreme ironing evolved if

you keep in mind a simple truth about the male species:

Given enough time, any man performing a mundane task will find a way to hurt himself.

And if you can hurt yourself doing it, then it's practically a sport already. Sure, bowling and golf might appear to be exceptions to this rule. But ask anyone who has ever jammed their finger in the ball return, or inadvertently left a tee in their back pocket and they'll tell you there is plenty of danger involved.

As a man who irons, I

know, firsthand, the danger that comes with pressing my wife's favorite clothes. Especially if I use the wrong setting and turn what was once a flowery cotton blouse into our newest hand towel.

Until recently, men who ironed were looked upon as being wimpy. This was a stigma left over from an earlier time when men brought home the bacon and women cooked it... then cleaned the kitchen, vacuumed, washed the dishes, bathed the kids, and did all the laundry.

Back then, men who refused to perform domestic

chores were still called masculine things such as "The Breadwinner," "King of the Castle," and "Man of the House."

Generally by other men. Today, men who want to bring home the bacon — while avoiding any domestic chores — are called other things, such as "single" or "recently divorced."

As a result, we men have come up with a way to demonstrate our unquestionable maleness by 1) taking a simple task and 2) making it as difficult as humanly possible.

This is the general idea behind "extreme" ironing, which, according to its website (www.extremeironing.com) "combines the excitement of an 'extreme' sport with the satisfaction of a well-pressed shirt."

Being a man, I can appreciate that kind of logic.

Anyone woman can iron a pair of slacks; it takes a MAN to do it while jumping out of a plane.

Because of this, I have decided to train for the 2018 Extreme Ironing World Championships, which my family has pledged its support

for by providing me with as much ironing to do as possible.

In fact, as a demonstration of her unselfish commitment to my goal, my daughter recently purchased an entire new wardrobe, none of which is "wrinkle free."

My hope is that the experience will draw us even closer together as a family.

At least, once I can find them on the other side of this pile of ironing.

(Ned is a syndicated columnist with News Media Corporation. Write to him at nedhickson@icloud.com.)

Annual 'From the Heart Dentistry' event Thursday

From the Heart Dentistry, an annual event established by The Korando Dental Group to serve marginalized populations in Florence with free dental care, is Thursday, Aug. 25.

For more than 30 years, From the Heart Dentistry has changed lives through free dental care for those who need it most, but who just can't afford it. This year's event takes place from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. at The Korando Dental

Clinic, 1705 22nd St. in Florence.

Patients can have a thorough cleaning, extraction, or certain other repairs done at no cost. Patients are typically uninsured, un- or under-employed, and/or homeless men and women in the community.

From the Heart Dentistry volunteers believe each patient is deserving of respect and dignity, and needs just a little help that will have big results for

their lives. Some patients who received corrective work have gone on to regain their confidence and get a job.

From the Heart Dentistry is a nonprofit subsidiary of The Korando Dental Group.

Financial contributions are tax-deductible. Even though all of the work done during From the Heart Dentistry is donated by nurses, hygienists, X-ray technicians, anesthesiologists and doctors, contribu-

tions from the public will buy additional cleaning supplies, anesthesia, and post-appointment educational resources for patients so they can maintain their dental hygiene.

People can contribute securely online by credit card at korandodentalgroup.com, make a contribution in person at the office on 22nd Street, or by mail to: From the Heart Dentistry, P.O. Box 159, Florence, OR, 97439.

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