

Internet Security

Rules of the Road

By Pat Struthers

Comparing the Internet to the highway system certainly isn't original, but I find it interesting how helpful it can be to adapt the tactics of surviving on our roads to avoiding security problems on the "Information Superhighway."

I recently began teaching one of my nephews how to drive and it became apparent to me immediately that it wasn't enough to say: "Do this. Don't do that." A good driver needs to develop an "attitude" toward driving; a fallback position that will give a driver time to make decisions in those emergency situations that no single "rule" fits.

This leads to two polar driving philosophies: offensive and defensive. Offensive drivers "own the road"; it is the job of other drivers to abide by the rules and not create a hazard by getting in their way. An offensive driver takes solace in the fact that, if an accident does occur, he was obeying the letter of the rules, if not the spirit. And he certainly wasn't obstructing traffic.

Defensive drivers realize that most accidents occur regardless of righteous adherence to the orderly progress of traffic flow. Accidents are inevitable whether they follow the rules or not and since they hate the messy state of affairs that results from even a minor fender-bender, their attitude is entirely different. A defensive driver expects every curve, vehicle and intersection to present a hell of body-mangling trauma. Whereas a driver of the first sort barrels blithely through congested intersections and residential areas, blameless and free, the second kind of driver creeps along in near-paranoiac anxiety.

Regardless of blame, the difference in effect is obvious. Offensive drivers are involved in more accidents because they don't think it is their duty to avoid them. The frantic alertness of a defensive driver, on the other hand, helps him to anticipate traffic situations that may turn ugly. Due diligence alone makes him a safer driver, even if he is not a "better" one.

Neither approach to driving, at its extreme, is healthy; but it should be clear that it is better to err on the side of caution than to depend on one's insurance company to be sympathetic.

What does this have to do with Internet use? A "defensive" user probably would get little done, but by the same token would be unlikely to harm anyone but himself.

An "offensive" web-surfer, on the other hand, might wonder: "How can my negligence endanger other users?" The answer is simple: "Viruses need hosts."

In order to spread themselves, computer viruses and similar threats need a stable base from which to attack. They exploit vulnerable operating systems, unsecured networks, insufficiently diligent e-mail and web users. Evil or not, these threats exist. They become more numerous and their attacks become more sophisticated every year, and they have more potential targets.

The lesson is simple: with all the benefits and privileges the Internet provides, there is a price. One also has a duty to secure his personal system so as to deny malicious software a foothold.

Teenagers, presented with the awesome responsibility of driving for the first time, are often overwhelmed. Patience, experience and a few simple "rules of the road" eventually give them the confidence to become confident, careful drivers without being meek ones. And a few "rules of the road" will help you avoid the hazards of the Internet while still getting the benefits you deserve:

-Shut down your Internet connection when you are not using it.

-Install virus, spyware-, and adware-killing software, scan often, and update signatures and programs regularly.

-Install a firewall, and use it.

-Exercise due diligence in surfing and e-mail use.

-Obtain and install security fixes for your operating system (Windows 95/98/XP etc., Mac OS, Linux) if they are available.

-Last and hardest: insist on responsible Internet behavior in others.

In later articles I will explain each of these basic rules in more detail. None of them are expensive or strenuous to follow, nor will their use ruin the usefulness and enjoyment you get from the Internet.

Some thoughts on therapeutic medical knowledge

By J. Timothy Hanlon,

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Therapeutic medical knowledge has increased dramatically in the past decade. It is estimated that more medical knowledge has been accumulated in the past ten years than in all of history prior to the last decade. How is knowledge of medical therapy acquired and what is its worth what degree of accuracy and reliability?

For most of history therapeutic medical knowledge was observational and anecdotal. Physicians and "healers" learned that certain things worked and others didn't—by "trial and error".... These individual observations of therapies that SEEMED to work were compiled and analyzed and therapeutic advances came mostly through this method. In the latter part of the nineteenth century the ability to observe large populations and scientifically and statistically analyze data evolved into the science of epidemiology (observational population studies), providing greater insight into disease occurrence and potential therapies. However, epidemiological evidence could be confounded or contaminated. For example, multiple large epidemiological studies led us to believe that hormone replacement (HRT) in postmenopausal women prevented cardiovascular disease, but we now understand that this observation was "confounded" by the fact that women who

used HRT also took better care of themselves, smoked less, exercised more, etc.

In the past 40 years or so, the advent of the randomized, double blind trial has eliminated any bias or confounding of the data. In these generally large trials, the physician investigators and the patients are unaware whether an active subject drug (or therapy) or either a placebo (e.g. sugar pill) or an older established therapy is used, and subsequent Outcomes are determined analyzed without any potential bias. Whereas our confidence in single or multiple observations, even when analyzed by statistical and epidemiological methods, was somewhat lacking because of potential bias on the part of doctors and patients, the advent of the randomized, double blind trials has produced an ever-expanding pool of knowledge with a high degree of reproducibility and certainty. We are now in the era of powerful therapies that we have near absolute surety really work.

Such huge trials in cholesterol lowering therapy, blood pressure control, and reestablishing flow in occluded

coronary arteries in heart attack victims have resulted in a dramatic improvement in the care of patients with heart disease. That in turn has translated in a marked reduction in cardiovascular risk and prolongation of life. Dramatic improvement in the care of patients with heart disease has resulted from such huge trials involving: cholesterol lowering therapy, blood pressure control and reestablishing flow in occluded coronary arteries in heart attack victims. Improving care has meant significant reduction in cardiovascular risk and prolonging lives.

Recognizing that not only the quantity, but also the quality and trustworthiness of our medical knowledge have grown logarithmically in the last decades, should give our patients greater assurance in following medical recommendations. What we now know now because we have tested theories based on theories tested in thousands and thousands of patients who participated in large randomized double blind clinical therapeutic trials. Such trials have revolutionized medical care.

Brownfields receive final 2005 Yard of the Month

By Kay Proctor

Heppner's last Yard of the Month in 2005 has been awarded to Steve and Luanne Brownfield at 315 Gilmore for September.

Luanne's family lived in Wisconsin until she was age five and then moved to Oregon where she graduated high school in Beaverton. Her family made their way to Eastern Oregon where she became a registered nurse through Blue Mountain Community College. While working at Good Shepherd Hospital in Hermiston, the hospital became involved with the TLC Hospice and Home Health program and Luanne was hired as the first employee. She and Steve began their married life in Heppner in 1993 and Luanne began commuting to Hermiston then. She has been with Hospice/Home Health now for 16 years.

Steve grew up in Eugene and graduated from University of Oregon. He then moved to Heppner to begin his teaching career in 1971 and spent the next 32 years teaching junior high and high school science. Since his retirement in 2003, he works seasonally for the US Forest Service.

The large, older bungalow style home, which has been occupied by the Brownfield family since 1974, sits on a corner lot with not a lot of room left over for yard, so Steve and Luanne together have worked hard to take advantage of every possible outdoor space for gardening.

Helping to make the most of their space is their use of a large number of different sized pots and planters. Luanne buys colorful plants keeping them in containers that can be moved, changed out or filled with plants that have staggering bloom time for multi-seasonal effect.

Another aid to maximize plantings is going vertical. Besides hanging baskets full of bright annual flowers on their front porch, planters hang from a side yard fence and dog kennel. Sadly, the kennel is empty after the recent loss of their beloved golden retriever, Reba.

A short time ago, Steve put down bark mulch the full length of their narrow back yard. That leads into the not very wide side yard where part of their vegetable garden grows consisting of butternut and zucchini squash, bell and banana peppers. Somehow there is room for California poppies, roses and granite boulders brought back from the mountains.

The side yard that borders the street really showcases the Brownfield's concentrated gardening style. Just outside the chain link fence Steve built is a row



Steve and Luanne Brownfield.

Photo by Kay Proctor

of bountiful fruit trees he has planted and replanted over the years. Pruning them himself, he is able to keep them below the level of overhead wires yet full enough to provide a vegetation screen for privacy. Tree types include Gravenstein and Red Delicious apples, Bartlett pear and Italian plum. Fruit produced is eaten fresh, given away or dried for use on their many camping trips.

A heavy cast iron, claw footed bathtub original to the house was moved below the fruit trees during a remodeling project. Being the science teacher he is, Steve experimented by planting a rhubarb start in it that has thrived ever since. A peony, a slip from Debbie Young's grandmother, has found its way into the tub, also. Along this same parking strip, Luanne found room for a flowering dogwood tree. Close by, the birds that eat out of a feeder Steve keeps in the front yard have thoughtfully thanked him by starting a scattering of sunflowers. Completing this side of the lot is a compost pile below the stop sign on the corner.

Inside this same side yard, Steve and his father built a wood deck connected to the house. It overlooks a barked area with a lengthwise cut wine barrel full of colorful annuals. Luanne enjoys the cheeriness of lots of color. When winter sets in, she leaves up their outdoor Christmas lights from around Thanksgiving to well after New Year's Day for brightness.

Beginning on this side of the house and wrapping around to the welcoming front steps is a flowerbed created by Steve and Luanne made of stacked gray landscaping blocks. Towering in back of low growing, white sweet alyssums are dinner plate sized dahlias. This is both Steve's and Luanne's favorite area of the yard.

Several years ago, a blue spruce tree was sawed down as it had outgrown the right front yard corner it was

in. It was donated to the City of Heppner to be used as the city Christmas tree at the mini-park by the post office. Its departure made room for more roses of which there are about 25 varieties. That includes a yellow rose Luanne planted on her side of the shared fence of their neighbors, the Jay Coil family. Unbeknownst to her, Darcy Coil had planted a yellow rose in the same spot on her side of the fence.

A diseased Elm tree in the midfront yard also got the axe years ago and was replaced by a Gravenstein apple tree. Anchoring the left front yard corner is a Redbud tree Luanne brought home and which has become her favorite planting. It is loaded each spring with small purplish flowers and then produces deep green, heart shaped leaves, which turn bright yellow after the first fall frost.

Between these trees are mixed beds of vivid perennials, annuals and shrubs including a deep pinkish flowering rhododendron. Amid these is another example of compact gardening- a two-tiered bed that is full each spring with tulips and daffodils which die back just in time for tomato plants. The Brownfield's harvest all the tomatoes before freezing temperatures and place them on newspapers spread on the basement floor to be eaten as they gradually ripen. The summer-ripened tomatoes are Steve's favorite plant.

Last summer, the Brownfield's tore up their aging lawn, rototilled and leveled the ground and replaced the grass. They have edged the lawn with gray concrete pavers and Steve can mow the lawn in about five minutes. They fertilize plants during the growing season with a water-soluble fertilizer and with bone meal or other fertilizers when they plant something new. Steve believes that in general they have good soil as a result of years of Willow Creek flooding, but has found lots of large river rock when he

digs. He has also uncovered hand forged nails, antique bottles and marbles, a small cast iron toy truck and an etched copper photograph.

Steve's daughters, Carri Grieb, Amy Wolters and Alissa Brownfield grew up in the home, which is now visited by the Brownfield's five grandchildren, three boys and two girls who have all helped with gardening. The cherry tomatoes are grown just for the grandkids.

The Brownfield's begin and complete a new project each year, but don't have a particular one in mind for next summer. Luanne has some ideas about water fountains from her favorite TV channel, HGTV. Their city water meter was relocated outside their yard this summer leaving an open piece of ground that Steve is eyeing and thinking about. Whatever the project will be, they will work on it together and make sure that there's always room for more.

The Heppner Yard of the Month recognition is co-sponsored by the Heppner Garden Club, Green Feed and Seed, Heppner TV and the City of Heppner.

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