

OPINION



Old wives' tales make for some good stories



Henning Happenings
Chad Koenen

As a parent I have something I need to get off my chest—I sometimes lie to my children. It's not always intentional.

After all, it's my job to pass on the lessons I learned as a child, even if the theories have been proven to be false. You see, some little white lies have been passed down from one generation to the next. And if we are to make a full mea culpa, parents don't often actually check whether the lessons we were told when we were children are actually based in sound facts.

For example, some strange fictional guy who lives in the North Pole does not watch everything you do (though I've never used that line before). You don't actually have to drink eight glasses of water a day. Sugar may not necessarily make kids hyper right before bedtime and there is no such thing as a five-second rule.

One of the most prevalent and often disproven old wives' tales concerns the need to wait 30 minutes after eating before they go swimming.

Perhaps this is the old wives tale most frequently used by adults who want to visit with their friends and family members a bit more after eating. As children, we believed the line as fact without so much as questioning our elders. In fact, it may be one of the few times that kids actually listen to adults when on vacation. But did you know, there is little truth to the old line about waiting 30 minutes, or in some cases an hour before swimming.

As early as 1961 pediatricians were doubting this old wives' tale, but the myth has hung on for all these years. While it is true that when we eat our body diverts blood to the stomach to help with digestion, that doesn't mean we no longer can move our arms or legs. In fact, the American Red Cross doesn't include any food warnings in its lengthy swimming and safety guidelines. That being said, even after learning that waiting to swim for 30 minutes after eating wasn't true, we didn't exactly let our kids know of the findings—I mean we were tied on the Fourth of July and needed a quick rest.

Waiting to swim after eating isn't the only old wives' tale that we heard growing up. Here are a couple of other popular sayings you most likely heard that turned out to be proven wrong.

Chewing gum will not stay in your stomach for seven years. While it's true that the human body can't digest chewing gum, it doesn't really get stuck in your body. The Mayo Clinic reassures us that it passes through our system more or less intact and comes out the other end. That doesn't mean you should still swallow gum, but just don't worry about gum sitting in your stomach for the rest of your life.

Cracking your knuckles does not lead to arthritis. Truth is, parents are just annoyed by the noise. According to Cedars Sinai orthopedic surgeon Robert Klapper, M.D., the cracking sound is just nitrogen bubbles in the fluid that lubricates your joints. If, however, you feel pain or discomfort while cracking, that may be a sign of an issue.

For most of my life, and my kids' lives for that matter, I have been a staunch supporter of the five-second rule in which food items dropped on the floor for less than five seconds could be safely eaten. That is, of course, it falls into a pile of hair or picks up some other crumbs under the table. Turns out, the tried and true five second rule is nothing more than a myth. A high school intern named Jillian Clarke spent most of her summer in 2003 working on experiments at the University of Illinois to prove or disprove this longtime myth. She dropped Gummi Bears and fudge striped cookies onto E. Coli treated floor tiles. The food immediately picked up the contaminated microbes, not after five seconds. That being said, most times food can be safely retrieved from the floor and eaten, but just make sure you have washed your floors in the past month.

We have all heard the old wives' tale that shaving will make the hair grow back thicker and darker. As far back as 1923 Mildred Trotter at Washington University in St. Louis disproved this myth. She had three female subjects shave their body hair at different intervals for eight months. In 1928 she repeated the study with four men and found that there was absolutely no increase in the diameter or color of their hairs before or after shaving.

Finally, we have all taken our kids to a birthday party and dreaded picking them up because "they will be all hyped up on candy and sugar." As it turns out, a 1994 experiment by Daniel Hoover and Richard Milich found that it isn't so much the sugar, as much as the occasion in which mass amounts of sugar is consumed. For example, the study found that moms and dads were much more likely to classify their kids' behavior as hyper when told that the kids had gotten buzzed on sugar (when in reality they had just drank a sugar-free placebo). The study found that typically the kids were just as wound up from going to the party, or being with their friends, as opposed to being all hopped up on pixie sticks and Mountain Dew.

Believe it or not, Hell officially freezes over

Rainbowe and I were looking out the window the other day, watching it snow when it's almost May, remarking that it would likely only be summer if and when Hell freezes over.

As we were talking about whether or not it would or would not, I was reminded of the following, which is an actual response by a student to a University question on a chemistry exam: "Is Hell exothermic (gives off heat) or endothermic (absorbs heat)?" The following is one student's answer:

First, we need to know how the mass of Hell is changing in time. So we need to know the rate that



The Prairie Spy
Alan "Lindy" Linda

souls are moving into Hell and the rate at which they are leaving. I think that we can safely assume that once a soul gets to Hell, it will not leave. Therefore, no souls leave. As for how many are entering Hell, let's look at the different religions that exist in the

world today. Some of these religions state that if you are not a member of their religion, you will go to Hell.

Since there are more than one of these religions and since people do not belong to more than one religion, we can project that all people and all souls go to Hell. With birth and death rates as they are, we can expect the number of souls in Hell to increase exponentially.

Now we look at the rate of change of the volume in Hell because Boyle's Law states that in order for the temperature and pressure in Hell to stay the same, the volume of Hell has to expand as souls are added.

This gives two possibilities.

If Hell is expanding at a slower rate than the rate at which souls enter, then the temperature and pressure in Hell will increase until all Hell breaks loose.

Of course, if Hell is expanding at a rate faster than the increase of souls in Hell, then the temperature and pressure will drop until Hell freezes over.

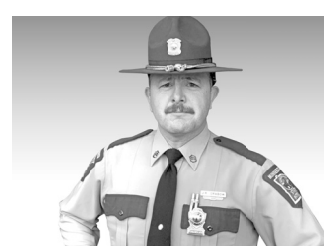
So, if we accept the postulate given to me by my girlfriend last night that "It will be a cold night in Hell before I sleep with you," and since she likely never will, then Hell must be exothermic (gives off heat).

That student got the only "A" in the test.

Law enforcement watches for distracted driving

Question: I spend a fair amount of time on the road and I see a lot of driver's on their cell phones. What are you guys doing about it?

Answer: Right now, to help change dangerous driving behaviors, law enforcement agencies statewide are participating in a distracted driving enforcement campaign April 1-30. We've been doing this for several years now as April is "national distracted driving awareness month." Along with enforcement,



Ask a Trooper
Sgt. Jesse Grabow

we continue to put this information in newsprint, radio, TV and social media. No one intends to seri-

ously injure or kill someone by driving distracted, but good intentions alone don't prevent crashes. Smart choices do. In Minnesota, distracted driving contributed to more than 39,000 crashes from 2017-2021 and an average of 28 deaths and 161 serious injuries each year.

Drive smart and keep yourself and others safe by parking the phone, avoiding distractions and paying attention. Visit WWW.HandsFreeMN.org and

WWW.DriveSmartMN.org for more information.

If you have any questions concerning traffic related laws or issues in Minnesota, send your questions to Trp. Jesse Grabow - Minnesota State Patrol at 1000 Highway 10 West, Detroit Lakes, MN 56501-2205. (You can follow him on Twitter @MSPPIO_NW or reach him at, jesse.grabow@state.mn.us).

How to contact your elected officials

<p>Governor Tim Walz Office of the Governor 130 State Capitol 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. St. Paul, MN 55155 Telephone: 651-201-3400 Toll Free: 800-657-3717</p>	<p>District 8B Representative Mary Franson 303 State Office Building St. Paul, MN 55155 651-296-3201 E-mail: rep.mary.franson@house.mn</p>	<p>District 8 Senate Bill Ingebrigtsen 95 University Avenue W. Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3207 St. Paul, MN 55155 (651) 297-8063 Email Address: sen.bill.ingebrigtsen@senate.mn</p>
--	---	--

Have your opinion heard

Have an opinion on a topic affecting Henning and the surrounding area? Write a Letter to the Editor to share your thoughts. Deadlines for all Letter's to the Editor is Friday at 12 p.m. Letter's can be emailed to news@henningadvocate.com or dropped off at the Citizen's Advocate office at 412 Douglas Ave.

Copyright, 2022 The content of this newspaper is protected

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Citizen's Advocate, PO Box 175, Henning, MN 56551-0175

Citizen's Advocate (USPS 240-180) is published weekly at 412 Douglas Ave., Henning, MN 56551 by Henning Publications, LLC. Periodic postage paid at Henning, MN.

Subscription Rate: In Otter Tail County, \$35 per year; everywhere else, \$42 per year

All Subscriptions are non-refundable

Staff Members:
Chad and Dani Koenen, Publishers

Office Hours:
9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Monday through Friday
Closed Saturday, Sunday

Address: 412 Douglas Ave., PO Box 175, Henning MN, 56551-0175.
Phone: 218-548-5585
Fax: 218-548-5582
Email: news@henningadvocate.com
www.henningadvocate.com

Letter's to the Editor
The Citizen's Advocate accepts and encourages Letters to the Editor from readers on subjects of current and general interest. All letters must be signed and include contact information from the author. Letters can be emailed, as long as the editor is able to verify the author of the letter prior to publication. The Citizen's Advocate reserves the right to edit all letters and refuse the publication of any Letter to the Editor without explanation or prior notice. Opinions expressed in letters and guest opinions are not necessarily the opinion of this newspaper or its staff.

The Publisher shall not be liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. The Publisher's liability for other errors or omissions in connection with an advertisement is strictly limited to one publication of the advertisement in any subsequent issue or the refund of any monies paid for the advertisement.