

Humor Me

By Ronald P. Culberson

September 2004

(Originally appeared in the *Herndon Observer*)

“Energy Conservation”

Last week, while catching my breath after the Olympic 400 Meter Fencing Relay (or something like that), a commercial appeared advertising Detroit’s latest innovation – a remote automobile ignition device. In the commercial, a father hid the remote in his hand and pretended to magically start his car while standing in the driveway with his daughter. Luckily, the car did not slip into gear, roll down the driveway and “drop in” on the neighbor’s house across the street.

I immediately went to the attic in search of my tenth grade Driver’s Ed manual. Although I couldn’t put my hands on it, I distinctly remember Coach Pruitt telling us that we were supposed to be *in* the car when we started it. I remember his saying, “Driving is a privilege, not a right.” I don’t think anyone has the right to start their car from the comfort of their own home! Nonetheless, I wondered why automobile manufacturers would develop such a ridiculous device.

My first thought was that the remote is for those people who live in Minnesota. They definitely need to warm up the car so that *their* seats don’t freeze on the *car* seats. Then I considered that it might be designed for all the elderly people in Florida so they can cool down the car before getting in. We sure wouldn’t want them to get overheated and forget to turn off their turn signal. And maybe the remote is a safety feature for those times when you’re not on Tony Soprano’s good list. Then it occurred to me. The only reason for a remote automobile ignition device is because WE’RE ALL TOO DANG LAZY!

If anybody knows lazy, I do (Note that the politically correct term is Energy Conservationist). In college, or the pre-remote control era, I owned a “manual” black and white TV. Since my roommates and I were always looking for an easier way to avoid any task, especially studying, we invented the Lazy Stick. We removed one 8-foot “L” shaped white metal curtain rod from the window and cut a “V” in the end just big enough to fit around the channel knob. Then, any of us, while sitting comfortably on the couch, could use the Stick to change the channel, adjust the contrast or turn the TV off! You must admit, it was a stroke of lazy genius. And I’m not alone. Everyone has jumped on this lazy bandwagon.

Consider the “lazy river”. This unique swimming pool invention is designed to keep us from exercising. Instead of swimming, we wedge our big behinds into an oversized

inner tube and float through an artificial current down a river that has no end. You don't have to do a thing and you don't ever have to stop. It's perpetual laziness!

And then there's that great culinary invention, the Lazy Susan. I don't know who Susan was, but she must have been one lazy woman to invent a device that spins the potatoes right to you so you don't have to reach the 18 inches required to get them. Can you imagine saying, "I would love to eat a few green beans but I just don't have the energy to pick them up?" I wonder if the real reason Dr. Atkins avoided carbohydrates is not because they aren't good for us but because they're just heavier? Hmmmm.

Finally, my favorite of all – The Clapper. You remember the commercial. "Clap on, clap off." A simple clap of the hands and your lights go off. Clap once more and they come on again. I'd actually like to see them install The Clapper in the U.S. Capitol where the President gives his State of the Union Address. If the lights went out every time the congressmen and senators clapped, I think they'd be a bit more selective, don't you?

I admit it, I'm lazy. But many of you don't recognize your affliction. You get your take-out food at the drive-thru window. You eat it while sitting in your Lazy Boy recliner surfing the channels with your TV remote (a descendent of the Lazy Stick, by the way). You keep your cordless phone in your pocket lest the phone ring when you're not right next to it. And when you clap off your lights at night, you wonder why your pajamas feel a bit tight. Our lazy-ness is out of control and we must do something about it. I'd love to suggest something but this article wore me out. I'm taking a nap.

Until next time, just humor me.

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Ron Culberson, MSW, CSP, CPAE is a speaker, humorist, and author of four books including Do it Well. Make it Fun. The Key to Success in Life, Death, and Almost Everything in Between. His mission is to change the workplace culture so that organizations are more productive and staff are more content. He shows people how to have more FUN while preserving the integrity of the work they do and the lives they lead. For more information, visit www.RonCulberson.com.