

Finally Grateful to be One Day Older

I'm feeling old today. Actually, I wrote this several days ago but I'm pretty sure I'll still be feeling old on whatever day this is as well.

I don't think I'm unique – I assume this is a common feeling among people in their fifties. Late fifties. Okay, *very* late fifties.

I wish the world would stop reminding me, and here's a small example. I was waiting at a stoplight in the left-turn lane recently when the light went through its cycle and failed to produce a left-turn arrow. I realized that the car in front of me hadn't pulled up far enough to trigger the sensor in the pavement to let the light know anyone was there.

After waiting another cycle just to be sure, I got out of my car, walked up to the closed window of the clueless driver within and made a circular motion with my hand and wrist to indicate I wanted her to roll down her window. The young woman stared at me blankly before I realized we have raised an entire generation of drivers who have never had to manually crank open a car window. Not to mention knowing what magic usually triggers a left-turn arrow.

Here's another scenario that could never have played out even ten years ago. I was at a restaurant last month with a half-dozen friends when one of them got done checking his Facebook page and left the table with his phone just lying there. I said, "If we knew his security swipe pattern, we could have a little fun posting on his Facebook timeline."

Someone at the table picked up the phone and said, "Here, I watched him do it." After a brief discussion about exactly how much trouble to cause, we settled on posting "Getting Naked!" A few minutes later the phone's owner returned, and we felt so guilty that we confessed. Alarmed, he checked his page and exclaimed, "Geez, I've got four replies already!"

Speaking of the Internet, how did we ever get along without it? It's really great not having to pay full price for Al Brazo Poderoso prayer cards anymore.

Seriously, they are currently on clearance at www.discountcatholicsupplies.com. Don't forget the plastic Holy Water bottles.

Nothing reminds me about changing times like modern technology. I have been listening to my iPod Shuffle several times a week for years – it's a remarkable device half the size of a York Peppermint Patty that holds over 100 of my all-time favorite songs. I loaded them five years ago but have been too lazy to update them. It was great at first, but now they're ruined – I can barely stand to listen to any of them. And I've forgotten how to load others, not to mention too lazy to look up how.

I can't remember who told me (maybe it's an urban legend) about a woman who called her husband to say she was locked out of her car because the battery on her key fob had died. He gently pointed out that she was standing in front of her locked car with a perfectly good key, but it didn't occur to her to manually slip it into the lock – something she'd never had to do before.

Constantly feeling old means I regularly have moments when I envy the young their youth, but recently that has changed - thanks to the Mayans. If their calendar is correct and the world really does come to an end on December 21st, I have to admit that I'll feel some perverse satisfaction because I will have lived a more or less full life while anyone else who is much younger than I am, will be getting shortchanged. Even better, I'm putting off my Christmas shopping just in case – that's one of my least favorite holiday chores and I'm not going to do it if there's any chance I won't need to.

But if we're all still here on the 22nd that will be fine with me. That's one day this year I'll expect to feel great about being a day older.

Writers Group member Dave Parsons is rapidly aging at the business he co-owns on the Coralville strip.