

Pet peeves of everyday language

What does "I mean..." really mean? That question keeps my brain busy. I will hear someone say, in response to a question, "I mean..." before he or she ever says what he/she meant to say.

In everyday conversations you will hear "I mean..." coming from the mouths of friends, co-workers and others as you discuss the weather, or what's new and the list is endless.

Keep track next time you are watching television or listening to the radio or just gabbing with a friend, and you will be surprised at how often "I mean..." becomes a part of the conversation.

It drives this 'Man of the Plains' bananas. Why would anyone say "I mean..." when they had already stated what they meant. Often, "I mean..." ends up being a contradiction to what was said, leaving the listener wondering what the person really meant.

I hear senators and congressmen/women use "I mean..." many times when being interviewed by members of the press. In their case, however, I think they use it to protect themselves in the event they said something they wished they wouldn't have.

And then to top this off, an acquaintance informed me he just purchased a new pet from one of those places where they shelter homeless dogs. I complimented him and asked what he named the new pet. He replied, fighting back laughter, "Well, Tom, knowing your impatience with people using 'I mean...', I named my pet, Peeve!"

Seldom am I lost for words!

Well...here I go again! On Nov. 25, I will blow out 77 candles on my birthday cake. Or is it 76 candles? I use two ages because for some odd reason family records of my birth are in conflict. I am listed as entering "Occupy Hospital Nursery" on Nov. 25, 1935 in some cases, while other records list my arrival as Nov. 25, 1934. But that's not all. My mother said I was born at St. Anthony's Hospital in Hays, but the State of Kansas Certificate of Birth, as submitted by our family doctor, has him delivering me at our home at 212 W. 16th Street. So, what year is right?

I do get cards with some showing two ages with instructions to circle the correct one; I usually circle both.

Snippets

"These days presidential - and congressional - campaigns begin as soon as the last winner has been sworn in. 'Election cycles' will soon disappear, leaving in their wake a perpetually ongoing campaign which never pauses, only builds to a crescendo as the actual election approaches."

"Herman Cain is a man of the people - the tobacco industry people and the liquor industry people..."

"...The word is 'Leadership.' And if President Obama continues to ignore it as part of his vocabulary he won't get that second four-year term!"

"... We need to do something otherwise the already rich and greedy will go hog wild! ...The tax laws must be changed to level out the playing field..."

"Herman Cain's problem is easy to explain: he's had more cuddle-ups than he can count! That would make remembering names nearly impossible"

"The GOP candidates sing the same song: Protect the rich, destroy the middle class, gut the Affordable Health Care Act, privatize Social Security, deny a woman's right to choose, degrade education, and demonize unions. Koch Bros. money rules. Oh, forget about jobs - Job #1 is to make President Obama a one term president; the book is 'The Wrecking Crew'; and the truth will set you free."

"Have you wondered how much the Democratic National Committee is shelling out to have these babes pop up like spring flowers and point at Herman Cain as a fast-operating hands-on guy?"

Snippets, mailto:milehitom@hotmail.com. Please keep them within three sentences.

Peace!

Your comments on anything that appears in your favorite newspaper coming from my computer, are always appreciated, regardless of the tone. Simply email me at mail to:milehitom@hotmail.com

Man of the Plains Tom Dreiling



Is vanity really worth all the effort and pain

I don't know where we got the idea women should work to enhance their beauty with makeup, hair styles, jewelry and clothes and for the most part men can just be men. However, I do think it is rather unfair!

I've never been very vain. My tendencies are usually somewhere between why bother and good enough! But I do worry about a couple of things: my thin hair and the frown line in my forehead.

Some people say you should be proud of your wrinkles. However the advances of plastic surgery and botox make a little fix tempting. Since we are always hardest on ourselves; maybe no one noticed. There is nothing wrong with doing a little something to make oneself feel better!

Until last spring I was using a pricy makeup that had an anti-aging formula. I liked it a lot. I used it about two years. One day my skin started itching. I was away from home so couldn't do much about it. It about drove me crazy. I was nearly out of make-up and I purchased more that day.

This was right before Easter. We had two cookouts and Easter dinner that weekend. Every time I got done up, my face itched. On the way home from

This Too Shall Pass Nancy Hagman



church I told Kate about the itching. She said, "Mom, I think you have hives!"

I got home washed the makeup off and indeed had a really nice rash. I quit using the makeup: no rash, no more itching. Kate happens to use the same product, so I gave the new bottle to her. I keep waiting for the call, "MOM----I have a rash!!!"

We recently saw a woman who had "some work done!" I knew about the surgery so I was not surprised, the hubby did not recognize her. He didn't like the results at all. I guess I'm not going to have any plastic surgery done on his dime. (At least I got a lot of reassurances about my "natural" appearance!)

Serendipitously, a sample of a wrinkle reducing cream arrived in the mail. It promised noticeable results with only one application.

I squirreled it away for a special

occasion. The occasion came. The instructions said you would feel your skin tighten and to avoid moving your facial muscles for a few minutes after application. I made sure I liked my expression and slapped the stuff on.

I felt a tingling immediately. I waited a couple of minutes; then I felt something else. Something worse: a burning.

Oh great! What was in that stuff? The same thing that was in the make-up? If so, my eyes were probably going to swell shut. So much for looking great! However when I looked in the mirror my skin appeared "noticeably" smoother! Wow!

I made it through the day with no problems. But no one commented on how great I looked. Why bother!

A friend posted this on Facebook, "Hope is like a hair ornament. Little girls wear too many, and old women look silly wearing even one."

This thought may also apply to beauty. And in addition to the worries of aging we have to balance doing enough to, remain attractive versus looking silly. That's probably why I have the frown line in the first place!

It is what it is. And that's good enough!

We must stand up for those who need defending

Most of my life has been devoted to child advocacy in one form or another. As parents, we all fall into that role. This past week has been sickening in its intensity and shocking in its breadth. Most, if not every state, has mandatory reporting laws requiring certain professions to report child neglect or abuse. As members of the human race, we have a moral obligation to report mistreatment of children in any form.

We like to believe people who indulge in this kind of crime are shrouded in black with evil eyes and a threatening stance, but that is far from the truth. All too frequently they are your next door neighbor, the Sunday school teacher, the pastor or priest, the Scout leader or, as this situation has taught us, the coach.

A tragic outcome of something like this is the shadow of doubt it places on all those, particularly men, who genuinely want to help children. Sandusky, whether guilty of the charges or not, by his own admission

Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



of showering with these young boys, screams of inappropriate behavior and certainly a lack of understanding boundaries. The sad thing about this is these children are yearning for someone to, 1) pay attention to them; 2) to teach them to navigate in society. Not only are they victimized; they are defeated.

All too frequently a child is not believed. Not all accusations made by children are true, but when a child accuses an adult they deserve to be heard, the situation investigated and action taken against the guilty party. When situations arise which are beyond our ability to comprehend, we sometimes ignore the cries of a child

and hence situations continue which should have been stopped.

We hear people say, "Why is there so much more of this now?" Maybe there isn't. We hope children are heard more now than they used to be, but we can do more. Children need to know who to go to; who can be trusted and what individuals will advocate for them.

It is always better to err on the side of safety. Kansas has mandatory reporting laws for many professions, however; universities do not fall under the same category. Kansas University Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little said the state's mandatory reporting law doesn't cover institutions of higher education. However, she stated KU is examining changes to its policies that would "codify that responsibility for our employees."

If one thing comes out of this terrible situation, it is the awareness these types of crimes are committed by all types of people. mail to:mkwoodyard@ruraltel.net

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Thumbs Up to Camden Cox on his beautiful, acappella performance of the "Star Spangled Banner" at the Northern Valley Jr. High basketball game Monday night. Emailed in.

Thumbs up to the Salvation Army volunteer who kindly returned my guardian angel coin that was accidentally placed in the donation bucket. It really means a lot to me and I was thrilled to get it back. Emailed in.

Letters to the Editor and Thumbs Up:
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