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THE HORRIFYING HISTORY OF HAND-WASHING

BEFORE DOCTORS KEPT IT CLEAN

We expect our doctors to wash their hands before examining us — it's a no-brainer. But more than 100 years ago, the idea wasn't only laughable — it was heresy. The first doctor who implemented mandatory hand-washing in a hospital saw swift improvements in patient mortality rates, but the backlash among other doctors came just as quickly.

Before germ theory began to catch on in the late 1800s, doctors believed illnesses were caused by "miasma," bad smells that originated in swamps, garbage, and decomposing matter. While the concept sounds strange now, convincing a doctor that miasma didn't exist would be much like telling a modern scientist the earth is flat. The idea of germs or viruses contradicted everything they thought they knew.

Still, a Hungarian doctor named Ignaz Semmelweis began to notice startling mortality rates between

two maternity wards at his hospital. The ward run by midwives had a much lower maternal mortality rate than the one staffed by doctors. After watching a colleague die of infection after cutting himself during an autopsy, Semmelweis determined something similar might be happening to maternity ward patients. Many doctors were examining mothers-to-be after performing autopsies — but midwives weren't.

Semmelweis blamed the problem on miasma from corpses. Nevertheless, he instituted sterilization and hand-washing procedures in the hospital in 1848. The maternal mortality rate dropped substantially in the doctor-run ward, becoming on par with the midwives. Semmelweis had solved the problem.

Yet, his colleagues disagreed. Other doctors at the hospital resented the suggestion that they'd been

causing their patients' deaths. And Semmelweis allegedly didn't make it any easier, behaving in ways others found condescending and arrogant. Further, Semmelweis had no hard proof that hand-washing and sterilization worked. Eventually, the other doctors stopped washing their hands. Semmelweis lost his job at the hospital and, sadly, died in a mental institution.

Fortunately, for the rest of the world, Semmelweis was not the only hand-washing proponent. Though they likely came by the idea independently, Doctor Oliver Wendell Holmes and a nurse, Florence Nightingale, encouraged the practice. Their championing and the emergence of germ theory gave us medical professionals who now have much safer habits — and, hopefully, the humility to acknowledge that they always have more to learn.



PAINFUL MOMENTS IN AMERICAN HISTORY



JFK, THE CHALLENGER, AND 9/11

There are moments in human history that completely change how we interact with each other or how we function as a society. We can only read about some of these events in books, like the Black Death that swept across Europe and Asia in the 1300s. Others, thanks to pop culture, have persisted, like the sinking of the Titanic. But monumental events have also taken place in our lifetimes that have changed the world.

What's interesting about these events is that we can often remember exactly where we were when they happened. My mother told stories about working at the cosmetics counter at Macy's in Joplin when word spread that President John F. Kennedy had been assassinated. She was behind the counter when a voice came over the PA system to let everyone know what had happened. I can only imagine what the atmosphere was like in there.

I'm not quite old enough to remember that event. I would have been 4 at the time, and I don't think I saw any footage of or even heard about the shot. What I remember is waking up on the Saturday after, going to the TV, and trying to watch my Saturday morning cartoons, only to find that JFK's funeral had replaced them. I flipped through all

three channels we had and was disappointed that I had to watch a somber service. I also remember his horse-drawn biers and seeing his young son, about my age, saluting his dad.

Two other major events have taken place during my adulthood that really stand out in my mind. The first was when the space shuttle Challenger exploded. It was 1986, and I worked for the Workers' Comp Bureau. I was having lunch with three buddies at the Wendy's that was then on the corner of Spring and High streets. The excitement that many felt about the Challenger was like the excitement felt during the moon landing, which I also watched and was fascinated by as a kid. My friends and I were enjoying our lunch when a lot of commotion started out of nowhere. Soon, someone came in and said the Challenger had exploded. It felt like time stood still.

Sometimes, these events are so tragic that they unite the country, as we saw with the terrorist attacks on 9/11. This is one of the most traumatic events we've ever experienced as Americans, and almost everyone who was alive at that time has a story about what they were doing when it happened. I was driving to work after dropping

my sons off at school. I was listening to the radio in Grandview when they announced that a small plane had crashed into a tower. Like everyone else, I had no idea how significant the situation was at first, as I was only listening to the radio.

The station I was listening to was talking to someone on the streets of New York City who was explaining the situation. I was still on my way to work when the guy began screaming that another plane had hit the other tower. It was at that moment that I and everyone else listening or watching realized we were under attack. I had been divorced two months, but I called my ex-wife to check on her and tell her to get our kids.

Whenever we experience a national tragedy, it seems like the country pulls together. We're kinder to each other and go out of our way more to help each other. But over time, we drift back to our old ways. You can see it as clear as day right now as we are so divided. I hope we can find ways to show each other grace and kindness without another national tragedy to bring us closer together.

-Jim Monast

BRING ON THE BIRDS!

THE DIY BIRDHOUSE THAT BLENDS INTO YOUR GARDEN

Springtime is filled with flowers, baby animals, and colorful birds flitting through the sky. And while many people love to watch our fine feathered friends, not everyone wants to put a colorful birdhouse in their yard that clashes with their decor or attracts unwanted visitors like squirrels.

Luckily, there is a style of birdhouse that will blend into your yard, keep pests away, and is incredibly easy to make – it's a flowerpot birdhouse!

To make a flowerpot birdhouse, you'll need the following items from your local hardware store:

- Drill with a regular drill bit and a 1 1/4-inch hole-boring drill bit
- Two 1 1/4-inch fender washers
- 1/4 x 2 1/2-inch carriage bolt
- 7-inch-diameter flowerpot (preferably terracotta)
- 1/4-inch nut
- 6-inch-diameter round wooden plaque
- Sandpaper

- Outdoor acrylic paint
- Sponge brush

Step 1: Choose your location, and drill! Pick a vertical surface like a fence or wall to mount your birdhouse onto. Try to pick an area where people rarely walk. Then, determine how high you want the birdhouse to be, and use the regular drill bit to make a hole.

Step 2: Mount your pot. Take your flower pot and align its drainage hole to the hole you drilled in step 1. Then, slide one of the washers over the carriage bolt before pushing the bolt through the drainage hole and into the drilled hole. Slide a washer over the end of the bolt sticking through the other side of the fence or wall, and twist the nut onto the bolt to hold the pot in place.

Step 3: Give the house a door. Use your 1 1/4-inch hole-boring drill bit to create a door in the round

wooden plaque, about 1 1/2 inch from the bottom. Use the sandpaper to smooth out the edges of this hole for the birds' safety, and use your outdoor acrylic paint to coat *only* the outside of the plaque and let it dry.

Once the paint is dry, push the wooden plaque into the pot until it is firmly wedged inside, and you're done!

This birdhouse is an excellent way to attract birds to your yard without the obviousness of a stand-alone house. Also, its lack of a perch stops predators from gaining a foothold that can lead them inside. To make the pot more discreet, hang it in a corner where shrubs or trees block it from view.



OVERCOMING DIVISIVENESS WITH DINNER

HOW 'DINNER AND A FIGHT' UNITES US

Deep inside a Greek Orthodox church in Akron, Ohio, locals gather specifically to disagree with each other! The event is called Dinner and a Fight, and it was created to help heal some of the divisiveness in our communities caused by politics. Many people have alienated themselves from those they disagree with instead of trying to understand them. That's why Dinner and a Fight brings strangers together to eat dinner and hear different perspectives with an open mind.

At Dinner and a Fight ("Fight" is actually scratched out and altered to "Dialogue"), guests don't spend the evening trying to persuade each other – that's

not the intent – but instead to understand others' opinions and essentially agree to disagree. There are no off-limits topics, but Dinner and a Fight has three rules for participants:

1. A desire to love and understand your country
2. A desire to love and understand your neighbor
3. A desire to show up with your whole self (just don't be offensive)

The rest of the meal is open for any peaceful discussion. The night begins with a buffet-style dinner at which you'll be seated at a table with four strangers (aided by fun ice-breakers on the table).

After half an hour, a moderator will lead everyone to a seating area with five chairs in the center. These five chairs are labeled "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Then, a moderator will introduce the hot topic and let volunteers fill the five chairs. Each will then explain their opinion and perspective, then the rest of the group has a chance to participate.

Finally, after 50 minutes of discussion, everyone will return to their original table, where they can enjoy dessert and further discuss the topic with their four new friends. By the end of the night, you will have heard various viewpoints from different political backgrounds in a welcoming, non-hostile environment.

After the organizer Ted Wetzel personally encountered a fight-fueled dinner, he created Dinner and a Fight to help change how we discuss politics. Now, there are plenty of Dinner and a Fight events across Ohio to help build connections once lost due to heated political debates. To learn more about Dinner and a Fight, check out Fighting-to-Understand.us/intro-to-daafd/.

CLIENT STORY: JASON SECKMAN

We really enjoy our client Jason and his wife of 40 years, Wendy.

For 30 years, Jason has driven and slogged through rain, mud, ice, snow, and heat to deliver packages and parcels throughout the area. He started with an international company known for its ubiquitous and distinctive brown trucks ... a kissing cousin, if you will, of the company Tom Hanks flew for before being "Cast Away" on a deserted island for several years.

I've had the honor of representing many of Jason's fellow package delivery drivers over the years. Without fail, they are some of the hardest working, most pleasant people I know. And their injuries nearly always involve their back or knees, not surprisingly. I mean, we see these men and women all the time and know they "run the tightest ship in the shipping business."

Jason worked all those years escaping injury, but it finally happened. As he was stepping off his truck to deliver packages, his knee twisted as



he hit the pavement, and he felt it pop out of place. It started swelling immediately. After he finished the delivery, he called his supervisor and was directed to the company's preferred medical providers who ultimately diagnosed lateral and medial meniscus tears.

So, what can Brown do for you when its own doctors relate the knee injury to the work incident? Can they fight your claim even when you're a 30-year employee with no prior injuries? They said, "Sure we can!" and so they did.

Initially, the Industrial Commission denied the claim. The hearing officer (a former defense attorney) concluded the injury was idiopathic (i.e., of unknown cause) and coincidental to Jason's employment. But that's not the proper standard: The question is whether the injury arose out of and was sustained in the course of employment. Agreeing that it did, the appellate hearing officer allowed Jason's claim, permitting him finally to have surgery six months after the injury.

While we had additional allowance issues (another ligament tear and arthritis) pending in the claim, the company, always "moving at the speed of business," decided to appeal into court the allowance of the claim. Since Jason had enough time in to be vested in retirement benefits, the company decided he was capable of "delivering more than just packages" and settled the matter before trial.

It's nice when people and companies can come together as "united problem solvers"!

SUDOKU

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ANSWER



MUNCHIES WITH MOLLY TASTY SPINACH ARTICHOKE DIP

Inspired by DinnerAtTheZoo.com

INGREDIENTS

- 8 oz spinach leaves
- 8 oz cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup sour cream
- 3/4 cup chopped marinated artichoke hearts
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 1/2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese, divided
- Sliced bread, crackers, or tortilla chips for serving

DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium pan, steam or sauté spinach until wilted. When spinach cools, ring out excess water, then chop coarsely.
2. In a large bowl, mix cream cheese, sour cream, spinach, artichoke hearts, garlic, salt, pepper, Parmesan cheese, and 3/4 cup of mozzarella cheese.
3. Spread the mixture onto the prepared baking dish. Top with remaining mozzarella cheese.
4. Bake for 20 minutes or until the dip is bubbly. Turn the oven to broil and cook for an additional 2-3 minutes so the cheese will begin to brown.
5. Immediately serve with bread, crackers, or tortilla chips.