

VIEWPOINTS

Science can be cool, except for when it's not

My mornings lately have involved a strenuous wrestling match, where I find myself thrown into a headlock and being slammed to the carpet a time or two.

This a.m. it appeared I was going to be pinned to the floor, but I was able to break my opponent's grip and, by using my patented Greco-Roman knuckle lock, I was soon free to walk out the door to my car.

I'm guessing my morning routine hasn't been unique this week. We've all to struggle, to make just the right moves, as we apply several layers of clothing topped by a big heavy coat before we can step outside into sub-zero temperatures.

I was a bit disappointed, however, to discover this morning that the invigorating wrasslin' bout I had with my winter coat wasn't needed. Don't get me wrong – I appreciated the warm feeling (and cardio workout) that my struggle with sleeves, double

BETWEEN THE LINES



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We're in heat wave.

It appears the polar vortex, which attempted to shift the northern ice cap of the planet to approximately 10 miles east of Platte, has subsided.

The National Weather Service, in fact, is the bearer of good news today. On Sunday, temps could hit 40 degrees in Vermillion. Thank goodness.

This should put a stop, at least temporarily, to the thousands of people that have decided, while

zippers and gloves, provided. As I write this, it is 10 degrees above zero in Vermillion. The wind is practically non-existent, at a paltry four miles per hour.

much of the nation has been locked in a deep freeze, to conduct cold-related scientific experiments.

The most popular of these seems to be the tried and true "Step Outside With a Pan of Boiling Water, Throw It Into the Air and See What Happens" procedure.

I've seen numerous videos of this done safely and properly, and the outcome is rather fabulous. The hot water turns into ice crystals before it hits the ground.

Mark Seeley, a climatologist at the University of Minnesota, explains:

"When it's cold outside, there's hardly any water vapor present in the air, whereas boiling water emits vapor very readily that's why it's steaming," he told National Public Radio. "When you throw the water up in the air, it breaks into much smaller droplets, so there's even more surface for water vapor to come off of."

"Now, cold air is very dense, and this makes its capacity to hold water vapor molecules very low. There's just fundamentally less space for the vapor molecules. So when you throw the boiling water up, suddenly the minus 22 air has more water vapor than it has room for. So the vapor precipitates out by clinging to microscopic particles in the air, such as sodium or calcium, and forming crystals. This is just what goes into the formation of snowflakes."

There's just one problem with this experiment. Quite a few people don't know how to perform it safely.

Over Monday and Tuesday, the Los Angeles Times counted at least 50 people on social media who reported burning themselves or their friends after trying to turn boiling water into snow. There were also several reports of people going to the hospital to receive treatment for burns.

Tuesday night, the *Argus Leader* shared the tale of Danielle

Albers, a Sioux Falls woman, who simply wanted to entertain her kids with this experiment.

She went outside earlier that day and stood in front of her picture window so her children could watch as she began to have boiling water into the air.

"As I was throwing it, I slipped on the ice and the water went up," she said. "It went all over my neck and down my back."

Albers sustained second- and third-degree burns along her neck and back. Large, yellow blisters had bubbled up across her lower back.

It's too warm now to try to do this experiment, but the Sioux Falls woman has advice for anyone tempted to try it should we get hit by another blast of subzero weather.

"Just don't do it," Albers said. "It's not worth it."

I've heard that blowing bubbles in severely cold weather can be kind of cool.

And very safe.

When it mattered, Adelstein showed smarts and courage

By Bob Mercer
State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE – During 11 years Stan Adelstein never got much traction in the Legislature.

Of 99 bills he introduced, 14 became law. Not one of the senator's 21 in 2012 and 2013 made it out of the Senate.

But the courage of Adelstein, R-Rapid City, shouldn't be misestimated.

He clearly was a feminist. He defended legalized abortion. He tried to stop the practice of an aggrieved spouse or parent seeking compensation in court for abduction, enticement or seduction.

He wanted Medicaid benefits expanded to pregnant mothers. Likewise he tried to raise more money for state and local governments through alcohol tax increases and a summer increase in sales tax. He championed ignition-interlock for convicted drunk drivers.

He occasionally brought legislation and resolutions regarding Judaism. Once in the House he let loose after an anonymous note was left at his desk about being a Jew. That came after he paid for lights to better show a historic mural in the House chamber

Those who truly understand Rapid City politics know too his roles in city elections.

Adelstein, 82, resigned on Dec. 30 from the Senate because of illness after surgery. With the 2014 session starting Jan. 14, Gov. Dennis Daugaard has little time to appoint a replacement.

Republicans will still control the Senate, 27-7.

You likely heard or read how then-Gov. Bill Janklow called Adelstein in the spring of 2002 and suggested some financial oomph might make the difference for Mike Rounds in the Republican primary for governor.

Rounds won the nomination. He was elected

governor, twice.

And you likely remember two years ago when Adelstein demanded state Attorney General Marty Jackley investigate activities of Secretary of State Jason Gant and deputy Pat Powers.

Adelstein introduced legislation in 2013 to make candidates for constitutional offices such as secretary of state subject to primary elections, rather than continue to be nominated at political-party conventions. This was a direct shot at the process that led to Gant's election.

The bill failed but the dissent was planted. On Sept. 3, Sen. Shantel Krebs, R-Renner, filed paperwork to run for secretary of state. Gant soon announced he wouldn't seek re-election in 2014.

For years Adelstein also showed how political action committees funded largely by one man – him – could be used to steer large amounts of money to candidates.

The Legislature adopted limits, but that merely led to multiple PACs relying on a wealthy contributor, such as those used by Republican Gordon Howie of Rapid City and Democrat Scott Heidepriem of Sioux Falls to fuel their 2010 campaigns for governor.

Adelstein's heavy emphasis on pro-choice legislation in 2005 led to rejection by Pennington County Republican voters in 2006. Elli Schwiesow took the nomination with 2,145 votes to his 1,971.

Democrat Tom Katus rolled past Schwiesow in the general election 4,994 to 4,515. Adelstein came back in 2008. He won a three-way contest, polling 3,834 votes to edge Katus at 3,464 and Schwiesow at 3,683 running as an independent.

Lesson learned: Adelstein didn't have a challenger in 2010 or 2012.

He wasn't a great legislator. But at times Stan Adelstein was good at politics – very good.



Ear hair is better than no hair

"It is not a lack of love, but a lack of friendship that makes unhappy marriages." – Friedrich Nietzsche, philosopher and poet

"You get the longevity prize when it comes to marriages in our family," came my brother's sober assessment directed at me. His remark broke waves of laughter and chatter at a mini gathering of relatives.

Only two of us have stayed together for the long haul. With his eyes calculating the mostly failed unions in our clan of six, my brother's matter-of-fact statement resonated with a tone of mystery and wonder.

"It will be 42 years in August," I acknowledged.

His statement gave me pause to consider my old habits I'm still trying to break after all these years, and some new ones I'm working on to continue to grow, including these pointers...

1. Avoid finishing his sentences. He's a big boy and will spit it out in his own time.

2. Don't interrupt him. Even though science has proven that women process information faster than men do, don't flaunt it. Let him speak.

3. When he's snoring, refrain from jabbing your elbow into his ribs. Trust me, I did this one too many times 13 years ago and have been in the dog house ever since.

4. At the end of the day, don't be the bearer of bad news. Deliver good

MY STORY YOUR STORY



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news first and wait until after he's had supper to share the bad stuff. Men are more docile on a full stomach.

5. Be sure to tell him he's handsome, even if he could not win a George Clooney or Brad Pitt lookalike contest.

6. When you're in public and notice he has more ear hair than head hair, avoid reaching into your purse for that pair of tweezers you put there just in case. Keep your mouth shut and repeat after me, "Ear hair is better than no hair."

7. When you get all gussied up to meet him for dinner at a nice restaurant and he arrives wearing his favorite pair of stained blue jeans and wrinkled t-shirt, don't despair. And, whatever you do, don't draw attention to it. That will only start a sparring match that you will not win.

8. Don't compete with each other. Remember, you're on the same team, not opposing teams, unless you're playing Scrabble, that is.

9. Be a good friend to your spouse. When you're inclined to harp about something he did or did not do, think WWYDTAF (What would you do to a friend?)

10. Try to out-serve your partner, as if you are the host of a very important event and he is the guest of honor.

11. Smile often. It becomes you. 12. Honesty is the best policy, but be tactful. Brutal honesty never gets us anywhere.

13. Surprise your spouse. Nothing breaks monotony in a relationship more than a fun surprise.

14. It's not all about Y-O-U. It's OK to do what he wants to do, even if you're not really keen on trap shooting or buffalo chip throwing. Grin and bear it.

15. Don't criticize or correct him in public and reframe from cutting him down in private.

16. Don't find fault, either. Who died and made you the "blame" police. The best policy is to look and overlook.

17. Take every opportunity to praise him. Instead of saying the dish he made for supper tastes like dog food, say something like, "Interesting flavor!" or "Thanks for cooking."

18. Unfortunately, women tend to think that pointing out a wrong makes a right. Remember, there's no place called perfect, no matter how hard you try. If you are so inclined, follow the next step.

19. Sometimes it's best to say nothing. Keep in mind the ancient proverb: "Do not speak unless you can improve the silence."

20. And finally, be loving, understanding, respectful, sensitive, supportive, accepting and playful.

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