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Personal technology wearing me out

I WAS DRIVING HOME FROM SCOUT CAMP with my son asleep in the back when she stopped short of pulling out in front of me on a two-lane country road. Soon she was following too close. Someone pulled out ahead and I slowed, and she fell back. Then after another mile, again too close. She followed me toward the highway and buzzed by at the first hint of another lane. As she passed I could see the lit cell phone as she held it up directly in her line of vision. There she went, turning without signaling onto the ramp. I lost sight of her on the highway in less than a minute.

In Cheyenne, WY recently a teenager lost her new cell phone after her dad saw the \$4,750 bill for texting, which wasn't part of the family's plan. Dad smashed the phone with his hammer. Score one for dads everywhere!

Twelve years ago I wrote a column titled "I Hate Cell Phones;" while I haven't tekped up much in the ensuing years now of course rely on my cell phone all the time. But my sentiments haven't changed; the intrusion of personal communication devices into our lives is lamentable, not to mention making driving more dangerous than ever.

I read about a 20-year-old college student who is looking forward to his summer job in Cape Cod where wireless connections are reportedly spotty. Seems he's on overload from trying to keep up with all his new best friends or something like that.

Lately I've felt a bit overloaded too, what with all the commotion about texting and twitting. Enough already with all the personal sharing. This is what people's lives have come to? Buy stock now in arthritis medicine companies, I believe all this twitting will result in record sales in the future when the digital nation's thumbs no longer work.

Here's an idea: How about meeting your friends for a cup of coffee?

Regional Conference plug

There's a great continuing education opportunity at Iowa State next month, presented by the Midwest chapters of STMA and headquarters. The 2-day event is relatively inexpensive at \$75/member, \$95/non-member (member of STMA National or Gateway, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, MO-KAN, Nebraska, Ozark, and Wisconsin chapters). That price gets you 2 days of education, exhibition and demo area entrance, and meals. Register at www.STMA.org.

Correction:

We made a mistake on page 44 in April in the photo caption. Obviously the dwarf varieties are on the left and the annual ryegrass on the right. We apologize for the error.

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