

They're Tighter Than Wallpaper!

I wrote a while back about people who are penny-pinchers, misers who carry frugality to extremes. People who will "squeeze a nickel 'til the beaver poops", as they say. I used my father as an example, but reading the "household hints" column in the newspaper I realize my dad was an amateur when it came to monetary risk avoidance. Take this, sent by a reader to the *Toronto Star* as an example;

"After you make a cup of freshly dripped filter coffee, leave the filter assembly over a mug. The next day, hold the filter upside down and shake away the dried out coffee. You can then reuse the filter. The money you save can go toward buying good coffee." I bet a person this cheap buys those fireplace logs made of compressed coffee grounds, smashes them into dust, and then uses the result to make coffee. I wrote her name down in case I ever get invited over for coffee. On second thought, this person would never invite you over for a coffee, unless instructed to bring your own.

How about this? "Save the comic section from the Star each week. The sheets make bright, colorful gift wrapping for extra-large toys for children." That's what I want, an extra large toy wrapped in a newspaper. If you can afford an extra large toy, you can afford wrapping paper.

Another lady suggested that you cut off the name and address section from your returned cheques. You then only have to glue them to envelopes for a return address. I get a million address stickers free from people who are soliciting donations. Looking at the free ones, I have return address stickers from Heart & Stroke, O.F.A.H., Easter Seals, Multiple Sclerosis, Cancer Society, and the Wildlife Federation. My logic says that if I give to these organizations, fine, most of them are worthwhile charities, and I will keep the stickers. If I don't give, what purpose am I serving by throwing the stickers away? Maybe by using them I am subtly promoting the charity. Besides, I'm hoping my stickers from the Federation of Anglers and Hunters will give my creditors pause. But aside from that, even if there are no free stickers, is it really worthwhile to cut out and glue the information from returned cheques? Isn't it easier to write a return address?

Here are some more:

"Grocery stores spray water on vegetables to keep them looking fresh. I shake them vigorously so I don't pay

for water." Sure, and save a dime over a lifetime.

"I recycle dryer softening sheets to blow my nose and for 'bathroom' purposes." Oh, my. Does this obsolete the Sears Catalog?

"When eating out, I bring home 'gently used' paper napkins or extra ones at the table and put them in a paper bag for re-use." For "bathroom" purposes?

"When I buy cherries, I select them one by one so I don't get spoiled ones and remove the stems so I don't pay for their weight." I'm sure cherry stems rival gold in weight and value, but there doesn't seem to be much point as the cherries would spoil because the stems were removed.

Senior citizens are among the cheapest people alive, and while what follows purports to be a joke, it's only funny because it's true:

Two men enter a drinking establishment. A sign over the bar reads, "All drinks, ten cents". Not really believing it, they order martinis, and receive large, extra dry Bombay Martinis in frosted glasses. The drinks are superb. The bartender collects a dime from each of them, and they order another, receiving the same exemplary drinks for the same price.

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