



Best not to use a butter knife to remove a stomach hernia

by Greg Hill, April 2, 2012

FAIRBANKS, AL — Sometimes initiative is called for, as in 2010 when a Swedish man named Jonas deeply sliced his leg open on the sharp edge of a cook stove while doing home renovations and, according to news reports, “tired of the wait at Sundsvall hospital in northern Sweden, he sewed up the cut in his leg himself.”

Afterward, Jonas said, “I first went to the health clinic, but it was closed. So I rang the medical help line, and they told me it shouldn’t be closed, so I went to emergency and sat there.”

After an hour, he saw a needle and thread were set out, so “I decided to take the matter into my own hands.” The hospital staff was ticked and reported him to the police for using hospital equipment without authorization.

Imagine what they’d have done to the 63-year old Glendale, Calif., man who last year “apparently attempted surgery on himself with a six-inch butter knife in an attempt to remove a protruding hernia from his stomach.”

According to the L.A. Times, when police arrived at the unnamed man’s house, they found him naked “on a lounge chair with what appeared to be the handle of a knife protruding from his stomach.” They reported that he “pulled out the knife and shoved a cigarette he was smoking into the open wound.”

The doctor who repaired the damage pointed out, “It is absolutely impossible for someone to fix their own hernia,” adding that in this case, “there is some amount of psychosis going on.”

The stoves of Sweden must be dangerous. Another Swedish fellow was arrested last summer for trying to split atoms in his kitchen. Richard Handle had samples of radium, americium and uranium in his apartment when the police arrived. They were called by the Swedish Radiation Authority who Handle had contacted to see if possessing this stuff was legal. They were unaware of Handle’s hobby until his call but could have followed his blog, on which he described his home experiments, including “how he created a small meltdown on his stove.”

Not being especially adept technologically, I feared the Swedish police might have to be called when I recently bought a Nook e-book reader to take on a trip to the East Coast. Happily, I consulted an adept librarian at Noel Wien Library beforehand and all was smooth sailing.

Clearly, I’m no “early adopter” of technology. That designation, defined by NetLingo.com as “a person who uses a new form of technology from the onset of its development, incorporating it into his or her lifestyle,” is a badge of honor among geeks and other techies.

Nor am I “edgy,” in the NetLingo sense of “something that’s on the cutting edge or attempts to push the

limit.” That’s because I’ve been on the “bleeding edge,” which Technopedia.com defines as “technology that has been released but is still not ready for the general public due to the fact that it has not been reliably tested.”

That happened years ago when our library was the first in the state-wide consortium to “go live” with a new integrated library system, the software that runs the catalogs and tracks who’s borrowed what. The software had been beta tested by UCLA, among other major libraries, who were sworn to secrecy about its failings. We trusted the company, which is no longer in business, and the other librarians, and were soon reaching for butter knives.

That was long ago. We survived and surpassed that ordeal, and now the library’s a place people turn to for help with information technology.

Scads of Fairbanksans acquired e-book readers during the holidays, and those in the know turned to their public library, both for free e-books through the Listen Alaska link on the library’s webpage (fnsblibrary.org) and learning how to load them into those e-readers.

The public library excels at aggregating information affordably, and helping old fuddies like yours truly get over their technological heebie-jeebies.

Along with thousands of free e-books, at your library you’ll find printed instructions for loading e-books onto readers, and friendly computer-proficient librarians to guide you.

Only your initiative is required, and as Victor Hugo said, “Initiative is doing the right thing without being told.”

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As seen here: <http://newsminer.com/bookmark/18003958-Best-not-to-use-a-butter-knife-to-remove-a-stomach-hernia>