

STEP BOLDLY INTO CHILDCARE BREECH BUT LOOK OUT FOR CHEESE DOODLES

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By now everyone who has read more than two of my columns knows I like to cite clichés as a way of introduction.

I will preface this one with one of my all-time favorites: “No good deed goes unpunished.” It ranks as my favorite because of my unerring propensity for arriving at junctures that insure that it holds true for me. A classic example presented itself last March 22.

My problem started for two basic reasons. The first is that I am a hopeless doting grandfather who enjoys his grandchildren. The second is my aversion to other than family caring for them.

It goes double for government-sponsored day care. Why should working mothers who pay for their own childcare be taxed to provide free childcare for others?

The plight began when a problem arose with the care and comfort of my grandsons, Forrest and Tecwyn Williams, four and two year olds respectively. Mom and grandmom were both away on extended trips and regular care provider Brandi Capron was imminently expecting another charge of her own.

Grandpa was only too happy to step into the breach and welcomed the opportunity to spend time with the boys.

Visions of quality time with them danced through my head as I prepared for bed in anticipation of their early morning arrival.

We would start with a real man’s breakfast of sausage and eggs. Then we would sort and store some of gramp’s tools and fishing tackle, all items near and dear to the boys’ hearts.

Around nine we would head up for the mail and after a quick stop at Walt’s Diner, go on up to Inlet to check on a log job. A quick lunch and short stint of cartoons

followed by a nap would fill time before Dad came home and took over. I love it when a plan comes together.

I could see it all. We would end up with a real bond and rapport that only grandpas and grandsons can know. It would be perfect. We would have a ball and all will come off without a hitch.

I never have been able to understand what could be so hard about taking care of two so precious little fellows. It would be a piece of cake for a man of my caliber. What could possibly go wrong?

I soon found out. You may recall Monday, March 22, was the start of a prolonged spell with the area being without power due to a heavy, wet snowfall. My plans went down the drain.

Forrest was not feeling well and would not eat. They could not go out in the snow and play. Gramp could not stand the nightmare of trying to worm them into their boots and suits only to have them back in wringing wet five minutes later.

They blew the little water I was conserving in the pressure tank in spite of my pleadings. The river water stored in the bathtub was a source of joy and they did their best to distribute same throughout the rest of the house.

The chips and Cheese Doodles suffered the same fate and sans vacuum were a source of constant irritation added to the rest of the confusion.

The nap did not work out in spite of my impassioned entreaties and I ended up with Forrest taking a time-out in the corner to get Tecwyn down.

There were many good moments when we all seemed to be hitting it off, but they did not last long and Gramp was left anxiously waiting for Dad to get home. When he did, I assured him I needed no help with the dishes, just get the boys home and bedded.

The ordeal was over Tuesday night in time for "Sanford and Son" and after a much-needed shower and shave, I relaxed for the first time in two days.

To make a long story short, I love them both dearly and would do it all over again
– but I hope I don't have to!