

# Can Kids Wear Out Power Windows?

BY TOM AND RAY MAGLIOZZI

When I was a kid, my siblings and I loved to play with the power windows – up a little, down a little, up some more, down some more, all the way up. Our elders always told us to cut it out because we'd wear out the switches. Now that I have kids of my own who love to do the same thing, I find it annoying, so I tell them to cut it out because they'll wear out the switches. But it makes me wonder – can you really wear out power-window switches, or were my elders fibbing, just the way I am? – **John**

**RAY:** I don't think I'd worry too much about the switches, John.

**TOM:** No. Switches are cheap. It's the broken power-window motors and regulators that'll have you cursing the little rugrats.

**RAY:** All of those parts – the switches, the motors and the window regulators (the mechanical pieces that actually move the glass up and down) – have thousands of cycles in them. But not an infinite number.

**TOM:** So, let's say you have two kids, and we'll assume the little tykes are confined to the back seat. On a three-hour trip to Grandma's, let's say each kid works one rear window – up and down, up and down, con-



CLICK & CLACK

tinuously. That's about 2,000 cycles right there. Or 4,000 round trip, if the kids aren't sleeping off candy comas after visiting Grandma.

**RAY:** If you make that trip once a year, within three years or so, you're going to need two window motors. And, depending on the car (sometimes you have to buy the regulator and the motor as one unit), they can cost anywhere between \$200 and \$500 per window!

**TOM:** So, you have two reasonable choices, John. One is to invent a coin-operated power-window mechanism. For a nickel or a dime, your kids will be able to raise or lower the window once, while contributing to their eventual repair.

**RAY:** Or you could simply limit the kids' playtime with the windows. You don't want to ruin all their fun, so give them a couple of minutes to play, and then when you start to smell smoke, tell them "Time's up," and deactivate their window switches (which you can do from the driver's control panel). Then, hopefully, they'll turn their destructive instincts to something less expensive, like opening and closing the ashtrays until their doors fall off.

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# Understanding What We Want Is Not Easy

BY TOBIN BARNES



Barnes

We don't really understand what we want, do we?

Boy, that's a pretty broad statement. Let me narrow that down a bit.

I don't really understand what I want, do I?

Yeah, that's much better.

Now if you happen to see some similarities to yourself in the following description, we'll work from that angle to start widening my theory back out to the totality it was in the first sentence.

Anyway, before the holiday season, I was looking forward to some down time after a lot of busy-ness. Added to that, for a change, we weren't going to be traveling anywhere for the holidays, so we figured we'd have many wonderful empty hours to fill with nothing in particular—just whatever, you know?

Ah, the bliss of unscheduled time!

Well, don't you know, we got that in spades. There's a fine line between "empty hours to fill with nothing in particular" and pure, unadulterated, left-studying-the-wall boredom.

It all began with the big Christmas blizzard. Yeah, a relentlessly white Christmas! That, in theory, would be nice, apropos of so many carols. Uh huh, I tell you, days without being able to go anywhere and with nowhere to go even if we could get there. Ay, Caramba! Save me from myself.

Sure, it started great. But after making pancakes, fiddling around with my gadgets, and catching up in a few hours with stuff I thought would take days, I was left with too much time to get anything else done.

Too much time? That's right, too much time. When you have too much time on your hands, doing anything of value becomes nearly impossible.

Why? Because you turn into a big, fat banana slug, barely able to move, that's why. All you can manage is a few "blub" sounds as you occasionally roll from one side to the other on the couch like a sunning walrus.

Granted, that's hyperbole...but not by much. Certainly, when you've got too much time on your hands, you can still get out of bed, you can still eat, and you can still turn on the TV. But beyond that, there's no immediacy. There's no urge. There's no need.

And if there's no need, there's no action. The metamorphosis from fairly active, somewhat achieving, middle-aged man to banana slug is complete. It is de-evolution at its most deficient. It's survival of the wastrels. Blub.

Normally, you'd think natural selection would eliminate blubbing animals like wastrel banana slugs and wastrel couch potatoes, but they continue to exist, if not thrive.

Maybe it's because a banana slug looks like...well, obviously...a banana. And a banana in the jungle is a threat to nothing else. It just hangs there ripening, causing other living things no problem (unless they don't know how to open a banana properly—which I've taken pains to point out before is not by the so-called stem, but by squeezing the bottom).

It is much the same for a couch potato with too much time on his hands. He is a threat to nothing else, except maybe to his wife's sanity or perhaps to an infinitesimal portion of the Gross Domestic Product.

But, happily, all this will be remedied when the banana is finally eaten properly, the banana slug stays out in the sun too long and shrivels up into a wet spot, and the couch potato goes back to work and returns to a schedule.

And then the world will spin again on greased grooves.

<http://tobin.barnes.blogspot.com>

Tobin Barnes, a high school English teacher, gets his skewed viewpoints of life from staring too much at Crow Peak, which looms above his home a few miles outside Spearfish.

## SCHOLASTICS

### MMC DEAN'S LIST

Mount Marty College has released the names of Dean's List qualifiers for the Fall, 2009 semester. Students must achieve a 3.5 grade point average or higher to qualify for this prestigious honor. Students from the area that made the Dean's list included:

**Nebraska**  
Bloomfield: Kyah Lauck;  
Crofton: Tara Evans, Tierney Schumacher, Jenna Van Heek;  
Fordyce: Ashley Pinkelman;  
Randolph: Amy Gubbels.

**South Dakota**  
Freeman: Chelsea Schultz;  
Hurler: Carly Benson;  
Irene: Danielle Lucas, Rachel Mellem;  
Lake Andes: Ashley Soulek;  
Lesterville: Maggie Gali;

Mission Hill: Scott Bormann, Jeremy Brenden, Jennifer Simpson;  
Olivet: Stephanie Parrish;  
Scotland: Amber Kruse, Cassie Neth;  
Tabor: Jordan Lenards, Katelyn Schindler;

Vermillion: Jessica Jurgensen;  
Wagner: Karis Gundrum;  
Yankton: Brittany Brasel, Julie Decker, David DeWitt, John DeWitt, James Fillaus, Nicole Finkal, Rebecca Glidden, Kylie Gross, Abigail Hunhoff, Laura Jenks, Joshua Koch, Titus Kosgei, James Leyden, Sarah Maty, Ashley Merkel, Tana O'Neill, Katrina Romero, Mi Seon Ryu, Felicia Sailer, Tina Saraceni, Audra Smith, Amy Stephenson, Sarah Swensen, Brian Teel, Jami Vander Broek, Kimberly Veik, Amber Walter, Albert White hat, Beverly Wurpis, Megan Zimmerman and Michael Tomac.

### SDSU DEAN'S LIST

**BROOKINGS** — The following students have been named to the dean's list for academic excellence during the Fall 2009 semester at South Dakota State University. To earn dean's list distinctions, students must have completed a minimum of 12 credits and must have earned at least a 3.5 grade point average on a 4.0 scale. Students with an asterisk received a perfect 4.0 grade point average.

**Nebraska**  
Bloomfield: Jared Mann, Justin Cunningham;  
Crofton: Brady Foxhoven\*, Dana Merkel\*;  
Fordyce: Jim Jansen

**South Dakota**  
Avon: Amanda DeJong\*, Natalie Schultz, Amy Schultz\*, Jennifer Weber\*;  
Centerville: Matthew Aucht\*, Alison Knutson\*;

Eik Point: Kyle Hanson, Beth Knutson;  
Freeman: Tiffany Mehlhaff, Brett Pidde, Jennifer Zanter, Aaron Boese, Sarah Rumi, Alia Alishare-Soulek;  
Gayville: Emily Koehler\*, Brian Bye Hurler, Angela Hotz\*;

Irene: Cody Oswald, Clinton Schroeder;  
Jefferson: Lanian Florke, Joseph Frankl

Lake Andes: Riley Svatos, Jessica Walder, Danielle Walder\*;  
Lesterville: Jeremy Syrovatka;  
Meckling: Shannon Jepsen\*;  
Menno: Tera Dubs, Michelle Neuharth;

Olivet: Tyler Miller, Kristin Rokusek;  
Parkston: Chad Konrad, Natalie Weber, Rebecca Murtha, Alan Armstrong, Andrea Wagner, Tory Alley, Kristin Thomas, Mallory Weiss\*, Cassie

Heisinger\*, Kelsey Kummer\*, Nikki Reiff, Casey Baumiller, Ryan Murtha\*;  
Platte: Joseph Nepodal, Heather Turris, Lindsey Olson, Rebecca Naasz\*, Colin Nachtigal\*, Benjamin Meyerink, Melissa Wesseling, Katie Willmont, Joshua Veurink\*

**Scotland:** Nicholas Fischer, Mark Misar, Jared Swefel, Hilary Patocka  
**Springfield:** Jessica Simons, Evan Palsma, Taylor Ramsdell\*  
**St. Helena, Neb.:** Brett Kleinschmit

**Tabor:** Janelle Kokes  
**Tripp:** Tiffany Mehlhaff, Cheryl Bietz, Bryan Bietz, Thomas Gali, Michael Konrad, Justin Horn  
**Tyndall:** Brandon Tyczy\*, Michelle Schuch

**Utica:** Megan Schaeffer, Shawna Knutson\*, Shelby McCouown\*  
**Vermillion:** Kie Hubert\*, Maureen Burton, Paul Hammond, Casey Carlson, Melissa Tracy  
**Viborg:** Troy Larson\*

**Wagner:** Cassandra Krcl\*, Tyler Cuka, Kara Schroeder, Cassandra Krcl\*  
**Yankton:** Caleb Cooke, Heather McDonald, Ashley Pfeiffer, Paul Ridgway, Emily Hansen, Ashley Knoff, Jessica Howell\*, Kristin Sternhagen\*, Sarah Binder\*, Kelly Cornemann\*, Brian Tackel\*, Layne Somsen, Ryan Burton, Brett Schurman, Douglas Stearns, Derek Eversley, Paul Haas\*, Elizabeth Young, Christopher Hubbs, Abigail Kramer\*, Staci Metz\*, Michael Quinlivan\*, Ashley Storm\*, Jared Aills, Kara Estabrook and Kimberly Dawn.

### NORTHEAST PRESIDENT'S LIST

**NORFOLK, Neb.** — Officials at Northeast Community College in Norfolk recently released the President's Honor List and Deans' Honor List for both full- and part-time students for the Fall 2009 Semester.

To be named to the President's Honor List, students must earn a perfect grade point average of 4.0 and be enrolled for at least 12 credit hours. Some 181 students made the President's Honor List this fall semester.

Students named to the Deans' Honor List must have earned a grade point average of 3.75 or above and be enrolled for at least 12 credit hours.

**President's Honor List Full Time Nebraska**  
Bloomfield: Greta Friedrichsen;  
Coleridge: Eric Schurman;  
Crofton: Samantha Blair, Garrett Carpenter, Kevin Doerr, Elyse Shaffer  
Crofton: Allison Hoebelheinerich;  
Fordyce: Thomas Steffen  
St. Helena: Taylor Boeckman;  
Vergdige: Brandon Pierce;  
Wausa: Jeffrey Dunn, Kenneth Kumm, Nevin Peters

**South Dakota**  
Springfield: Ethan Burk;  
Tyndall: Sean Bauder;  
Vermillion: Mason Eichelberg;  
Yankton: Haylee Monk

**Presidents Honor List Part-Time Nebraska**  
Allen: Judy Nice;  
Crofton: Daniel Buschkamp, Larry Taylor;  
Fordyce: Katelyn Eickhoff;  
Hartington: Madison Becker, Carrie Burbach, Kaylee Dump, Shanna Leise, Taylor Miller, Toni Peitz, Alyssa Steffen, Danielle Steffen, Lisa Weier, Jason Wintz  
Wynot: Jacob Reifenrath;

**Deans' List Full-Time Nebraska**  
Bloomfield: Lindsay Hopkins, Britanni Seagren;  
Coleridge: Andrew Dendinger  
Crofton: Shane Carpenter, Grant Doerr, Josh Kruse, Michael Kuhlman,

Lance Rudloff, Mackenzie Schlote, Emily Wagner  
Crofton: Brittany Schieffer  
Fordyce: Jason Loecker  
Hartington: Mark Dendinger, Crystal Felmeier, Alyssa Fischer, Zachary Kramer

**South Dakota**  
Laurie: Lacey Heikes, Tyler Jacot, Nicole Thompson  
Vergdige: Stephanie Larsen  
Wausa: Brian Haselhorst

**South Dakota**  
Vermillion: Daniel Amundson  
Wagner: Jessica Robertson  
Yankton: Alex Becker

**Deans' List Part-Time Nebraska**  
Crofton: Rebah Opkis;  
Crofton: Justine Kube  
Fordyce: Donald Dickes, Angela Steffen

Hartington: Jordan Anderson, Steve Craig, Jillian Felmeier, Cassandra Howey, Kendra Lammers, Andy Moser, Tracy Peitz  
Randolph: Jessica Haselhorst

### AUGUSTANA DEAN'S LIST

**SIOUX FALLS** — Augustana College's Dean's List for the 2009 fall semester cites the academic achievements of 525 students. Full-time students with grade point averages of 3.5 or higher are eligible for the Dean's List.

The following area students were named to the Dean's List for the 2009 fall semester.

**Centerville:** Robin Bennett  
**Eik Point:** Olivia Matthews, Alexandra Staum, Curt Truhe;  
**Freeman:** Melissa Svartbrien;  
**Hartington, Neb.:** Laura Wiebelhaus;  
**Hurler:** Kayla Graber;  
**Lesterville:** Crystal Dvoracek;  
**Platte:** Devan Hansum;

**Scotland:** Molly Kokesh;  
**Vermillion:** Anna Isaacson;  
**Yankton:** Spenser Ferrell, Drew Heithoff, Samuel Hopewell, Natalie Kathol, Emily Lincoln and Hannah Lincoln.

### NORTHEAST ANNOUNCES GRADUATES

**NORFOLK, Neb.** — Some 137 Northeast Community College students completed their course of studies and requirements for diplomas or degrees during the Fall 2009 Semester.

The candidates for graduation, as of the end of the Fall 2009 Semester, are listed below by state and hometown. Key to abbreviations: A.A.S.-Associate of Applied Science; A.A.-Associate of Arts; A.S.-Associate of Science.

**Nebraska**  
Bloomfield: Lori Schlecht, A.A.;  
Crofton: Samantha Blair, A.A.;  
Jack Johnson, A.A.; Lindsay Laflan, A.A.;  
Chelsea Naprstek, A.A.;  
Chelsea Naprstek, A.S.; Mackenzie

Schlote, A.A.S. — Administrative Assistant  
Crofton: Christopher Krepel,  
A.A.S.-Diesel Technology; Cody Wilken, A.A.S.-Electromechanical Technology  
Hartington: Alyssa Fischer, A.S.; Miles Lammers, A.A.S.-Diesel Technology

**South Dakota**  
Wagner: Jessica L. Robertson, A.A.S.

### NELSON MAKES ST. LUKE'S COLLEGE CHANCELLOR'S LIST

**SIOUX CITY, Iowa** — Brooke Nelson, a 2nd year radiology student at St. Luke's College in Sioux City, Iowa, made the Chancellor's List for the fall semester of the 2009 school year by achieving a grade point average of 3.5 or above and satisfactory clinical attainment for that session.

Nelson is pursuing her Associate of Science in radiology, which is affiliated with St. Luke's Health System. She is a graduate of Crofton High School, Crofton, Neb. Her parents are Val and Kathy Nelson of Crofton, Neb.

### SDATAT ANNOUNCES THEIR 2010 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The South Dakota Association of Towns & Townships is again offering a \$1000 scholarship to a senior high school student who lives in South Dakota and is currently attending a South Dakota public, private, or parochial high school or a home school program. Graduates of the class of 2010 are eligible to apply for the scholarship. The student must use the scholarship for a college, university, or vocational school which has a physical presence in South Dakota.

Applicants must complete an application form and submit it along with a written essay on the topic: "Do you plan to vote? What does the privilege of voting mean to you? What qualities are important to you in a candidate?" These forms are available at <http://sdtownships.com/>, emailing us at [sdstaff@santel.net](mailto:sdstaff@santel.net), or contacting the office at 605-353-1439.

The winner will be announced in May. However, the actual scholarship money will be paid to the financial office of the chosen school in the fall of 2011. Seniors graduating in 2010 are eligible. The winner and their family will be guests at the SDATAT annual meeting at Aberdeen, SD in December of 2010. Deadline for application is April 1, 2010.

For more information contact: SDATAT 2010 Scholarship Program PO Box 903 Huron SD 57350 [sdstaff@santel.net](mailto:sdstaff@santel.net)

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