

## The election controversy continues

Larry Thurlow of Bogue, deeply involved in the controversy surrounding the medals and hero status pinned on Sen. John Kerry resulting from his service to the nation during the Vietnam war, continues to call the Democratic presidential candidate a liar.

There's that word again!  
The descriptions of what happened in that war-torn country 30 some years ago when Mr. Thurlow and Officer Kerry served in the same enemy waters but in different boats are miles apart.

Military documents seem to side in with Kerry. But that hasn't silenced Mr. Thurlow, despite the fact the documents contradict what Thurlow is saying.

Thurlow is a member of a group called "Swift Boat Veterans for Truth," a GOP-leaning group of Vietnam veterans who say Kerry exaggerated his actions to win war medals.

Again we ask, "Who cares?" And why is this alleged Kerry exaggeration, or as Thurlow would say "lie," just now surfacing and did not play a role in any of Kerry's many prior successful elections?

Steve Schmidt, a spokesman for President Bush's re-election campaign, said, "The Bush campaign has never and will never question John Kerry's service in Vietnam."

Laughable.  
Of course the ongoing controversy is good for the Bush campaign. Why would the president ask the "Swift Boat Veterans for Truth" to tape their traps shut? They're doing him a big favor. And the polls are beginning to reflect that.

The more the electorate talks about the Kerry Vietnam war controversy, the less they talk about the Bush war in Iraq.

War? We all knew that war would figure into the decision made on election day Nov. 2, but now we are faced with the question, "Which war?"

— Tom A. Dreiling

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR: Woman doesn't agree with coalition

To the Editor:  
Those of us who do not agree with the Christian Coalition don't care what their beliefs are. We do, though, resent them forcing their beliefs on others.  
The Christian Coalition's shameless controlling tactics were made apparent by the dirty campaign waged by their candidate against his opponent in the primary. There was nothing Christian about that!  
After reading the letter to the editor

outlining the goals of the Christian Coalition, you realize they will never be satisfied until they are in total control of our governments, schools, businesses and every other aspect of our lives.

People who wrap themselves in Christianity and use it as a tool to further their agenda give Christianity a bad name.

Frankie Holeman,  
Norton

## WRITE:

The Norton Telegram encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of public interest. Letters should be brief, clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise.

We do not publish form letters or letters about topics which do not pertain to our area. Thank-yous should be submitted to the Want Ad desk.

Letters will not be censored, but will be read and edited for form and style, clarity, length and legality. We will not publish attacks on private individuals or businesses which do not pertain to a public issue.

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## Looking at other people passes time

At one time I was pretty much a talk-news addict. I watched and listened to the analysts for hours. It gave me a lot to think about and amused me. A lot of the "talking heads" are so self-important you just have to laugh at them. Some are innately funny and know how to use their wit.

I wasn't employed outside my home then so it passed the time. I find myself in a similar position now. I am at home a lot and I sew, do housework or cook to the din of the television. But I have changed the channel.

HGTV reigns.  
This may be because of the house renovation we are undertaking. But I have also come to realize that I am sick of talk! And ultimately it is just a huge waste of time. Or maybe I am sick of analysis.

All our talk cannot change what has happened and unless we are the actual people determining policy it will not change the future.

We see a lot of this in an election year. How many news stories have you seen speculating about how John Kerry would handle this or that or why George W Bush has done something?

The absolute truth is (keeping in mind that there are no absolute truths) we can never guess how John Kerry will handle something.

Francis Bacon said "Men must pursue things which are just in present, and leave the future to the divine providence."

Back Home  
Nancy Hagman



As to why George W Bush did something; it is possible not even he knows.

I realize his job is very important but most of us can identify with the "what did I come into this room for" syndrome. Sometimes we just have to react. It is not a conspiracy. We can't plan for everything — see Bacon's quote above.

But it is not just in politics we play this little game of "how come" and "what if" I, you, he, she, it, they did \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank.)

We do it everyday with our family and friends.

I have noticed this in my conversations with my daughters and friends. One sister tells me what she thinks of what the other is doing. We analyze the pros and cons, the motives of everyone involved, the circumstances that brought the situation about and possible outcomes.

We aren't gossiping. We are helping. When we are done (if we get done, sometimes it just goes on and on) we are left unsatisfied.

But it does fill up time. Or waste time.

Recently I saw a "cowboy" tee shirt that proclaimed "Tattoos are scars without the stories."

I know it was just a little joke but it struck me as profound.

For too many of us life has become so easy we get tattoos to make ourselves interesting. We have nothing in our own lives worthy of interest so we spend endless hours examining the lives of others.

Their lives may turn out to be just as boring as our own, but at least it passed the time.

We intellectualize it if we are intellectuals. We politicize it if we are in politics. We justify it by saying we are concerned. We find precedence in the Bible and call it evangelism.

We talk and talk.  
Then someone misquotes us or misrepresents what we said and we wish we had never said anything.

It happens all the time.

My advice: Don't give advice!  
Even if you are asked. Be an ear to listen and a shoulder to cry on. Find your own truths, recognize talk as talk and give it precious little of your time.

**Keep in mind**  
There is so much good in the worst of us,  
And so much bad in the best of us,  
That it hardly becomes any of us  
To talk about the rest of us.

Author Unknown

## A rose garden is more than it seems

One of the homes in our neighborhood has a beautiful rose garden in the front drive area. All summer long the blooms have been vibrant and then faded only to return to vivid colors once again.

Each time I would drive by I would marvel at these beautiful flowers and ponder the grower's secret.

"They must have some strong pesticide and frequently fertilize to achieve these horticulturist delights," my envious mind declared. But I never happened to be there when someone was working in the yard or when there was someone to ask about the roses.

And so I was delighted one day to see the resident working outside and I slowed the car and yelled out of the window.

"Your flowers are so beautiful and I enjoy them so much. What is your se-

Phase II  
Mary Kay Woodyard



farewell as they leave. It brings joy to passers-by and hope to the rose growing challenged.

It doesn't just happen; it is tended with loving care. But even as often as I drive by I seldom see the work going into it. It's much like a marriage that way. It has times when it is blooming and filled with overwhelming beauty and then there are those times when it is wilted, fading and downright thorny. And all of this as we, the outsiders, are going on our merry way, unaware of the beauty or the thorns that may be disrupting another's life.

I think it was his immediate response though that so thrilled me. Without skipping a beat, he had declared his love, admitted to the work and acknowledged the reward. This wasn't for him; it was for those he loves.

## A FUNNY FOR TODAY

The Dysfunctional Section of a Hallmark Store...

• I always wanted to have someone to hold, someone to love. And now that you've come into my life... (Inside card) - I've changed my mind.  
• I must admit, you brought religion into my life... (Inside card) - I never believed in Hell until I met you.  
• As the days go by, I think how lucky I am.... (Inside card) - That you're not here to ruin it for me.  
• Congratulations on your promotion. Before you go.... (Inside card) - Will you

take the knife from my back? You'll probably need it again.  
• Someday I hope to marry... (Inside card) - Someone other than you.  
• Happy Birthday! You look great for your age.... (Inside card) - Almost lifelike!  
• When we were together, you said you'd die for me... (Inside card) - Now we've broken up, I think it's time to keep your promise.  
• We've been friends for a very long time... (Inside card) - What do you say we stop?

• I'm so miserable without you... (Inside card) - It's almost like you're still here.  
• You are such a good friend. If we were on a sinking ship and there was only one life jacket... (Inside card) - I'd miss you terribly and think of you often.  
• Your friends and I wanted to do something special for your birthday... (Inside card) - So we're having you put to sleep.  
• Looking back over the years we've been together, I can't help but wonder... (Inside card) - What was I thinking?