

Children's lives hang in the balance; Tsunami victims need your help

Please help. Thousands of people on the other side of the world are hurting, and we can help them. It's hard to feel empathy for people you have never met, never seen and know nothing about. It's a lot easier to feel sorry for a puppy you see standing and shivering in the cold. Still, the tidal wave that hit the countries around the Indian Ocean caused incredible damage, killed more than 150,000 people, and left thousands homeless and without food, water or medical help. We can help, and we have someone we know to help us do it. Dinesh Kumarajeeva lived and went to school in Norton in 1980-'81. Many people here still remember him. He is a native of Sri Lanka, one of the hardest hit of the 12 countries to suffer from the tsunami. While he lives in the U.S., his sister still lives in Sri Lanka and will be helping to distribute money sent to her through her brother for relief efforts.

If you're still having trouble reaching into your pocket for a couple of bucks, just remember that the life of a child may be in your wallet. The \$5 you give may be used to buy water purification tablets, which in turn will allow a child who might have died of dysentery to drink safe water and live. You could be saving a child who will grow up to be an artist, a singer, an athlete or a doctor. While the U.S., the United Nations and others are working to raise millions to help the masses, your money will be going to help children in refugee camps. These are children who have lost their parents, their homes and the only lives they have ever known. Send your contribution to Dinesh Kumarajeeva, No. 3 Oak Place, Watertown, Ma. 02472-3714, or call him at (617) 504-2902. Please help.

— Cynthia Haynes

Congressman recognized for record

Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Dennis Hastert today recognized Congressman Jerry Moran for his near perfect voting record during 2004.

In the second session of the 108th Congress, Mr. Moran only missed four votes, compiling a 99.4 percent record.

"Jerry Moran's voting record is proof that he is one of the hardest working members of the House of Representatives, and it serves as a testament to his commitment to the people of Kansas," Speaker Hastert said. "Jerry spends each week here in Washington, D.C., working for Kansans, then travels home on the weekend to work in his district. His dedication to the First Congressional District is unmatched."

Congressman Moran's voting record was broken on Sept. 10, when House business ran long, conflicting with his attendance at the dedication of the Kansas Veteran's Cemetery in WaKeeney. Mr. Moran, who is a member of the House Committee on Veteran's Affairs, attended the dedication, causing him to miss the four votes.

Since coming to Congress in 1996,

Capitol Views

Rep. Jerry Moran



Congressman Moran has maintained a near perfect voting record.

"Jerry understands the importance of representing his constituents by the votes he casts in Congress," Speaker Hastert said. "It is rare for a member of Congress to maintain this high percentage rate for votes cast, yet still work every weekend within their district. Jerry is a great representative for the people of Kansas."

Speaker Dennis Hastert convened the 109th Congress by swearing in Members. Moran was sworn in to his fifth term in the U.S. House of Representatives.

For more information, contact Congressman Moran at (202) 225-2715 or visit his web page at www.house.gov/moranks01/.

Ode to the Snow shovel

The edge is curled
FROM SCRAPING CEMENT.
THE HANDLE IS LOOSE,
TWISTED AND BENT.

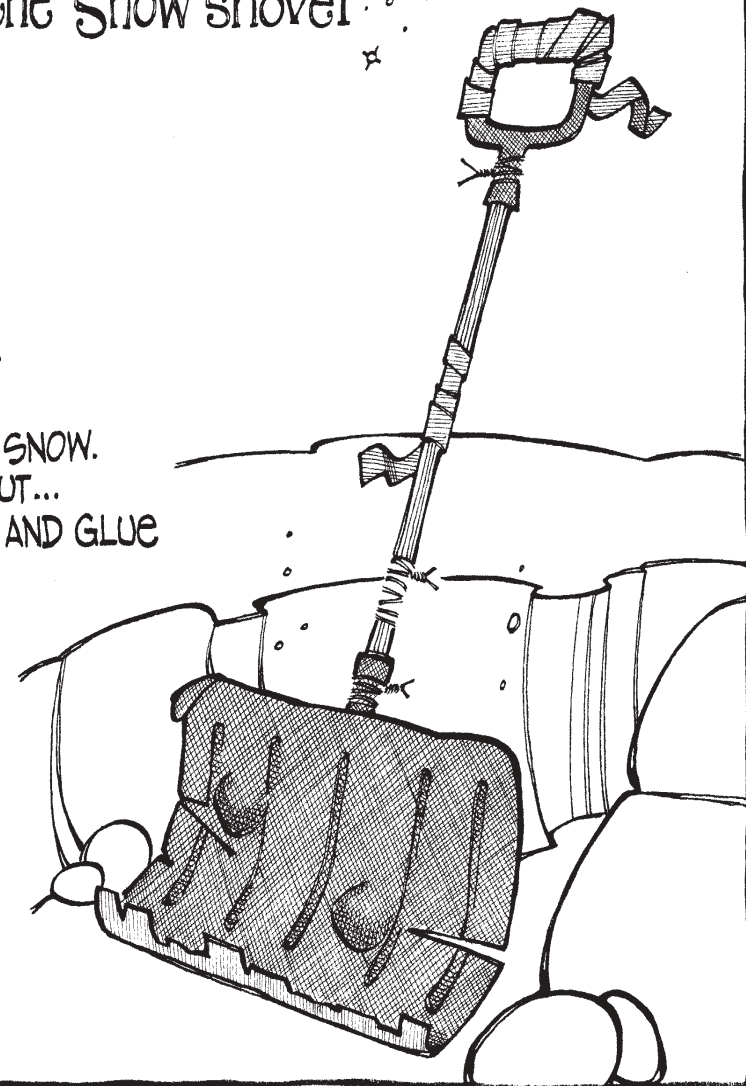
DIGGING THROUGH SNOW...
CHIPPING AT ICE...
THIS SHOVEL LACKS SOMETHING...
A PULL START WOULD BE NICE.

THIS STORM DUMPED A MOUNTAIN OF SNOW.
NOW IF ONLY THE SHOVEL HOLDS OUT...
BUT WITH ALL THE DUCT TAPE, WIRE AND GLUE
I HAVE SOME SERIOUS DOUBT.

NEARING THE END
OF THE DRIVEWAY AT LAST!
JUST IN TIME TO BE BURIED
BY THE PLOW GOING PAST.

WITH ALL THE TECHNOLOGY
AT OUR FINGERTIPS
THEY'LL NEVER MAKE A SHOVEL
THAT OUR HANDS WILL FIT.

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Humble pie served up by a 5-year-old

You've never been humbled until you've been humbled by a child. There is nothing quite like it.

My youngest daughter Kara is an accountant for a property management company in Dallas. She handles large transactions every day, she keeps the books on dozens of business properties, she knows and understands complicated bookkeeping principles.

That must be why sending invitations for her daughter's birthday party was confusing. It was too simple.

Kara said she had addressed 19 invitations to her daughter Taylor's sixth birthday party, but she was stumped.

"Taylor," she said, "Think, think. There are 20 kids in your class and I can only come up with 19. Who are we forgetting?"

"Uh, Mom," Taylor began. "You don't have to send one to me. I make 20."

"Right," was Kara's only answer.

She did tell me of the plans for Taylor's party. If I understand this right, policy does not allow parties at school, but it for-

Out Back

Carolyn Plotts



your child what, you hope, will be the perfect birthday party. I know I sponsored my share of roller-skating and pizza parties. It has only been in the last few years that I learned a dark secret my girls had kept from me.

I was confident both of them had said they didn't really like cake. So, thinking I was being the good mother, I came up with an alternate.

Every year, when they were little, I made them a Rice Krispie cake, decorated with candles, frosting and their name spelled out in chocolate chips. Can you imagine how devastating it was to learn they had just been humoring me? They didn't like the Rice Krispie cake, either. I was crushed.

Thank you (sniff, sniff), I'm (sniff) over it, now.

On Friday, Alexandria, my granddaughter who lives nearby, will be 11, and I'm sure her mother has a special fete planned for her. Too bad Taylor and Alexandria live so far apart. Their moms could combine forces and get two for the price of one.

A bird in the hand is worth two in the family Christmas tree

Some people had a partridge in a pear tree over the holidays. I had a sparrow in the Christmas tree.

Steve warned me when I insisted on putting in a pet door that we would be finding more than cats inside the house. He was right.

So far, the cats have brought in a bird every three to four weeks.

Just after Christmas, after the children had all left and Steve was out doing errands, I was trying to solve the world's problems when Molly Monster waltzed into the room with a sparrow in her mouth. Like a flash, I was after her, but she headed through the kitchen into the dining room, where she let go of her prey. It immediately took flight, headed for the living room.

We both headed after it in hot pursuit. The bird seemed to be headed for the front window, but suddenly spotted what looked like a safe haven. It dove into the Christmas tree.

The cat and I both came to a screeching halt and started staring intently at the tinsel- and light-festooned branches for a brown wing. I looked high while Molly looked low, then she jumped onto a chair to check the middle of the tree. She has better eyes or a better nose, because she came up with the bird first.

However, I was armed with a couple of paper towels and a strong desire to not have more feathers spread all over my house — we'd been through the bird thing before. I grabbed the bird out of her mouth and headed for the kitchen door with the cat hot on my tail.

I could feel the little heart beating under my hand but figured any bird that had

Open Season

Cynthia Haynes



put their pictures in the paper, so I went out with the animal control officer to take dog pictures.

The dogs were great, though almost impossible to photograph. They were either trying to kiss me or run away. After a lot of laughter and licking, I got the happy faces of three dogs.

There was only one cat at the shelter, and it had escaped. It was hiding under the cat kennels, and I said I would help catch it.

After all the excitement with the dogs, though, the cat was not in a good mood. As soon as I laid hands on it, it turned and went for me with all 10 front claws.

My left hand looks a little like Fearless Leader from the Rocky and Bullwinkle Show.

The scratches aren't deep. It was my own fault. A day later, the animal control officer said she was able to catch the cat with no problem. Timing is everything.

So, I won one and I lost one. Fighting with cats, that's pretty good.

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.

