

New appointee seems qualified

We will be watching with interest the treatment rendered Alberto Gonzales as he confronts the U. S. Senate in his quest to win approval as President Bush's attorney general.

Democrats, not all of them but enough to make waves, aren't all that excited about approving the nominee to be the nation's chief law enforcement officer. The concerns vary but seem to settle on words appearing on one of the memos written by Gonzales relating to the war on terrorism in which he "rendered obsolete" the Geneva Conventions' strict prohibition against torture. Gonzales served as President Bush's top lawyer.

Shortly thereafter Mr. Bush signed an order declaring he had the authority to bypass the accords "in this or future conflicts," and that the Geneva treaty's references to prisoners of war did not apply to al-Qaida or "unlawful combatants" from the Taliban. Critics contend that decision helped lead to the torture scandal at Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison.

And so it goes. We look at it this way: Gonzales is President Bush's pick. Give him who he wants. Gonzales will serve at the pleasure of Mr. Bush, and it won't go any longer than four years, that's for sure.

But politics raises its ugly head in these times of confirmations of presidential nominees. And there will be more to come. The argument against this particular nominee as stated above is nothing more than fog to disguise the real reasons — political. Without the nastiness of the political cesspool that seems to work overtime in the Beltway, we would have difficulty at times recognizing our own government.

From what we read, Mr. Gonzales is suited for the post. And he should be confirmed with little disturbance from the Democrats on Capitol Hill who are still licking their wounds for not being able to capture anything in the November 2004 election.

The stench generated by confirmation hearings, unfortunately, continues to make its way across the land. It calls for massive doses of air freshener.

What needs to be done is for both sides of the aisle to reach out to one another, hold hands, sing "God Bless America" and then, and only then, take the vote.

— Tom (TD) Dreiling

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: There are lots of ways to give helping hand

To the Editor:

New Years are always full of resolutions, new plans and new goals. As you consider what you'd like to achieve in this new year, I encourage you to consider Special Olympics and help us make changes.

As a sports movement, we provide training and competition to 5,384 people with intellectual disabilities in Kansas. Many people don't realize that intellectual disability is the largest disability population in the world.

This population often has been shunned from society, ignored, teased and underestimated, but at Special Olympics we celebrate our athlete's contributions and we invite you to join us in our goal of transforming lives.

There are many ways that you can make a difference this year. Become a coach or volunteer with one of our local programs. Or join us for one of our many fundraisers throughout the state this year. I invite you to join us as a fan in the stands at our state games, June 3-5 in Wichita.

Or simply don't use hurtful terms like "retard" and help us respect everyone who may seem different. Another way to help Special Olympics is when you do your shopping. Procter and Gamble is helping Special Olympics create this world of change. This year we celebrate the 25th

anniversary of this partnership. Procter and Gamble will donate 10 cents to Special Olympics for every product sold between now and Monday, Jan. 31.

Consider Special Olympics as the way to help make change in your community.

Sincerely,
Kelly Curran
Special Olympics Kansas

Paper late sometimes, but always good read

Enclosed is a check for a one year subscription of my home county paper.

I do enjoy it when I get it and also *The Oberlin Herald*. Been two weeks but all at once I'll get all of them at once! It is still news to me, though. It's not your fault, but is a bit aggravating.

I was back in October to attend the Church Bazaar at Clayton and stayed at my cousin Weldon Brooks' in Norton.

Lots of rain (12 inches) here since Dec. 26 or so. Wish we could stockpile it for our farmers in Norton County. Happy New Year.

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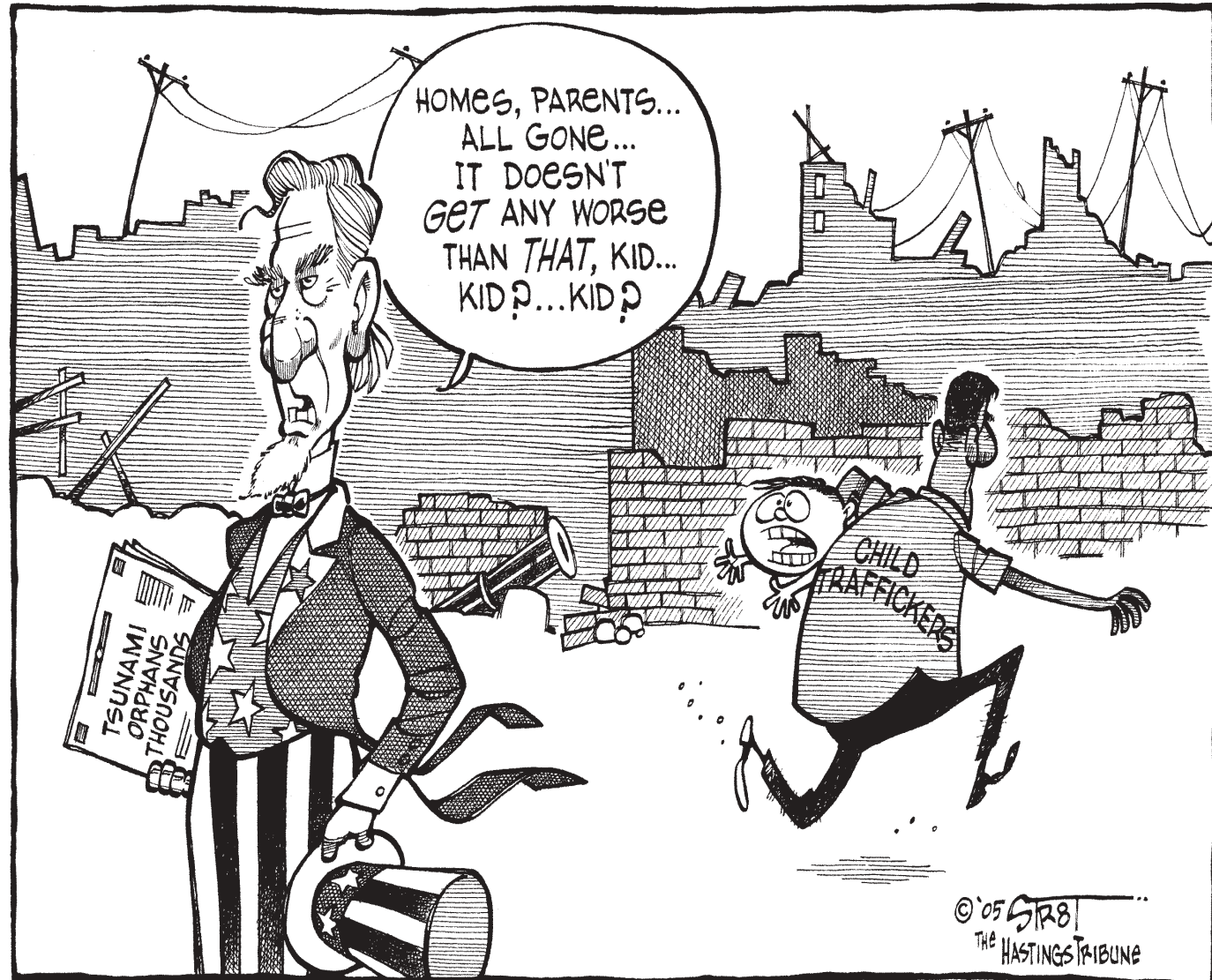
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Words bring memories of days past

This past week I have been wonderfully exposed to nostalgia. It wasn't the result of visiting an antique store or reading a book.

It wasn't even the smell of cookies baking in the kitchen.

No, it was from words.

I don't think I had ever realized how powerfully words could trigger such vivid memories.

Someone last week said to me, "Savvy?"

It was as if my dad had walked into the room and sat down at the table. That was his word, he had others, but that was a constant of his and a favorite of mine. I hadn't heard it for years and the rush of memories it created was unbelievable.

And then later another person said, "Oh you mean the house that sits katty wampus?"

I don't know if the spelling is right, but I do know those four syllables created another album of memories. My mother

Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



used that phrase a great deal.

It probably stemmed from the fact that in all her vast number of accomplishments a command of directions wasn't one. So it seemed inconceivable to her anyone would purposely build their home at an angle.

I suppose where you grow up makes a difference too.

For my sister living in South Dakota, she found many sentences end with the word "with". For instance her friends may say to her, "Do you want to go with?"

It didn't take long after she moved there

to realize that fill-in-the-blank, is a popular pastime and, I might add, word game.

When we lived in the south, a favorite was the term "fixin' to", which had nothing to do with repair.

Our oldest son found great delight in using the term, which for some reason truly grated on my nerves.

My late father-in-law had a favorite phrase as well, and, no, he didn't grow up in Ireland, but rather in southwest Kansas.

His phrase was "top of the mornin' to ya".

I knew when he ended it with, "sister", I had made the grade and this wonderful man had accepted me into his world.

The old childhood phrase, "sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me" is one of the first truths to be dispelled.

But likewise although words can hurt, they also can be the source of unmatched comfort and old terms conjure up wonderful memories.

Kitties are taking over the house

Miss Molly is mad. Her house is overrun with cats. Never mind that Molly Monster is a cat herself. She hates cats.

Our son-in-law Nik, who rescued a gray-and-white kitten from a construction site near Topeka five years ago, claims that Molly thinks she's a dog.

He may be right. Molly loves Annie, our Brittany spaniel, and likes to go for long walks with us.

And she hates cats.

For a cat hater, the holidays at our house weren't pleasant, and things aren't getting a whole lot better.

Molly and April Alice, our blond female, share the house with an armed truce most of the time. They hiss at each other as they pass and stage about one major cat fight a week. At night, Molly sits on my lap and April Alice on Steve's.

Then youngest daughter arrived for the holidays toting Rupert and Jezebel, two of her three female cats.

Jeze is a scaredy cat and immediately headed for a hole in the basement ceiling.

Open Season

Cynthia Haynes



She came upstairs to sleep with daughter at night and spent the rest of her time hiding.

A few days later, son arrived on our doorstep with a cat carrier. Out came Frank and Jules. Frank is April Alice's son and Jules is her daughter. (No I don't know why my children gave their female cats male names — you'd have to ask Lacy and Lindsay.)

Now there were six cats in the house, and Molly was in rare form. She hissed and growled at everything that moved, including the humans. She was as grouchy as a bear with a sore tail. Everywhere she turned, there were cats, and she hates cats.

After four days, it was time for son to pack up and head back for Lawrence. He caught Jules fairly quickly, but was having trouble with Frank. He finally found him under the couch in the living room.

Actually, he found him in the couch. The old lining on the bottom has a big hole and Frank was crouched up amongst the springs. It took four of us to turn the couch over and disentangle him.

Note to self — Get couch fixed before Easter.

Then it was time for youngest daughter to leave. However, she left Jez and Rupert behind. Her boyfriend is allergic to cats, and she sweet talked her gullible mother into taking two of hers for "a few months."

Now there are four cats in the house, and Molly only has to hiss and growl every half hour or so and hope the intruders go away soon.

I hate to break the news to her, but I think the boyfriend is becoming serious. Those "intruders" could be here for a long, long time.

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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