

Congressman supports his voters

While reading one of Rep. Jerry Moran's updates a while back, we ran across a topic that should be of more than just passing interest locally. It has to do with members of the Kansas National Guard and Reservists.

Rep. Moran said he was continuing his work to provide better support for members of the Kansas National Guard and Reserves and their families by sponsoring legislation to lower the retirement age and help troops in combat save for retirement. Today's soldier, he noted, is not just the enlisted men and women — it's the local teacher, banker or small business owner who is part of the National Guard and Reserves.

"This week," (this was his May newsletter) he wrote, "I sponsored H.R. 783, legislation to lower the age for receipt of retirement pay for Guard and Reservists from 60 to 55. Guard and Reserve members are currently ineligible to receive retirement pay until they reach age 60, regardless of the age they actually retire. However, active duty forces have no age restrictions and instead begin collecting retirement pay any time after their 20 years of service is complete.

"I have also sponsored H.R. 1499, the Heroes Earned Retirement Opportunities (HERO) Act, which makes adjustments in the federal tax code to allow combat soldiers to use their hazard pay to make contributions to their Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs). Currently, soldiers serving in a combat zone are not able to contribute their hazard pay towards their IRA.

"Despite ranking thirty-third nationally in population, Kansas ranks eighth nationally in number of troops per capita deployed from the Guard and Reservists. As we call upon these citizen soldiers more and more to serve in the line of fire, we need to make sure that the benefits they receive reflect their sacrifice."

Rep. Moran has always been known as troop friendly and he makes no bones about it. Whenever he can inject his influence into Washington conversation as it relates to our military, he does.

He is continuing his visit to all 69 counties in his big First District where he listens as you talk. When he is in your neighborhood, take time out of your schedule to let your voice be heard.

He's a busy representative. But never too busy to spend some time with the folks back home.

— Tom Dreiling

Mental stimulation is needed for physical, emotional health

Daphne Stevens, Ph.D., a psychologist and author of several self-help books, says people need mental stimulation to feel healthy, both physically and emotionally.

Most people's lives follow a predictable routine that is needed to get them to school, work, appointments and other activities. But it is important to recognize the difference between maintaining a healthy routine and that of spiraling into a rut.

Dr. Stevens says that routines can become destructive when a person feels trapped, and unable to see other options. This can increase the risk of depression, burn out and a feeling that life is not enjoyable.

Some simple ways to escape the rut:

- Try something other than the usual at the restaurant, or at least, sample a new appetizer.
- Mix up your workout with a combination of exercises such as yoga, running, biking or strength training. Try out a new class now and then. Or alternate your routine on different days of the week.
- Make extra effort to get together with

High Plains Mental Health Karen Beery

a friend after a hard day at work for some stress-reducing time and conversation.

- Include some time on the weekends to relax, whether it is alone, with friends, or on a social outing.
- Plan a trip other than business meetings. Go somewhere new.

The views expressed here are those of the writer and should not be considered a replacement for seeking professional help.

Mail questions to: High Plains Mental Health Center, Plain Sense, Consultation and Education Department, 208 East 7th, Hays, Kan. 67601.

Questions will be formatted and answered in a manner that insures confidentiality. Internet site: www.highplainsmentalhealth.com.

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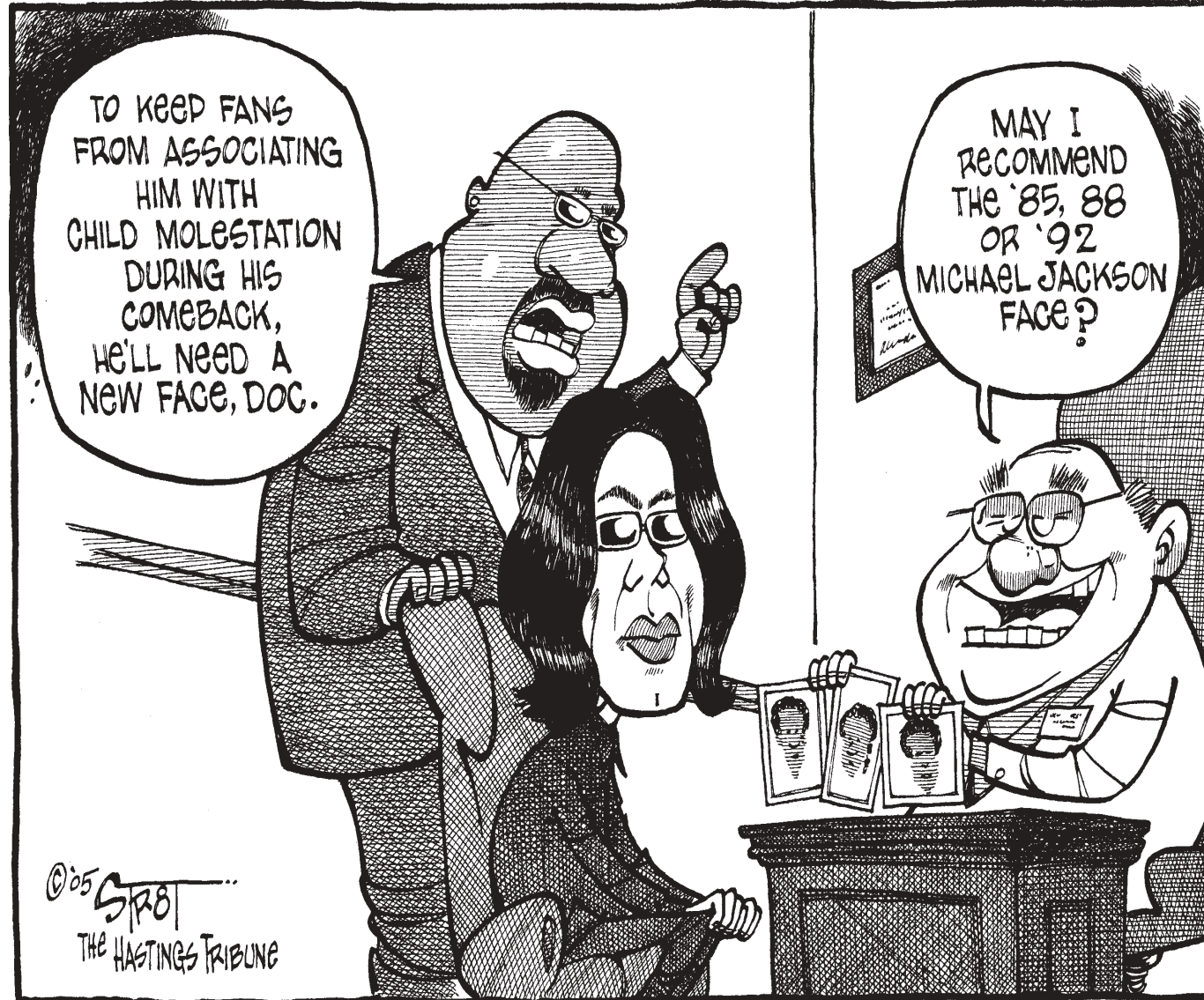
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Death of a pet leaves an empty space

The last time it happened I vowed I would never go through this again. Some people understand and others have the attitude, no big deal. But to us it is a big deal because our pets are a part of our lives, a part of our family, a part of our love.

We lost a part of our lives this afternoon. We returned from a trip to Wyoming to see our daughter and her family. We picked up the dog and cat and came home.

Whitney came home, laid out under the maple tree for a few minutes, then went downstairs and within two hours she died. She was 11 years old, with arthritis and asthma. She loved life, people and food not necessarily in that order.

She was a cross between a St. Bernard and a Black Lab or as one vet told us, just tell people she is a "Newfoundland" because that is in essence this particular cross. She was 170 pounds of black fur (however as she aged she became whiter (much like her master). Our backyard isn't fenced but she would never leave it. She was too devoted, too loyal to wander away.

The UPS driver could knock, open the

Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



door and say, "Hi Whitney, it's just me."

He knew our beloved Whitney would only amble to the door and watch what was going on. You could leave food on the coffee table and she wouldn't eat it, unless it belonged to one of the grandchildren and then she felt all was fair.

She was a great vacuum cleaner, just say "oh, shoot" and she'd clean up the dropped food. When you wanted her to move, you would say, "excuse me" and she would find another spot.

She could always sense when one of us was sick and she would plant herself next to us as if her presence could "right the wrong".

She also shed clumps of black hair, so much so that I warned the kids to be sus-

picious if they ever received a black sweater for Christmas. She was extremely gentle, but one time she stood in our backyard with hackles raised when a man tried to enter. There was something about him she questioned and to this day, I believe rightfully so.

There is nothing greater in this life to experience than unconditional love: this love can ignore one's not so gracious traits; it can forgive the unforgivable; and is a presence in the darkest of times.

Our pets devote themselves to us and we are the receiver of a great reward.

And so once again I grieve for a pet, but also I am grateful. Whitney died at home with Michael by her side surrounded by all she loved.

Her death reminds us of the very tenuous nature of life. When we grieve for one thing we have loved we grieve for all we have lost and we are more compassionate and more aware. Whether pets or people we have memories, sorrows and joys and in our celebration of life we are eternally grateful for those who have blessed us and touched us in so many ways.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: Chamber needs money for July 4th fireworks display

Dear Editor,
The Fourth of July is fast approaching and our annual fireworks display is in need of your help. Donations are desperately needed!

I'm sure many of you will say, "I can't afford to give enough to make a difference." Any donation — large or small — is needed and is greatly appreciated.

Please look through your spare change

or open your wallet for this great family fun night.

Donation cans are located at Jamboree, Norton Shop and Save, Dairy Queen and Norton Archery fireworks stand or they can be mailed or dropped off at the Chamber office, 104 South State, Norton.

If you have never been to our fireworks display, please consider doing so this year. It's really quite spectacular and the fun

events before make it an evening to enjoy.

Come out to Prairie Dog State Park, enjoy free watermelon, music, karaoke and visit with neighbors and friends. This year we are honored to have Governor Sebelius with us.

Don't let this family fun activity become a thing of the past.

Karla Reed, Director
Norton Area Chamber of Commerce

Holiday trash should have more effective schedule

To the Editor,

We were at my mother's house over the Memorial Day weekend. Her normal trash day is Monday, so I did not think anything about it when the trash truck did not come on Monday, which was a legal holiday. I put the trash out on Tuesday, thinking they would double up on that day. The trash truck did not come, so I called the city office that Wednesday to see when it would come.

They told me that trash was picked up the Thursday before Memorial Day. This did not seem right to me, as there would have been a three-day spread in trash service and then a 10 day window without trash service.

This may be okay for most elderly people, but when you have company, you have more trash. I asked if a person had a paid utility bill, they could have a free dump at the landfill. The city staff said

they have no such program.

Later, I read an article in the newspaper about illegal dumping of trash in the country. With the Fourth of July weekend coming up, I think the city should rethink its position on trash and either pick Monday trash up on Tuesday or make a concession to get a program of a free dump with a paid city electric bill.

Rich Meyers
Norton

Woman appreciates columnists' advice, shared memories

Dear Telegram Staff:
Enclosed is a check to renew my Norton Telegram subscription.

I enjoy the articles by Cynthia Haynes, Mary Kay Woodyard, Carolyn Plotts, Nancy Hagman and Mrs. Deines.

Mrs. Haynes wrote an article about "Frugality is not the same as cheap". I thought of her this morning as I cut open a tube of hand cream so I could use every last bit of it.

I was a seat mate of Alice Foley, Mrs. Woodyard's mother, on a plane from Denver and we had such a nice visit and David Foley used to carpool with us to

high school.

Sonya Montgomery's article about coach Burns' son brought back memories of being let out of high school early so we could go search for scrap iron to help the war effort. This was 1942. My girlfriend and I happened onto some scrap iron and carried it to our pile. We asked a couple of boys to take it back to school in their car. They did and then went back to pick up their scrap iron and it was the pile we had taken.

The coach, with the aid of the sheriff, I think, fixed up a bogus warrant for my arrest. I was so gullible, I fell for it and

polished the boys' shoes and ironed some of their shirts in order not to have the warrant served.

Mrs. Plotts has a wonderful sense of humor. She's so right about a tractor being a man's toy. My son thinks there is nothing like a John Deere and wants so much to know what year the John Deere his grandfather, Ernest Bolliger, had was made. He wants to get a model of it.

I cut out L. Deines article about depression glass as I gave my son some of that.

Thank you all.
Ruth Wheeler Bolliger
Tulsa, Okla.