

People need to understand what the Patriot Act is

Most Americans say they support the so-called Patriot Act, but the truth is, most people don't have a clue what the act involves. The name sounds nice, and that's good enough for 64 percent of us, a University of Connecticut poll shows.

Of course, only 42 percent could identify the main purpose of the law as enhancing surveillance powers for federal law enforcement agencies.

The poll also shows that, the more people understand this law, the less they like it.

Most of us, 81 percent, are OK with the provision that allows federal agencies to use information gathered from foreign intelligence activities in domestic criminal investigations. To most people, that only makes sense, though it's long been illegal.

It means, if the CIA overhears terrorists plotting a bombing in the U.S., the FBI can move in and use the information to make a case against the bombers.

A two-thirds majority agrees with a provision allowing the government to collect names and addresses from Internet communications in criminal investigations.

A section which allows federal agents to tap any phone a subject uses, rather than having to name each number in a court order, also draws wide support, 62 percent. It just makes sense to get one warrant for one bad guy.

When it comes to allowing agents to get people's library records without telling them, though, only 53 percent say it's OK.

We suppose there is some legitimate reason to check out the "Radical's Guide to Bomb Making," but we can't say right now what it is.

Still, will we get on an FBI watch list if we read the Koran? Just 43 percent support requiring banks to turn over records without a court order.

Why not get a court order? It's not that hard.

Searching American homes without telling the occupants doesn't draw much support, just 23 percent. Common sense has not left the American people.

Still, there is some scary stuff here.

A vast majority of Americans say they support this law with the patriotic name, though few of us know what it really means.

Few understand that it means your librarian or banker may be spying on you, turning your information over to some federal agency.

When people know about this law, though, many parts don't sound so nice.

The Patriot Act — high sounding, but not so high in purpose. Many provisions have to be reauthorized by Congress, and some of them ought not to be.

When the law was passed, the Sept. 11 attacks were fresh in everyone's minds. Few asked questions.

Now, though, people have a better grip on the law, and many Americans know which parts ought to be scrapped. Congress needs to listen to them.

— Steve Haynes

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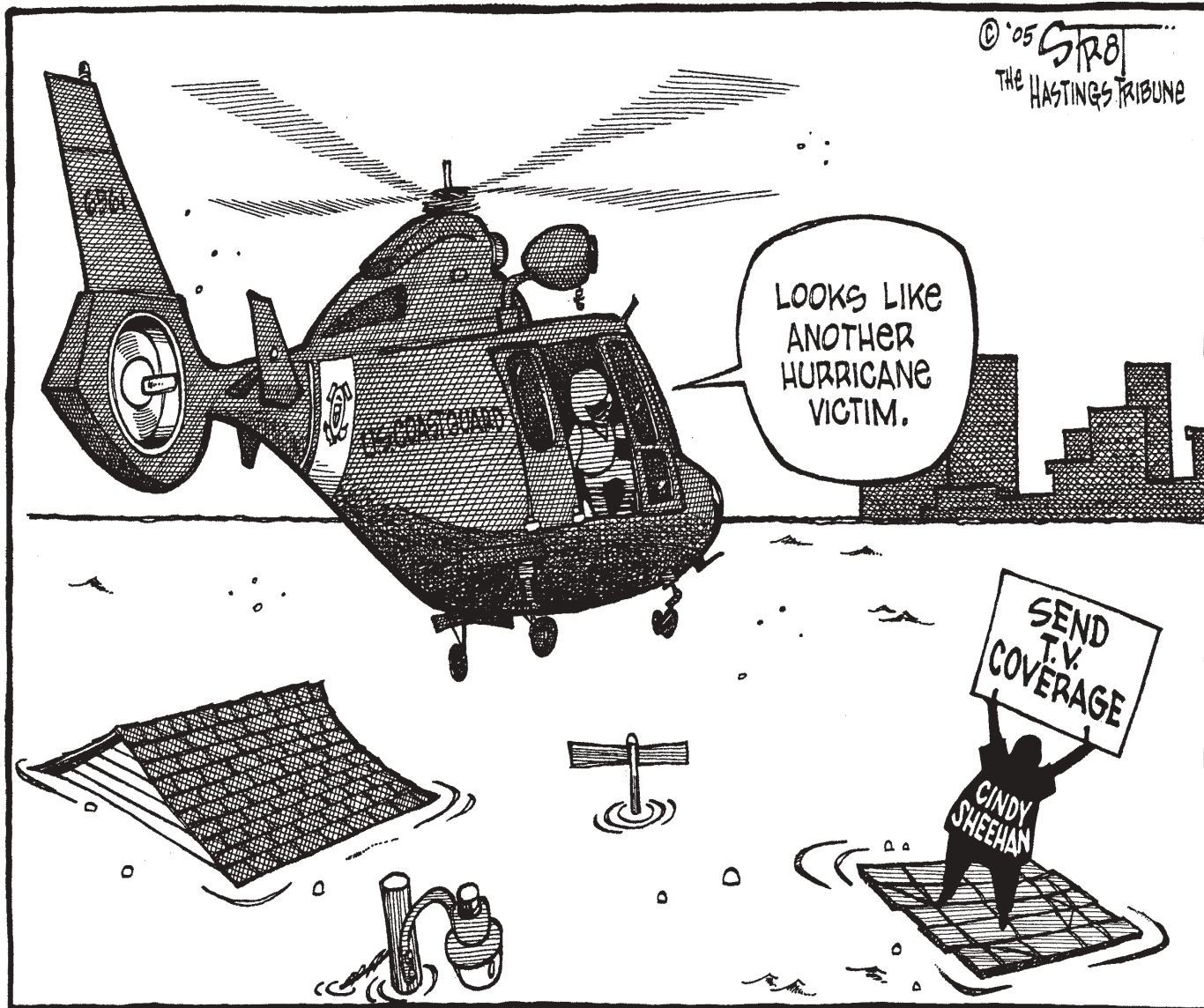
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It's really how you say something

Those of you who knew my parents know my father was a Democrat, one of the few in this state years ago.

When I went to college I sent him a card which said "Everything I am, you have made me" and on the inside it said "a Democrat".

Since that card, which I sent before I was even old enough to vote, a lot has changed. I'm still a Democrat but I've never voted a straight ticket and I have worked on far more Republican campaigns than I have Democratic ones.

And so it was last week I watched with interest as our First Lady so graciously conducted herself in the throes of disaster.

I always liked Barbara better than George and likewise I am far more impressed with Laura than George W. Her ability to describe and define problems and solutions while being questioned by a rather indignant news media was comforting.

My mother used to always say, "It isn't

Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



what you say, but how you say it."

Laura Bush demonstrated that skillfully last week.

It didn't change the fact of the horrors taking place in our country. It didn't bring food, water or a way out any faster, but she was able to convey her pride in their ability to be so strong. It was her belief in the good in mankind, which illuminated the situation and strengthened the victims.

To be sure we have to address the problems, but she was faced with people who were powerless certainly nationally, and definitely personally.

The ability to recognize the problem is

more a gift than a skill. Her husband has to answer the difficult questions of slow response time, few troops and limited food and water.

Those who remained behind out of stubbornness or refusal to believe it could happen find little comfort in their decision.

Those who remained because of lack of resources whether money, car or anywhere to go, are the heaviness for us all. They reflect our inability to care for those less fortunate, to respond to those determined to act in violence, or to heed Jesus' commission, "feed my sheep".

Republican or Democrat, it doesn't matter. We are all human and we are all vulnerable. We all know our life style was largely chosen for us. We didn't choose our parents nor our country of origin. There but for the grace of God goes any one of us. Maybe that should be our mantra as we witness the tragedies of the event.

Ag secretary to be at farm bill forum

Congressman Jerry Moran will join U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns in hosting a farm bill forum at the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson. Congressman Moran and Secretary Johanns, who was formerly governor of Nebraska, will talk with farmers and ranchers on the development of the 2007 farm bill.

"I am pleased the secretary will be joining us at our state fair to meet with Kansans involved in agriculture," Mr. Moran said. "It's great to see the Secretary taking these initial steps in the Farm Bill process and including input from Kansas farmers and ranchers."

The fair visit is part of a nationwide farm bill listening tour of the agriculture

Capitol Views

Rep. Jerry Moran



community. The farm bill forum will be from 9 a.m. to noon Monday in the Encampment Building on the state fairground.

At the fair Congressman Moran will attend the annual Kansas Farm Bureau leadership breakfast on Saturday.

The congressman has attended the state fair to gather suggestions from Kansans every year since being elected.

Congressman Moran will also have an information booth in the Pride of Kansas Building with members of his staff available to answer questions and provide information to fairgoers.

Congressman Moran is a senior member of the House Agriculture Committee and chairs the subcommittee on General Farm Commodities and Risk Management.

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

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Congressman finishes tour, appreciates ideas shared

To the Editor:

I recently completed my ninth annual Big First Listening Tour, holding town hall meetings in each of the 69 counties in the 1st Congressional District.

I appreciated meeting with all those in Norton County who took time out of their day to share their ideas and concerns with me. As your representative, it's key for me to understand what issues Kansans want their congressman to focus on.

My efforts in Washington remain much

the same today as they were when I was first elected, to see that we have a little prosperity in the Kansas communities we call home. However, we have our work cut out for us. While our economy has shown signs of improvement, the costs of doing business and raising a family, from fuel prices to health care costs, continues to grow. I will continue my efforts to ease these burdens for the people of Kansas.

If there were any issues that we did not get to discuss, or if you were unable to at-

tend, you can always contact me through my website at: www.house.gov/moranks01/.

It is a tremendous privilege to represent Kansas in Congress. Please let me know how I can better serve you in the future. I pledge to work for you, and with you, to make good things happen for Kansas.

Jerry Moran

Hays

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.