

## Disasters both memorable, but not the same way

Four years ago, our country was reeling from the impact of the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington.

That tragedy brought us to the realization we were not immune to the violence that had plagued other parts of the world.

Today we are reeling from another disaster. This time Mother Nature reached out and swatted the Gulf Coast with hurricane Katrina to remind us of her ability to inflict widespread destruction.

In both cases, emergency crews responded to the disasters, but there was a difference.

For the terrorist attacks, the country not only mobilized rescue efforts, but there was a genuine feeling that our national honor had been crumpled with the falling of the twin towers and explosion at the Pentagon.

The focus of the nation was on New York and Washington. The damage, while horrific, was contained to a much smaller area than the path of Katrina.

Americans of all ages were affected by the images from GroundZero in New York. Many can tell you what they were doing when they heard the news that an airplane had slammed into the twin towers. These were instants of history that will be remembered and retold.

For those who were trying to sit out Katrina, the hours will be remembered, but for the nation it is not an instant to be remembered but an incident, which has longer and larger consequences than the terrorist attacks.

New Orleans has captured the nation's focus as that Southern city copes with the disaster, and the aftermath of the flood. For those who have lived through a flood and had to clean up the mud, the scenes in New Orleans are heart rending. It's somewhat incomprehensible that people would want to return to that city and rebuild.

Back east, the Pentagon has been rebuilt and a new building will stand where the twin towers were in New York. The American spirit is indomitable, and we are sure much of the Gulf Coast will be rebuilt in the years to come.

So far it appears the death toll will fall far short of last week's dire predictions. Some areas of the City of Jazz are going to bounce back in good shape, but in some of the northern areas of the city where the worst flooding was, the cleanup is going to take much longer.

Thousands of people are being welcomed by cities in this state and others with food and shelter to help them find ways to survive and rebuild their lives. For many, there is nothing to return to, and even if they could return, it will be many weeks or months before that can happen.

As the cleanup and reconstruction begin, there will be a surge in jobs for people willing to work, and the need for construction workers and materials will put a strain on other parts of the country.

There will be bright days ahead for New Orleans and Biloxi, Miss., and as the event fades in the memory of the country, the new buildings will help erase some of the sadness and pain of the misery Katrina caused.

Maybe four years from now, when the anniversary of the terrorist attacks of 9/11 comes around again, there can be a quiet moment remembering the destruction and terror of Katrina. In the meantime, every dollar given to the American Red Cross will help the victims of this awful storm.

— Tom Betz



## Life's collection can get very big

My sister was telling me the other day about my grandmother's spring cleaning method.

She would do a room at a time. First she would wash and box all the small things in the room and then she moved all the furniture outside, scrubbed the walls and floors (after taking the rugs out to the line to be beaten).

When the inside was clean then she moved everything back into the room and unpacked the boxes. Everything sparkled and was like new.

As I prepare to move to another house, I wonder why I haven't been practicing her method for the last nine years.

Moving would certainly be easier and much less tiring. The trouble with life now is we are cluttered with too many things.

A great aunt of mine once said the problem with the coming generations is their pre-occupation with "gadgets". She said

### Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



we spent more time "loading" our gadgets and trying to get them to work properly than just doing the job would require. And I think she was right.

I am overloaded with "gadgets" — a bread machine, a can opener, food chopper, mixer. Women back then didn't need to work out; they kneaded the bread, opened cans, chopped food and mixed the batter with a wooden spoon. How much easier it was to move a knife, wooden spoon and your hands rather than all the

paraphernalia we have accumulated. A problem I encounter is my sentimental attachment to things.

With five children you can imagine how many first grade colored pictures of our family I have accumulated as well as baptismal outfits, and Mother's Day gifts.

I'm still contemplating what to do with the dishwasher-destroyed first-grade mug given to me by our oldest son. It's mangled far beyond use, an event which occurred the first time I washed it and yet I have hung on to it for over 30 years, and six moves over countless states.

I read an article on organization the other day.

It recommended taking pictures of those things you hate to part with — mmm, the only thing is she didn't say what to do with the boxes and boxes of pictures I have accumulated already.

## It's a small, small, small world

We've been back in Kansas for a dozen years and we decided it was time for a small celebration.

Actually, the anniversary was just an excuse to see another baseball game before the end of the season, even though our Rockies aren't anywhere near being in the playoffs.

Since I had to work Saturday, we decided to go to a Sunday game, leaving Saturday when I got off work and spending the night in Denver.

I tried to get a room at my favorite downtown hotel but all the reasonably priced ones were gone, and I wasn't about to pay more for a room than I make in a week, so I started checking around. The Adam's Mark, a nice hotel on 16th Street at the end of the mall, had a good deal, so we decided to stay there.

As soon as we arrived, Steve laid down. I had taken a nap on the four-hour trip to Denver while he drove. While I had worked in a nice, cool store, he had mowed the lawn in 90-degree-plus weather.

Well, I wanted to go to the book store and he wanted a nap. No problem. I headed downstairs.

As I started out the front door, I came face to face with our best friends, Merle and Mary Barnczyk from Salida, Colo. Since I didn't know they were coming to Denver, let alone staying at the Adam's Mark, I was stunned, if not very surprised. (I have always said, never have an af-

### Open Season Cynthia Haynes



fair. No matter where you go, you'll run into someone you know.)

Merle and Mary were in Denver with their grandchildren because they had won a one-night stay at the hotel and dinner for two. They all planned to go to the amusement park on Sunday.

Merle and Mary are also in the newspaper business, and the two men always get lost in computers, presses and problems with the papers. Mary and I talk about our children, her grandchildren, what's happening and where we are going next.

We've been friends for more than 20 years, and even though we sometimes don't see each other for months at a time, we always seem to stay close.

Later, as Merle and Mary and their crew headed for the hotel dining room, Steve and I started walking down 16th Street to find a quiet little restaurant for a romantic dinner.

Halfway down the mall, we ran into some more friends from Colorado. Boy, am I glad I was with my husband.

Shane and Susan Birdsey have a sporting goods store in Creede, the little town in the mountains where we settled 25 years ago to run our own newspaper and raise a family.

Back then, Shane was in high school and a source of gray hair for both his parents and the sheriff. Today he's a prosperous businessman with a wife and two children and works as a deputy for the same sheriff to whom he gave all those gray hairs.

The Birdseys were in town for a fly fishing equipment retailers conference, and the kids were home with grandma. They promised to say hi to all our friends back in the high country.

We found a good restaurant, but it wasn't too quiet. While the food was wonderful and the atmosphere inside great, there was the annual Octoberfest going on in Larimer Square right outside.

I know, it's not October. Larimer Square holds Octoberfest in September because you never know what the October weather will be like in the Mile-High City.

We had breakfast with Merle and Mary and their kids, went to church and watched the Rockies beat the Arizona Diamondbacks 7-2 without running into anyone else we knew, even though we stopped at the filling station at Byers, Colo., where you can meet someone from northwest Kansas almost any day of the week.

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