

## Have you ever been asked to break the law?

(Editorials are generally written in the "we" context, but this one can only be written as "I." It quickly becomes evident why.)

I was asked to break the law.

That's right.

The person I talked with didn't use those words, "break the law," but there was no other way to interpret the conversation.

I lost my Social Security card. I don't know when I lost it. But I needed it a few days ago and couldn't find it. I tore my home a part. Ditto my pickup. Nothing.

So I called Social Security to see how I go about getting a new card.

A form would need to be filled out.

No problem.

The form would be mailed to me on the day of the telephone conversation. As soon as I received it, I was to complete it and mail it back with my driver's license attached. That's the only ID I have that has a photo, as required.

I said, "Whoa! You want me to take my driver's license from my person and mail it to you? Could I not send you a photo copy?"

The answer was clear, "No, we need to have your actual driver's license to process your request.... Things have changed a lot since 9/11."

I then said if I do this I would be breaking the law by driving without a driver's license.

I was told this was the first time this particular situation was ever brought up. I suggested a mention to their supervisor. It was suggested that perhaps I could bring it to the attention of my congressman.

I find it odd that in place of driving to the nearest Social Security office (especially at the price of gasoline these days), I could instead get it done via the mail and in the process *surrender* my driver's license.

In other words: break the law, or find other means of transportation while my driver's license was visiting another location. That would certainly be inconvenient.

I am not being critical of the person on the other end of the line, who was very courteous, very kind — a credit to Social Security.

Maybe you faced the same situation and never gave any thought to it. To me, however, it's just another example of how a well-intentioned request could have embarrassing consequences.

Imagine this:

Officer: "May I see your driver's license, please?"

Me: "Sorry, I don't have it with me, officer. I loaned out to someone else."

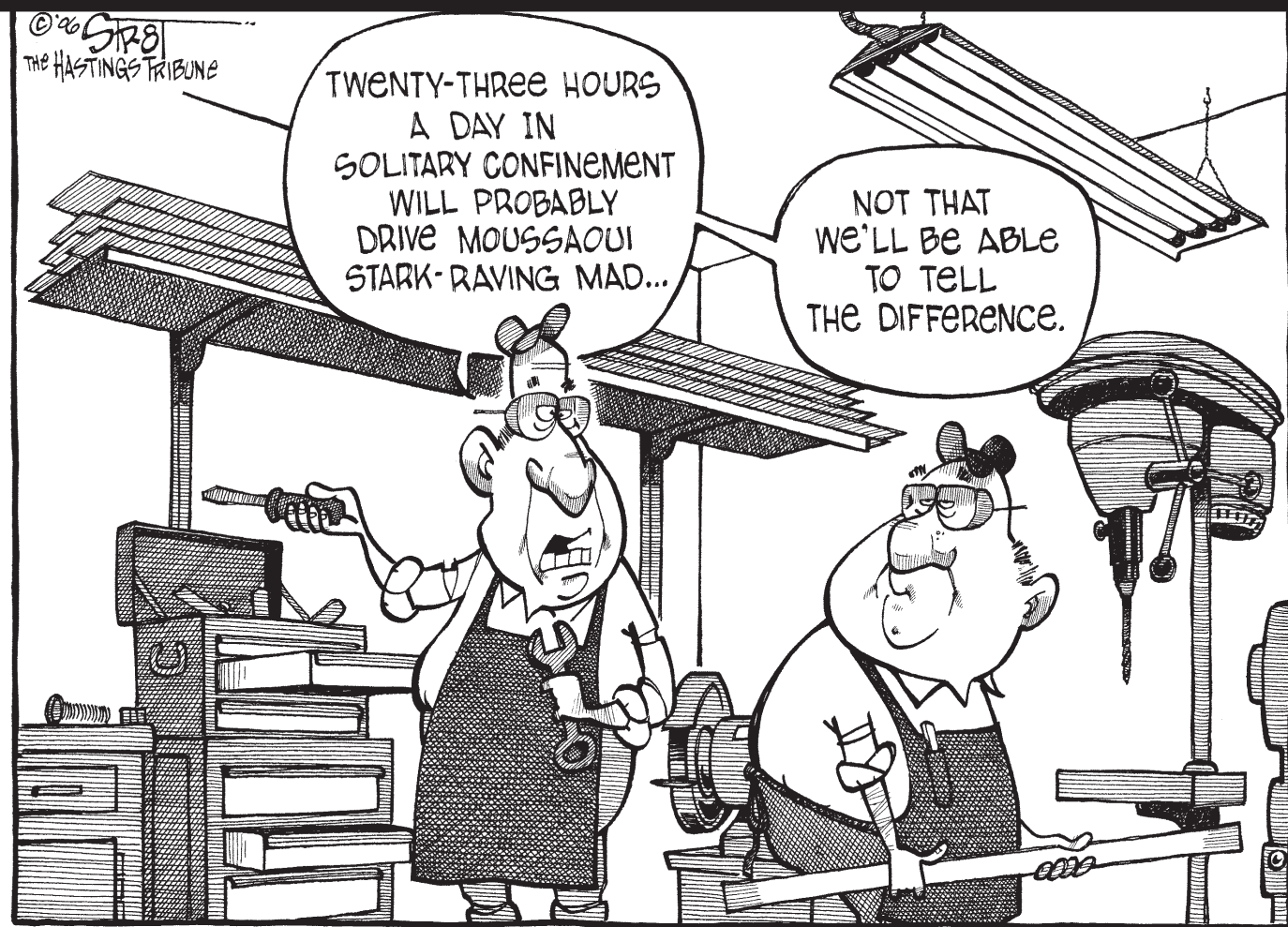
That would certainly warrant a ticket.

—Tom Dreiling

## Thumbs Up to . . .

- ✓ **Calvin and Anise Gill**, on your 50 years of marriage.
- ✓ **All Moms**, on this the weekend of Mother's Day.
- ✓ **Dale Carlson**, "for taking us into the world of wine making." (via e-mail)
- ✓ **Colton Lowry**, on the impressive honor.
- ✓ **Kaylene Hahn**, on your many years of service as a library aide in the Norton School District. (via email)
- ✓ **Kelli Cole, Andrea Lowry, Jessica Holmes, Henry Griffiths, Jena Jessup, Melody Miller, Ashley Kingham, Abigail Ponstein**, on your induction into the Northern Valley High School National Honor Society.
- ✓ **Jared W. Laughlin**, on your graduation Saturday, and good luck the rest of the way. (a friend)
- ✓ **Layne**, for your kind attention to detail while taking my groceries to my vehicle. (called in)

(You may submit names of persons you feel are deserving of a pat on the back. It's as easy as 1-2-3. Email [tomd@nwkansan.com](mailto:tomd@nwkansan.com), call 877-3361, 877-6908, fax 877-3732; regular mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave, Norton 67654; or drop by the office. Thanks for your help.)



## Waiting in the wings is a pandemic

I continue to be amazed at the newest and latest fear forecasting. Since 9-11 we have been inundated with "information" about forthcoming disasters. If we become lax and begin to feel too comfortable up comes another statistic, another conference.

The most recent is a document outlining the problems associated with a pandemic outbreak of bird flu or other flu types. It is suggested in the document to keep workers three feet apart, God forbid those little buggers (no pun intended) travel out of the area. Why does this remind me of duct tape and plastic following 9-11.

The government also warns of limiting travel within the country during this time of "massive disruption" due to the approaching pandemic. Although we will limit travel within the country we are not going to take any action on the borders as

### Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



that would only delay the spread of disease by a few weeks. Now who do they think they are kidding? This in the midst of our border dilemma?

The prediction states as many as 40 percent of the workforce could be off as this nasty little bug takes over. The solution is simple, according to this document, we must "rely on the voluntarism and sense of civic and humanitarian duty of ordinary Americans."

Perhaps Washington has failed to notice, but this country operates daily be-

cause of the generosity of millions of volunteers.

There is no doubt we need to be aware of the danger; however, simple solutions such as hand washing and, yes, staying home when one is ill are probably two of our greatest weapons.

The advent of hand washing contributed greatly to human's longevity. Although businesses tend to reward employees who refrain from taking sick days, this is a time to reward common sense.

I am all in favor of preparedness and information, but it seems to me the constant ramblings of possible outbreaks do not strengthen our nation, but rather create a fear response which depletes our immune system rather than strengthen our defenses.

• <http://www.cnn.com/2006/HEALTH/conditions/05/02/us.birdflu.ap/index.html>

## When it comes to sewing, call Mom

When Kate graduated college my sister had her old sewing machine reconditioned and gave it to her. Kate enjoys sewing (or maybe she doesn't but I have known her to sew for herself and others.)

Elizabeth is another story. She did the requisite sewing for 4-H but quite honestly I never expected her to sew again after that. It surprised me that she wanted a sewing machine for college graduation so I got it for her.

I know she sewed some P.J. pants last year, but she did that on my machine. To my knowledge in almost two years her sewing machine has never sewn a stitch.

This is partially because she lives too close. How convenient to just call mom. And, I don't mind. I like to sew.

I have gotten side-tracked from sewing clothing, however. I have started sewing quilt tops. I made the mistake of counting the pieces in a quilt I did over the winter. I won't do that again!

A friend came over and looked at the latest project. Since I have sworn off counting pieces, she felt obliged to do it for me. I planned to give it for a wedding gift. I only had a picture to go by and I now

### Back Home Nancy Hagman



realize that I started off with pieces that are way too small. But it's sort of like sin — once you start down the wrong path it's hard to get off! In this case, not even divine intervention would help!

Our new little grand niece had been promised a christening gown so I had to take time out for that. It is so precious, thank heavens for little girls!

Then Elizabeth asked me to make some things for her spring program. Remember that sewing machine? Well, she is busy. So I am making skirts for Indian maids and a Spanish flag.

She measured the girls. I was satisfied with the results of the first one but then I looked at it and thought, "This looks huge." She told me all three girls were

more or less the same size. I guess I can't read her handwriting because to me it looks like one has a 26-inch waist, one a 28-inch waist and one a 39-inch waist. I know that can't be right! (But I don't want to do it over!)

Then there is the flag. She looked it up on the Internet. I swear she told me it was three stripes, yellow, red, yellow. I wrote it down. I can read my own writing! But just to check I looked it up in the encyclopedia. It showed the flag as red, yellow, red. It better be right, but then who is going to know, anyway?

After I got the flag finished I decided it needed ironing. Elizabeth was also looking for an American flag. I have a nice cloth one, Grandma left it here. I got it out and decided it could use a little pressing also. This was the same day I got *The Telegram* with the tips from the VFW about flags.

Unfortunately there was not a section on ironing flags. Is that OK?

I may have to give up sewing. (I've pretty much given up ironing anyway.)

I can give my sewing machine to Patricia when she graduates. It will all be good.

## Futures markets' role in gas prices aired

The House Committee on Agriculture held a recent hearing to review the role of futures markets in determining gasoline prices. As the average price of gas nationwide approaches \$3, the Committee sought to ensure that activity on the futures markets was not improperly influencing the high price of gasoline.

High gasoline prices are affecting people all across the nation. Several factors are contributing to the situation, including increased global competition for limited supplies of oil, the instability of foreign sources of energy, as well as dis-

### Capitol Views

Rep. Jerry Moran



ruptions in domestic production and refining capacity as a result of last year's hurricanes. The goal of the hearing was to determine if there is reason to believe there are problems in the futures market,

what type of surveillance is being conducted to prevent and detect manipulation, and if the regulators are equipped with the appropriate authority and enforcement mechanisms.

In Kansas, businesses and families are faced with long car trips and our agriculture producers rely on gasoline and diesel to operate equipment. There is promise in the Heartland for producing and utilizing alternative energy sources like ethanol, biodiesel and wind energy. I will continue to support further development of these alternative energy sources to ease the burden of high fuel prices on Kansans.

## Good news for the guys who wear ties to work: take them off!

It's that time of year when I declare the start of the tieless season — if you have a job that requires you to wear one.

Years ago, I started promoting May 15 as the date for the removal of those irritable pieces of cloth that we wrap around

our necks and by the time the day ends we look like we've been roped by a champion rodeo roper.

That all said, let's get rid of the ties as an accessory to our daily attire effective Monday, May 15. Let your neck breathe

freely for a while.

Because all good things must come to an end, we will return to wearing those pests the day after Labor Day. Until then, be comfortable...at work.

—Tom Dreiling, publisher

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