

McCain hopes high, Osborne downed

What a difference a year makes. Or two. Or four. Or more. And...

How quickly polls can turn on a candidate thought to be unbeatable. First, Sen. John McCain. Remember when Sen. McCain was seeking the presidency and had nothing good to say about the Rev. Jerry Falwell, Liberty University founder?

Well, guess who was speaker at Liberty's 2006 commencement? Sen. McCain. And guess who gave him one of the most glowing introductions we have seen so far this commencement season on C-Span? Rev. Falwell.

It is no secret that Sen. McCain will again seek the nation's highest office in 2008. He has been positioning himself for this second run ever since the first try failed.

And he needs the Rev. Falwell and his following this time around. A reception in the senator's honor was held the evening before the commencement and was attended by a couple hundred people from all over the country. Needless to say that was probably an opportunity for some of the deeper pockets to get a closer look at Sen. McCain, who admits, he has changed somewhat over these past few years.

Sen. McCain seems to be everybody's hero. And in some Republican circles he is viewed as the candidate who can *definitely win*. And they aren't about to settle for someone who *might win*, or stands a *good chance* of winning.

They see Sen. McCain as the *certain victor*. A hero. Everybody's hero. They see the Democrats and the Independents joining the Republicans in electing him president.

But they must not put the cart before the horse. Enter: Congressman Tom Osborne.

Nebraska's Rep Osborne has won three easy congressional terms — getting no less than 82 percent of the vote each time. But last week in the Nebraska Republican gubernatorial primary, Mr. Osborne, the football genius once called "Nebraska's God," was beaten by Gov. Dave Heineman. The governor won slightly more than 50 percent of the vote to 44 percent for Mr. Osborne.

Gov. Heineman took over the governorship last year when then-Gov. Mike Johanns was appointed by President Bush to be Secretary of Agriculture.

Polls leading up to last week's Nebraska primary had Rep. Osborne, who decided against seeking reelection to the U. S. House of Representatives, with comfortable leads. After the stunning defeat, Rep. Osborne acknowledged two key issues may have swung votes to Gov. Heineman: immigrant tuition and small schools.

The governor vetoed a bill allowing children of illegal immigrants to pay in-state tuition at public colleges and universities. Rep. Osborne supported the idea. The governor also vetoed a bill forcing elementary-only school districts to merge with larger K-12 districts. Rep. Osborne said the vast majority of the schools were doing a good job, but he supported closing some of them.

Rep. Osborne's comments were ill-timed. And costly. Very costly. So, there you are. Two political tales. One full of hope, the other in shambles.

—Tom Dreiling

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The talk is now focused on the baby

Jennifer called with a definitive answer. The sonogram revealed it is a girl and she is slated to arrive sometime around July 22.

Her name will be Aniston; Annie for short. Eleven-year old Alexandria came up with the name and after trying it out for awhile, everyone seemed to like it.

The middle name might still be up for grabs. I'm not sure. How does Aniston Sue sound?

I have come to believe that every set of expectant parents should have to work in a newspaper office before being allowed to name their child. Everyone (me included) wants a unique name for their child. Then, they (the parents) get upset when everyone misspells or mispronounces the kid's name.

When my oldest daughter was born, her father came up with the name, Halley. Pronounced "Hay-lee." Some thought it was a combination of his grandmother Hazel's name and my maiden name,

Out Back Carolyn Plotts



Kelley. That was a little too deep. And, no. He had never heard of the child-actress Hayley Mills. He just came up with it. And, she looked like a "Halley" when she was born.

That was almost 39 years ago and the name was unusual, then. Now, I know of Halee, Haleigh, Haylee and Halie.

What's in a name. It's your identity. It's who you are. Some names come and go like fads. Some are timeless like James, Mary and William. I never cared much for my name as a little girl.

I was envious of the kids with a nickname. Not much can be done with

"Carolyn". So, when my freshman history teacher referred to each student as Miss So-and-so or Mr. Who's It, I thought it was cool to be Miss Kelley. And, really cool when my classmates just shortened it to Kelley. That's what I became.

Kelley — much cooler than Carolyn. Parents shouldn't fret too much about the name they chose for their child. By the time little Johnny gets to school, his playmates might just as well be calling him "Butch" or "Pinky".

—ob—
I've been holding off buying baby things because I wanted to be gender-specific. I didn't want to buy yellow or green to go either way.

I needed to know if I should buy pink or blue.

Now, that we know it's a girl, I might become dangerous. It's been seven years since there's been a baby in the family and that's a long time between embroidered burp cloths and little bunny baby booties.

Bill will force us to clean up our act

As elected officials, Members of Congress have been entrusted by the American people with the responsibility of making our society a better place to live. As such, we all must be held to the highest ethical and moral standards. The recent stories of corruption and bribery coming out of our nation's capital have disappointed and saddened me.

I supported House passage of the Lobbying Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006. This legislation includes many common sense remedies and punishments to address corruption. Provisions of the legislation would require Members of Congress to forfeit their pensions and retirement benefits if convicted of bribery, make lobbyists disclose more frequently who they are lobbying and what they are lobbying for, and reform the earmark process by making public any request a member has made.

I have also sponsored a separate bill that

Capitol Views

Rep. Jerry Moran



would establish an independent Office of Public Integrity to oversee all Members of Congress. Please know that my first priority has always been the well-being of the people of Kansas.

Farmers and ranchers suffered significant losses last year as a result of adverse growing conditions. In 2005, all but 4 of the 105 counties in Kansas were declared primary or contiguous disaster areas. For this reason, I have asked House leaders to support agriculture disaster assistance as part of supplemental appropriations leg-

islation currently working its way through the legislative process. I pledged to work with leaders to deliver fiscally responsible, yet effective disaster assistance.

A variety of natural disasters, including drought in Kansas and the hurricanes along the Gulf Coast, have caused devastating losses that are either not covered by crop insurance or are not adequately addressed by available policies. In addition, multiple year droughts result in reduced coverage to producers who hold even the best available crop insurance policies.

These crop losses have occurred at a time of significant increases in cost of production.

Unless the immediate emergency needs of the producers in Kansas and across the country are met, the lack of adequate coverage coupled with the tremendous increase in fuel, fertilizer and natural gas prices may force many farmers and ranchers out of business.

FROM THE MAILBOX:

Thanks to The Haven, Norton again wins praise

Editor's Note: A portion of this letter was read during the benefit concert held recently for The Haven. It is printed here in its entirety.

Dear Community of Norton,
It is with much gladness that I write this note to you. The reason that I write is to express my extreme thankfulness to The Haven.

I am the wife of an inmate at Norton Correctional Facility. With the incarceration of my husband, I found myself facing a whole array of financial decisions and emotional challenges.

I love my husband very much and we need each other for emotional support. It is a long trip to Norton from where we live. With my current financial burdens I knew that I would be unable to afford to visit him often. I found out about The Haven that had recently opened up to accommodate those visiting loved ones at the Norton Correctional Facility. It was a shelter and it cost a minimal \$10 per night to stay there.

I was able to afford the trip to see my husband and have made several other visits since. Now, The Haven is so much more to me than just a shelter.

The Haven is a place where the people involved in running the house have poured out their hearts. Generous people of Norton have donated beds, bedding, towels, clothing, food, dishes, toys, paper products, etc. It is like home to me in so many ways. The first night I stayed at The Haven I stayed in a room with a queen size bed with flannel sheets. The other bed in the room had a beautiful handmade quilt on it. There is a kitchen area where I could fix something to eat. Clothes had been donated and I found many items of clothing for myself and my children.

And the fellowship that I have enjoyed is wonderful. Typically, I am reluctant to mention that my husband is incarcerated. I didn't want people to pity me or look down on me.

At The Haven, the volunteers were very welcoming. They have been such a blessing and encouragement to me by listening and sometimes even praying for me and my family.

No longer did I have to try to deal with things alone emotionally. I have had many enjoyable conversations with other guests at The Haven. It's good to talk to someone who is going through the same

struggles — someone that can relate. And the hours that the volunteers put in there — I have gotten to The Haven at 11:30 at night and sometimes one of the volunteers is still there to welcome me.

Nearly every Saturday night the volunteers provide supper for everyone staying at the house. Occasionally they order out for food, but many times a volunteer puts together a home-cooked meal for everyone. It is always delicious home-cooking and everyone sits around the table to eat and visit. People laugh and fellowship for hours and for me it's like a family gathering I once enjoyed as a youth.

Yes, I think it's fair to say that The Haven holds a place very dear in my heart. I'm encouraged and inspired by the people of Norton and what you've created and provided for families of inmates. You must realize that the factor that has the most positive impact on an inmate's re-entry into society is maintaining strong family support.

Be proud of The Haven. I hope that you will support this wonderful part of your community.

Thank You,
Melissa H.