

## They forgot to add a couple of things

**Good Evening Norton**  
**Tom Dreiling**



Talk about taking a cheap shot, this takes the cake. At Wednesday night's telecast resulting in Taylor Hicks being named the 2006 American Idol, the host was quick to point out that 63.4 million votes were cast and that was more votes than any president ever received. What the host failed to note was the fact when we vote for president we can only vote once. We must show up at a polling place. There are hours only during which we can vote. We must be registered and we must be at least 18 years of age. The American Idol voter can vote as many times as he wants, from the comfort of his home, using his telephone, at any age and no registration required. There is no way of knowing how many people actually voted if it was limited to one vote per person, but it would be safe to assume less than 30 million. That sound you just heard was air coming out of their balloon.

You probably get as much junk mail as I do on your computer. One that frequently appears is a pitch for singles to meet other singles. The one that draws the most chuckles from me, says, "Meet singles with Christian values." What is that supposed to mean? "Christian values" is more of a catch phrase than anything else. It's something we should determine individually. "Christian values" to me may be entirely different from what you consider to be "Christian values." But it sounds good. A wise old teacher once advised our junior class, "Just because something sounds good doesn't make it so."

I wish he were alive today.

He was also the teacher we asked, during a discussion on religion, about our basketball team's habit of making the sign of the cross whenever they stepped up to the free throw line. "Does that really

help?" we asked. He replied in few words, "No. Not if you don't know how to shoot the ball."

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius has come of age. It has taken a while but it has finally happened. "What's this all about?" you ask. It's about the attack on our governor by one of television's biggest egomaniacs, Bill O'Reilly. Tuesday night he launched an attack on Kansas and its governor because Kansas is one of the states yet to have Jessica's Law on its books. He's right, we should. But the way he struggled to pronounce her name was something else. You would think someone of his stature would learn how to correctly pronounce a name, especially of a governor under fire, before air time, not take the test and flunk on camera. It was pathetic. But that's "Mr. O," who they say is the hottest commodity on cable television. The pickings are slim, either CNN's Paula Zahn or FOX news Bill O'Reilly. Unfortunately Paula puts me to sleep, Bill keeps me awake.

This is Memorial Day weekend. The day of focus is Monday, the day we honor the memory of all of our servicemen and women of the U.S. Armed Forces who lost their lives in all wars. It is also a time to remember our departed loved ones whose graves we decorate with flowers and other appropriate items.

## Thumbs Up to . . .

✓ **Lary Stull**, on your 28 years of dedicated service as Norton Community High School principal, and also for the outstanding honor bestowed renaming the gym to the NCHS Stull Gymnasium.

✓ **Mary Ellen Posson**, for all the special things you do for your Aunt Dorothy.

✓ **Ward Foley, Pam Shelton, Dan Sturgill, Tamme Johnson, Toby Kuhn, Gina Frack, Janae Talbot, Deb Anderson**, who so graciously gave of their time and shared their expertise with the children of Northern Valley, Lenora Grade School and Eisenhower Elementary for the Big Brothers Big Sisters after school program, *Too Good for Drugs*. (Mary Kay Woodyard)

✓ Friend **Dan Hazlett**, for accepting the responsibility of feeding my dogs and providing them much needed attention as my new job involves a lot of travel. I appreciate all he does. (Megan O'Connor)

✓ Congratulations to **all the graduates** here, there and elsewhere for a job well done. Have at it!

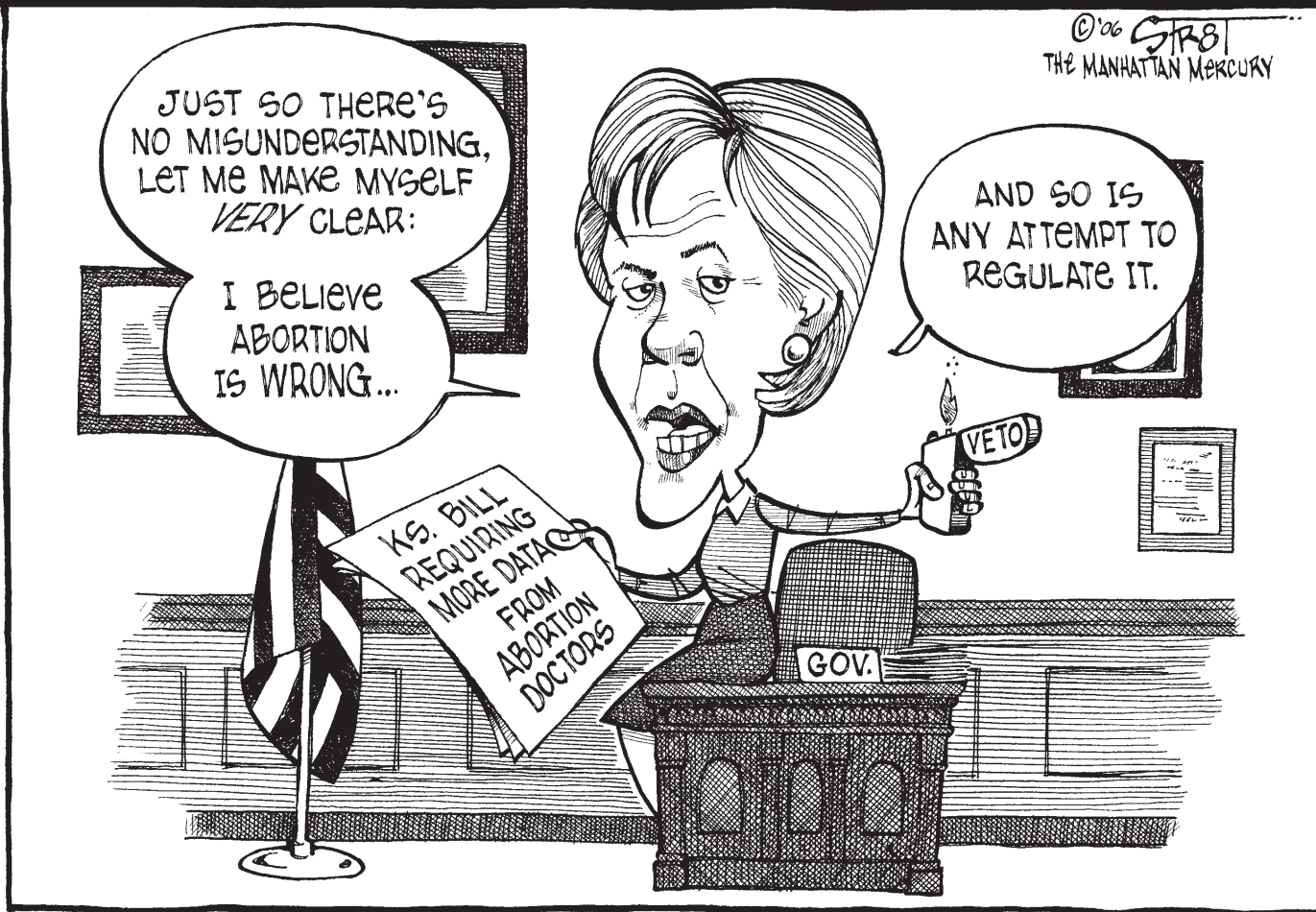
✓ **Arnold Jackson**, on your 90th birthday.

✓ **Clayton High School Alumni Association** on your reunion this coming weekend.

✓ **Jackie Rutherford**, director of nursing, on your many years of service to Andbe Home. You are a credit to your profession. Make the most of your retirement.

✓ **Kenney Leiker**, on your move to Hays. You will be missed here.

(To submit a name of names, email [tomd@nwkansas.com](mailto:tomd@nwkansas.com), call 877-3361 or 877-6908, drop by the office at 215 S. Kansas Ave., or fax 877-3732.)



## FROM THE MAILBOX:

### Superintendent clarifies Eisenhower music program

To the Editor,  
This is being written in response and to clarify the "Letter to the Editor," published in the May 19 edition of *The Norton Telegram*. That letter stated concern over the possible loss of a music classroom and therefore the amount of music being offered to our students at the Eisenhower Elementary School.

There have been discussions between the superintendent of schools and the building principal, and between the principal and his teaching staff regarding the moving of classes at the Eisenhower El-

ementary School. These discussions are being held for the following reasons: to accommodate all day kindergarten in 2007-08, have better alignment and organization of classrooms by grade levels, and to make better and more full use of our current classroom space.

The possibility of vocal music and instrumental music sharing the same classroom is one of about three or four different scenarios being looked at, and no final decision as to classroom assignments as they may relate to the vocal music room will be made until the end of next year.

It is very important that it be understood that in these very preliminary discussions of classroom usage, the elimination of the amount of music to be offered to our students has **never** been part of the consideration. There are **no** plans to eliminate or reduce any music offerings in the Norton School District. Norton has a long and proud tradition in music; it is our intention that this tradition will continue long into the future.

Sincerely,

Greg Mann  
Superintendent of Schools

### Scoreless soccer games complaint draws response

To the Editor,  
I am in serious disagreement with the majority of Robin Somers' letter in Tuesday's *Telegram*. One of my sons has played AYSO soccer here in Norton for five years including this season. Another son has played for three years and (being too old to play) volunteered and trained as an official this year.

It is completely short-sighted, I believe, to consider lack of official scorekeeping to be equivalent to a lack of competition. Healthy competition is prevalent among the AYSO players and most of them are always playing their very best, score or no score.

The Apostle Paul teaches us to "Encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone." (1 Thess. 5: 14) I believe AYSO exemplifies this admonition. The greatest benefit to not officially keeping score is to encourage as many kids to play as possible. Some children, fearing failure, just naturally hold back, but I have seen AYSO encourage these "wall flowers" to really take chances. They have been encouraged by their coaches, officials and fellow players and given every chance to succeed. I personally saw this year how two young men fit into this category. They had a previous bad experience in another sport and their mother was a little tentative about soccer. I assured her that AYSO was a "safe haven" for children such as hers and I believe that her children enjoyed the season and came away encouraged to continue in this and maybe other sports.

AYSO's policies also state that "every-

body plays." Where else do children have this opportunity? Robin's foster children had "losing" seasons, but at least they got the opportunity to play and learn in AYSO. In nearly all other competitive sports only the best will play; others remain the benchwarmers.

We have homeschooled our sons up through this year, so out here in northwestern Kansas soccer has been one of their few chances at sports competition. They have learned a great deal about winning and losing, grown in skill, competitiveness, maturity, and learned to deal with different team members' attitudes and coaches each year. It has been a great learning experience! Josiah's coach saw such a good attitude in him this season that he put him in as a frontline "striker" each quarter their last game so that he would have the greatest opportunity to score a goal. And Josiah took advantage of it! He had never given up in all the years he'd played and he was "rewarded!" He scored his FIRST goal in five years! In his own words, no medal or trophy could add to his excitement!

Our two youngest are now going into Norton Junior High this coming fall and expect to be going out for competitive sports, music, etc. They have no fear of having to work for a position and are already working toward their goals. AYSO has been a part of their preparation. We are thankful for it. I trust our children understand that the feeling of a job well done is the highest reward and failure is a chance to learn and do better the next time.

I'm not against giving trophies and

awards. I recently dug out my Northern Valley "letter" to show my boys what "lettering" meant. It was heavily hung with medals for track and field, music, forensics, and business competitions. I'd lettered multiple years in three sports. Yes, I'm proud of my accomplishments and glad that I competed. I gained a great deal from the experiences of winning and losing. But ironically even I had to look long and hard to find these "rewards" stuck away in the basement. These things are truly the "crown that will not last" about which Robin quoted but then also seems to find essential to be given in AYSO soccer. This seems like circular reasoning to me.

Lastly, a parent is responsible for researching and understanding the policies of any organization in which they put their children. AYSO has always been upfront about their policies, never dishonest. You're welcome to disagree with the policies, but if you feel they're insulting and dishonest, don't sign your children up. If you choose to put your children in anyway, don't publicly criticize something you don't fully understand after eight weeks of involvement — something which many volunteers have given heavily of their time, energy, and money to start and support over several years. Most importantly, speak to those in authority privately and respectfully over any concerns before airing them in such a public forum.

Respectfully,

Bonnie K. Laughlin  
Norton

### Increasing theater ticket prices becomes a concern

To the Editor,  
First, I want to say that I really enjoy having a theater her in Norton. I think it's a big draw to our town. I feel we are very fortunate in Norton to have several places that people can go and have fun. We have great churches, beautiful parks with very nice playground equipment for our children, and several businesses in town that most small towns do not have. Our theater is one of those places practically anyone can enjoy; whether it's just by ourselves, with a friend, or with our families.

Several months ago, the theater association held an open meeting to discuss the future of the theater. I was there as well as a great amount of the town. I was pretty impressed by the turnout. We really care about the theater. Basically, at the end of the meeting, we had all agreed that we would be willing to pay \$6 (\$5 for youth) to help keep the theater going. I felt the

meeting ended with good results and looked forward to supporting our theater again.

Then, some things happened that I didn't expect. One was to get rid of the matinee price. I think this caught quite a few people by surprise, especially the larger families. However, I can deal with this. Now I find that the premiere movies are being charged an additional \$1 making them \$7 for adult tickets. Once again, I think several people have been surprised at this.

I think that there are too many changes being done too soon together and I think that it is creating some unhappy people. I really don't want the theater to shut down and I think we are going to lose people because of these changes.

Why can't we stick with the one change, which was to raise the adult prices to \$6 and then reevaluate the finances at the end

of the year? If more changes need to be made, then that would be the time to come up with a different plan.

I feel like it's a betrayal to the whole town to keep increasing the prices so often without discussing it with the town — especially since our opinion supposedly was wanted at the meeting,

I for one actually feel angry about it and I don't think I'm the only one.

Now, what can we do about it?

Any ideas anyone?

Sincerely,

Elaine Gaer  
Norton

Share your thoughts with a Letter to the Editor

**THE NORTON TELEGRAM**

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