

## When the time comes, where is the exit?

Do you sometimes get the feeling we are fighting nothing more than a sound bite war in Iraq?  
How often have these bites surfaced:  
"Stay the course!"  
"Cut and run!"  
More times than any of us can count.  
Republican. Democrat. Makes no difference. Neither has come up with a firm exit strategy.  
President Bush says we won't leave until the job is done. He never seems to get around to explaining how we will know the job is done. We recall a huge sign on U. S. battleship a couple of years ago that declared, "Mission Accomplished."  
The question begs: Without an exit strategy, how in the world are we going to find the exit when "the job is done?"  
This war has confused millions of Americans. They run hot and cold. Nothing is clear, other than we've lost 3,000 men and women so far in a war that was supposed to be a cake walk

On Nov. 7, voters said they wanted a new direction in Iraq so they turned control of the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives over to the Democrats.

That got President Bush's attention, so he booted Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

The Democrats can't seem to find common ground in their search for a new direction in a war that gets uglier by the hour. They are no where near the red zone so don't expect them to score anytime soon.

Then yesterday, in Jordan, President Bush was high in praise of Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki as the man to get the job done. He said this despite a White House memo leaked to the media the day before in which Maliki's fitness for the post was questioned.

And all the while, the U.S. military body count goes on. Don't look for a new direction. Look for more bullets and more sound bites. Unfortunately.

—Tom Dreiling

## Thumbs Up to...

✓ **Pastor Terry Laughlin**, on that great story in the Nov. 24 issue of The Norton Telegram. (e-mail)

✓ **Bernard and Lavon McCormack**, on your 40th wedding anniversary. (e-mail)

✓ **Ashley Maybon**, on your selection as Area 4 KAY President. (e-mail)

✓ **All who had** anything to do with the recent Big Brothers Big Sisters Dinner, Dance & Silent Auction fund raiser. (via telephone)

✓ **To the city crews** who make Norton look good for the holidays year after year. (e-mail)

✓ **Santa and Mrs. Claus**, you haven't aged a bit since Christmas '05. (e-mail)

✓ **Jean White, Carol Hudson, Verla Chambers and Jim and Marla Ruth**, for the unique, yet beautiful, displays at the Norton Public Library. "These are must sees." (telephone)

✓ **The Norton Correctional Facility, the EMS and the Norton County Hospital** staff, for their quick thinking and actions given to Joe when he most needed it. (from Sarah Durham)

(To submit a name or names, e-mail [tomd@nwkansas.com](mailto:tomd@nwkansas.com), call 877-6908 or 877-3361, fax to 877-3732, or mail to or drop by the office at 215 S. Kansas Ave. Thanks for your assistance!)

## Say it with a Letter to The Telegram Editor

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

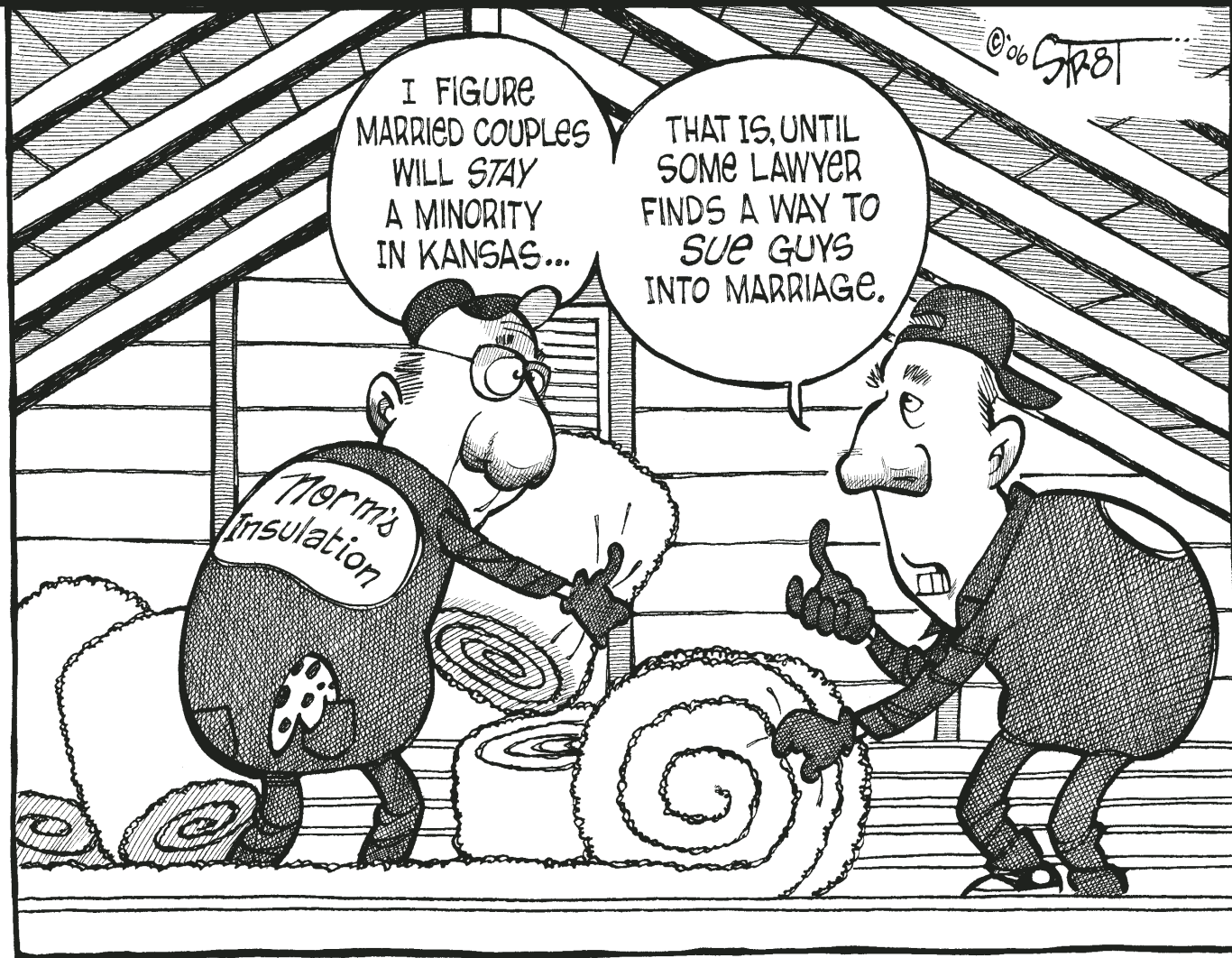
Office hours:  
8 a.m.- 5:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.  
Phone: (785) 877-3361  
Fax: (785) 877-3732  
E-mail: [telegram@nwkansas.com](mailto:telegram@nwkansas.com)

### STAFF

Tom Dreiling ..... editor and publisher  
Lisa Marie Henderson ..... advertising  
Veronica Monier ..... staff reporter  
Dick Boyd ..... Blue Jay sports  
Carolyn Plotts ..... society editor  
Sherry Hickman ..... bookkeeping/circulation  
Vicki Henderson ..... computer production

### Nor'West Newspapers

Dick and Mary Beth Boyd  
Publishers, 1970-2002  
Incorporating the Norton County Champion  
Marion R. Krehbiel, editor



## Here's some extra cash for shopping

Let me help you find some extra cash to do your Christmas shopping with this season. I bet you haven't given any thought to the following:

✓ **Shop at home.** The Norton stores can accommodate you. And what you save at the gas pump by shopping at home vs. going out of town, you can add to your gift fund

✓ **Eat at home.** When you go out of town to shop, you will feed your face at least once in one of the restaurants in that distant city. Add that to your gift fund.

✓ **Sleep at home.** When you go out of town to shop, chances are, due to distance, you will stay in a motel overnight. Add that savings to your gift fund.

✓ **Community betterment.** All of the above would mean more dollars staying at home and working for the betterment of the community. And I am a firm believer that's what we all want — an even better community.

There are probably other ways that would also free up more \$\$s for you to spend at home. As you think of them, put them into action.

I jotted down a few numbers if I were to travel out of town to do my Christmas shopping. And it wouldn't be a long trip, about 200 miles to and back. And this is just me, nobody else going along. Total: approximately \$110 for gas, food and lodging — I don't forget the food would be an evening meal and breakfast the next day. Now, if you are taking your spouse and a couple of kids — wow! What you save would be a nice pot of gold with which to kick off your hometown shopping experience.

We make what we want out of Christmas shopping. It can be a relatively fun and easy experience, or it can be a hectic ride. It's your choice.

And remember we have "The 12 Days of Christmas" that rewards some lucky Norton shoppers. Doubtless you are going to find anything like that in your out-of-town journey.

We often say, "Proud to be a Blue Jay." Maybe this Christmas season we can re-

## Good Evening Norton

Tom Dreiling



phrase that to, "Proud to be a Norton shopper."

-td-

Last Saturday I observed another birthday. A telephone call from a friend, who purposely emphasized the number of years being observed, said, "Hey, Tom, it's just a number. That's all." My reply was, "I have counted more numbers than there are numbers left to be counted." After a brief silence, the comment from the other end of the phone was, "Hmmm. Never looked at it that way."

I noticed where President and Mrs. Bush's twin daughters, Barbara and Jena, celebrated their 25th birthday also on Nov. 25.

-td-

With the New Year just around the corner, it's not too early to be talking about investment tips for 2007. Please be aware of the next expected mergers so that you can get in on the ground floor and make some really BIG bucks.

Watch for these consolidations in 2007.

- Hale Business Systems, Mary Kay Cosmetics, Fuller Brush, and W. R. Grace Co. will merge and become: Hale, Mary, Fuller, Grace.

- Polygram Records, Warner Bros., and Zesta Crackers join forces and become: Poly, Warner Cracker.

- 3M will merge with Goodyear and become: MMMGood.

- Zippo Manufacturing, Audi Motors, Dofasco, and Dakota Mining will merge and become: ZipAudiDoDa.

- FedEx is expected to join its major competitor, UPS, and become: FedUP.

- Fairchild Electronics and Honeywell

Computers will become: Fairwell Honeychild.

- Knotts Berry Farm and the National Organization of Women will become: Knott NOW!

-td-

She's a nice gal, but just a wee bit slow on the button. For example, she went to the post office to buy stamps for her Christmas cards. □

She said to the clerk, "May I have 50 Christmas stamps?" □

The clerk asked, "What denomination?" □

She said, "God help us. Has it come to this? Give me 6 Catholic, 12 Presbyterian, 10 Lutheran and 22 Baptists."

-td-

I think Seinfeld's Kramer needs to get a new adviser. How many apologies is he going to make? The first one should have sufficed. Now the number is up to four! Currently, he is being coached by Al Sharpton and Jessie Jackson. Talk about two controversial characters. Kramer (Michael Richards) keeps digging the hole deeper. And speaking of those who try to make people laugh — Jay Leno and David Letterman come to mind — they must take responsibility for what they say. And there are times I cringe at some of the remarks they make. Funny is funny until they cross the line and make it personal.

-td-

More outdoor Christmas displays are going up throughout the community. Jump in your vehicle some evening and start looking around. If the early displays are a gauge, then the town's going to have an extra special look this year.

-td-

How often do you hear big city mayors say, when ordering a Christmas display on public property taken down because it is a bit too religious, they are doing it so as not to offend anybody? How stupid! Their order in itself offends.

-td-

Have a good evening and a good weekend. And as Liza Deines would say, "Be sure 'U' are not missing from CH RCH Sunday.

## Great news, but questions linger

We were afraid to get our hopes up; we had done that once before. In July, we thought my great nephew Gerry would return from Iraq. He had been there 12 months and the order was given for his Stryker Combat Unit to return to Alaska. We had been worried while he was there, but he assured us he was in a "safer" part of Iraq. I'm not sure that place exists, but he wanted to save us from worry.

It was mid-July and most of his unit had already boarded the plane to return to the states. He was still on the ground when a new order was issued. His unit was to return to Iraq, this time to be stationed in Baghdad because they had been so "successful" in their former assignment. As I said, we were afraid to get our hopes up only to begin the process all over again, but this time it was true.

My phone rang at 7 a.m. Monday morning. My sister had a call from her daughter. Teri was ecstatic. Gerry, her only child, was back home in Alaska. Now we

## Phase II

Mary Kay Woodyard



can all relax, but can we?

As talks, negotiations and more confrontations continue, our good fortune isn't everyone's. Not everyone will hear the sound of their loved one's voice again or if they do, it won't be the same voice. It will be the voice of pain or trauma, perhaps never to walk again, or remember their name or function on their own.

The well-known phrase "war is hell" is more truth than those of us who have never experienced it can imagine. I don't know what my nephew's feelings about the war are, but I know mine.

There are too many discrepancies in our excuses to go into Iraq: WMD (Weapons of Mass Destruction), the evilness of Saddam, the housing of terrorists. These and other excuses were meant to justify an aggression in a country far from here and not the home of the 9-11 terrorists. For this, our young men and women are losing their lives, either physically or emotionally.

Our desire to make the world "right" is admirable, but perhaps ill fated. A troubled Middle East is steeped in history. It is much like the hand withdrawn from a pool of water; the ripples last for a short time and then the pool returns to what for it, is the norm.

Our family has returned to normalcy with Gerry's return. Other families still watch the news with baited breath. I pray first and foremost for leaders to weigh the consequences of their decisions and I pray for all of us to be vigilant in our desire to be the world's leader, not of aggression, but of peace and humanity.