

We need to carry on Stan Clark's mission

Let's revisit a proposition championed by the late Sen. Stan Clark, who thought the state should have more offices out in the hinterlands and fewer in Topeka.

Sen. Clark once suggested that, instead of buying up more buildings in Topeka to house an ever-expanding work force, the state should start farming out its work to places like Oberlin and Norton.

With modern communications, he argued, most jobs could be done in our area as well as they could in Topeka. Some might argue that the state would get better workers and a better product out in rural Kansas.

Half a century ago, the state built an office tower in Topeka. Today, the government spills out into two more office buildings and a passel of other space.

There's no reason why all that money has to be spent in Topeka.

Some of it could be creating economic development in rural counties bypassed by state government in the last few decades.

There's a whole litany of crimes against the rural economy the state should atone for: closing Social and Rehabilitation Services offices, highway shops in smaller towns, consolidating Highway Patrol dispatch centers, the list goes on.

Sure, that's the way utilities like Southwestern Bell (now the "new" AT&T) do business. Once Bell had operators and a business office in nearly every town; today our small towns have been deserted. Those functions have been "centralized" in Wichita, Tulsa, Dallas — or Bangalore.

But Ma Bell isn't run with tax money and has no responsibility to promote economic development. We all know how much she loves us.

The state of Kansas, though, in many ways has been a booster for rural decline. New highways concentrated traffic, drying up commerce along the two-lanes across our state. Consolidations closed schools, offices and services.

If we're interested in a stronger state economy, shouldn't we demand that the state reverse this trend? And shouldn't we want every county in Kansas to be prosperous, not just a few?

Stan Clark thought so. He'd only begun the fight before his untimely death in a prairie dust storm three years ago.

The rest of us should take up the torch.

A computer center in Atwood. An engineering office in Hill City.

Maybe a prison in Oakley and a research center over in Norton.

Oh, here's an idea: welfare offices in every county where people can go down and apply for help — in person, not on the phone. Maybe state service centers where people could get all kinds of services at the county seat without a day-long drive to some consolidated office.

Someone will say state workers don't want to move out to the sticks. Too bad. Hire people who want to live here. Rural Kansas will be a lot more hip with jobs and people.

There are, last time we checked, lots of other jobs in Topeka for those who don't want to move.

— Steve Haynes

Thumbs Up to ...

✓ **Mel Rice**, on the coveted honor bestowed by the Blue Jay Booster Club. Well deserved. (e-mail)

✓ **Nathan Pollock**, on being named recipient of the Kansas State University Putnam Scholarship. (called in)

✓ **All the paper delivery people**, who braved the recent snow storms, ice and cold to get out the papers! (called in)

✓ **The Norton Junior High wrestling team**, for winning the MCEL wrestling tournament on March 3 at Osborne with eight first place finishers. Way to go! (brought in)

✓ **Jeremy Hartwell, Larry Land, Curtis Black, Adam Wahlmeier**, Norton Police Department's new officers.

✓ **The Young Americans**, and the **Norton students**, for a super show at Stull Gym Tuesday night. You were marvelous, all of you! (e-mail)

✓ **The honest young man** who found, and returned my wallet. The contents had to be tempting. You are a credit to your parents. God bless! (e-mail)

(E-mail tom@dwnkansas.com, phone either 877-6908 or 877-3361 or drop by the office (215 S. Kansas Ave.) to place a salute in this column. There is no charge. Thanks!)

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

ISSN 1063-701X
215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, KS 67654

Published each Tuesday and Friday by Haynes Publishing Co., 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, Kan. 67654. Periodicals mail postage paid at Norton, Kan. 67654.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Norton Telegram, 215 S. Kansas, Norton, Kan. 67654
Official newspaper of Norton and Norton County. Member of the Kansas Press Association, National Newspaper Association, and the Nebraska Press Association

Nor'West Newspapers

Dick and Mary Beth Boyd

Publishers, 1970-2002

Incorporating the Norton County Champion

Marion R. Krehbiel, editor

Office hours:
8 a.m.- 5:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.
Phone: (785) 877-3361
Fax: (785) 877-3732
E-mail: 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



Giuliani's son erects speed bump

When the kids grow up, hold on! They have their own opinions and often share them. It looks like former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, a 2008 Republican presidential candidate, may have an election issue coming from within his household.

We all know Mr. Giuliani's marriage record, although he's not placing it on the picnic table for lunch. But when his 21-year-old son brought it up and spiced the dialogue with an unfavorable view of his father, well that takes the issue to a new level.

Right now, Mr. Giuliani is leading the pack in the polls. But it is a long way from now to November 2008 and lots can happen. The former mayor is a good speaker and seems to be well received when he climbs on his soapbox.

True conservatives, however, scratch their heads when he steps to the podium. Some of the social issues he embraces would never find their way in the list of ingredients for a GOP pot of stew.

And we find it interesting that a Giuliani rival, Mitt Romney, former governor of Massachusetts, has been — of late — letting his wife make a comment or two as he steps up to speak. And then he emphasizes that he and Mrs. Romney are getting ready to celebrate their 38th wedding anniversary, as he makes mention of their five sons and 10 grandchildren. Well, you get the message.

Up to now, the Republican campaign has been more of a "hands off criticizing one another" approach, as they invoke the 11th commandment of the late President Ronald Reagan. That commandment directs Republicans not to speak ill of another Republican. With that in mind, it appears Romney is skirting the Reagan commandment.

Good Evening Norton
Tom Dreiling



Richard Land, he's head of the public policy office for the Southern Baptist Convention, said the convention has doubts about Giuliani, who has been married three times. He was especially critical of Giuliani's divorce from his second wife, television personality Donna Hanover. He called it "...divorce on steroids." He said the former mayor showed a lack of character. These are mean words coming from an organization that carries a lot of clout.

And with this latest, and totally unexpected comment from Giuliani's son, it looks like the microscope will be putting in extra hours.

-td-

Another firestorm erupted last weekend when author Ann Coulter used what she called a schoolyard word when mentioning Democratic presidential candidate and former U.S. Sen. John Edwards. If you have been following the story you know the word she chose. We opt not to repeat it.

Some think Ms. Coulter owes Mr. Edwards an apology. Why? Ann Coulter is Ann Coulter and you never know what is going to flow from her mouth. Her comment should not have come as a surprise. And she said it was used in a joke-like manner. Love her or hate her, it's simply called "freedom of speech." You know

how that works: If a speaker speaks what you like, three cheers for freedom of speech, if not, trash the speaker.

No, I'm not an Ann Coulter person. She's not warm and fuzzy, she alone could have sunk the Titanic.

-td-

As the campaign takes another surge, Kansas Sen. Sam Brownback pretty much bills himself as the only true conservative in the race. His name is beginning to catch on and that is reflected by the polls now recognizing him as a valid and perhaps real contender for the job.

Do I hear any applause out there for our fellow Kansan??

-td-

And everyone is waiting for Jenna Bush's book. It's sure to make the best seller list, or at least be one of the hottest publications on the shelf. The book, so we understand, has total support of the first family.

Talk has it that it won't be a bombshell, as many books today seem to be, but more of a call for public service, from personal experience, to help those in need around the globe.

-td-

Just another reminder to turn your clocks **up** one hour before going to bed Saturday night. The time change (to Daylight Saving) comes three weeks earlier this year. You might want to remind Grandma and Grandpa, too.

-td-

Are you still keeping the commitment you made at the beginning of the Lenten season?

-td-

Have a good evening. And cap off the weekend by attending the church of your choice.

You'll be glad you did.

'Cat in a Hat' OK, but not in bed

Steve told me not to go looking for a new cat and, as usual, he was right. Steve's theory is that the cats always find us. Too true. But I've been wanting to replace my missing Siamese for about five years. Every time a new cat comes — usually from my children — it's not a Siamese.

So when my favorite pet pusher told me about a Siamese kitten she had at the Norton city animal shelter, I tumbled.

Sherry works as the Norton animal control officer and as the circulation/classified/you-name-it manager at *The Norton Telegram*. Which is probably why *The Telegram* has a lot of information about lost, strayed, dumped and underloved cats and dogs in it.

The newspaper office even has a pair of birds, which Sherry brought in for a short visit — about a year ago. Oh well. The Oberlin office has a cat and we never even pretended it belonged to anyone but the newspaper.

Anyway, back to the Siamese. Sherry said she had a 5-month-old female Siamese-mix that needed a home.

I talked to Steve. I discussed it with the girls at the office. I talked to Steve.

I called Sherry about a test drive.

Sure, she said, I'll bring her down to the office.

Open Season
Cynthia Haynes



I stopped by *The Telegram* and picked her up — a scared bundle of shedding fur. She's beautifully marked and lay unresisting in my lap.

Ah, I thought, the perfect cat — pretty, loving, docile. At home, I showed her where the water was upstairs and the food and litter box and food bowl downstairs. Then I let her go.

She ran between a couple of boxes near the food bowl in the basement.

OK, no problem. I knew where she was and she was safe from the other cats.

But I was afraid she'd get lonely. So I headed for bed, taking the new baby with me.

She needs a bit more socialization, I figured, and a night in our bed should help her to get close to Steve and me.

Steve stays up late, but he was ready to hit the hay at about 2 a.m. when I woke

and realized something was wrong.

The baby had had an accident all over me, the bed and herself.

Steve removed the kitten to her hole between the boxes in the basement. I took a shower and stripped the bed and rinsed the sheets. He hauled the bedding to the washing machine.

We remade the bed and went to sleep, figuring that I was to blame for the "accident."

That was four days ago, and neither of us has touched the new kitten since.

We figure she's somewhere in the basement among the boxes, Christmas decorations, summer clothing, books and stored items. There are about a million places a small cat could hide down there.

We're pretty sure she hasn't left through the cat door. It's kinda hard to get to, and every time one of the other cats goes down there, it growls and sniffs around suspiciously. Steve says he saw a flash of white the other night.

The up side of this is that Jezebel, the cat we hadn't seen since we took her to the vet three months ago, has come upstairs demanding love and attention. Rooming with a kitten apparently wasn't to her taste.

We still have a cat in the basement we never see. It's just a different cat.