

Encourage Faber to stand firm

Rep. John Faber saved western Kansas from an economic body blow when, as chair of the House Agriculture Committee, he bottled up a bill designed to curb water use along the mostly dry Arkansas River.

The problem as Mr. Faber sees it — and we agree — is that the proposal would use federal Conservation Reserve money to pay farmers to idle land so the state could take well rights out of service.

We don't argue with the push to reduce pumping underground water. Rampant production of irrigated corn, while lucrative, is running the state dry in many areas. Some wells can stand that type of pumping. Many cannot.

Despite a lawsuit forcing Colorado to use less water and deliver more to the Kansas border, the Ark is dry west of Hutchinson most years. Overpumping is a major problem in the basin, as it is in many parts of the state.

How we approach this problem is critical, though. Taking huge chunks of land out of production would have a snowball effect, harming co-ops, ag suppliers, schools, businesses, whole towns.

A more reasonable approach is to buy back well rights and let farmers either graze the land or grow dryland crops on it. The blow to our economy will be far less, and for the foreseeable future, the nation will have the corn it needs and demands.

That's what Mr. Faber is standing for against pressure from the Senate and many in the House. The problem is the bill relies on a federal program that prohibits any productive use of land covered by its payments. Rep. Jerry Moran says he'd like to change that, but it hasn't happened so far.

Make no mistake: we need to face the water problem.

Where wells are overpumped, where aquifers are dropping, where streams dry up, we need to cut back to a sustainable level. Water is not just a private property right, but a shared resource that everyone depends on.

And we have to make it last.

The state realizes it has to pay farmers for giving up their wells. The Legislature needs to recognize that our economy depends on keeping this land in production.

Rural Kansas has suffered enough, God knows. Taking more land out of production when grain supplies are tight and prices high makes no sense.

We applaud Rep. Faber for standing up to this awful bill.

With improvements in dryland seed varieties, the land can be productive for decades without irrigation. This is important to all of us out West, because whatever solution applies to the Arkansas eventually will be spread to the rest of the state.

We will have to face the irrigation issue some day, and we hope the state will have a reasonable program to help us — not the one in this bill.

Stand firm, John.

— Steve Haynes

Thumbs Up to . . .

√David Will and the Norton High School Band members who participated in the regional contest at Oberlin March 31. (called in)

√Elwood and Norine Bailey, on your 60th wedding anniversary. (e-mail)

√Delores Atkinson, on your 85th birthday. (brought in)

√To everyone, who took time to vote in Tuesday's election.

√Tanner Pabst, on earning a Hansen Foundation scholarship to the North Central Kansas Technical College at Beloit. Go, Tanner! (e-mail from friends)

√Kelli Cole, on your selection to the Cheyenne Conference All-Conference Team. (e-mail)

(To submit a name or names, e-mail tom@dwnkansas.com, fax (785) 877-3732, call either 877-3361 or 877-6908, or mail or drop by the office at 215 S. Kansas Ave. Thanks for your interest in this column. -td)

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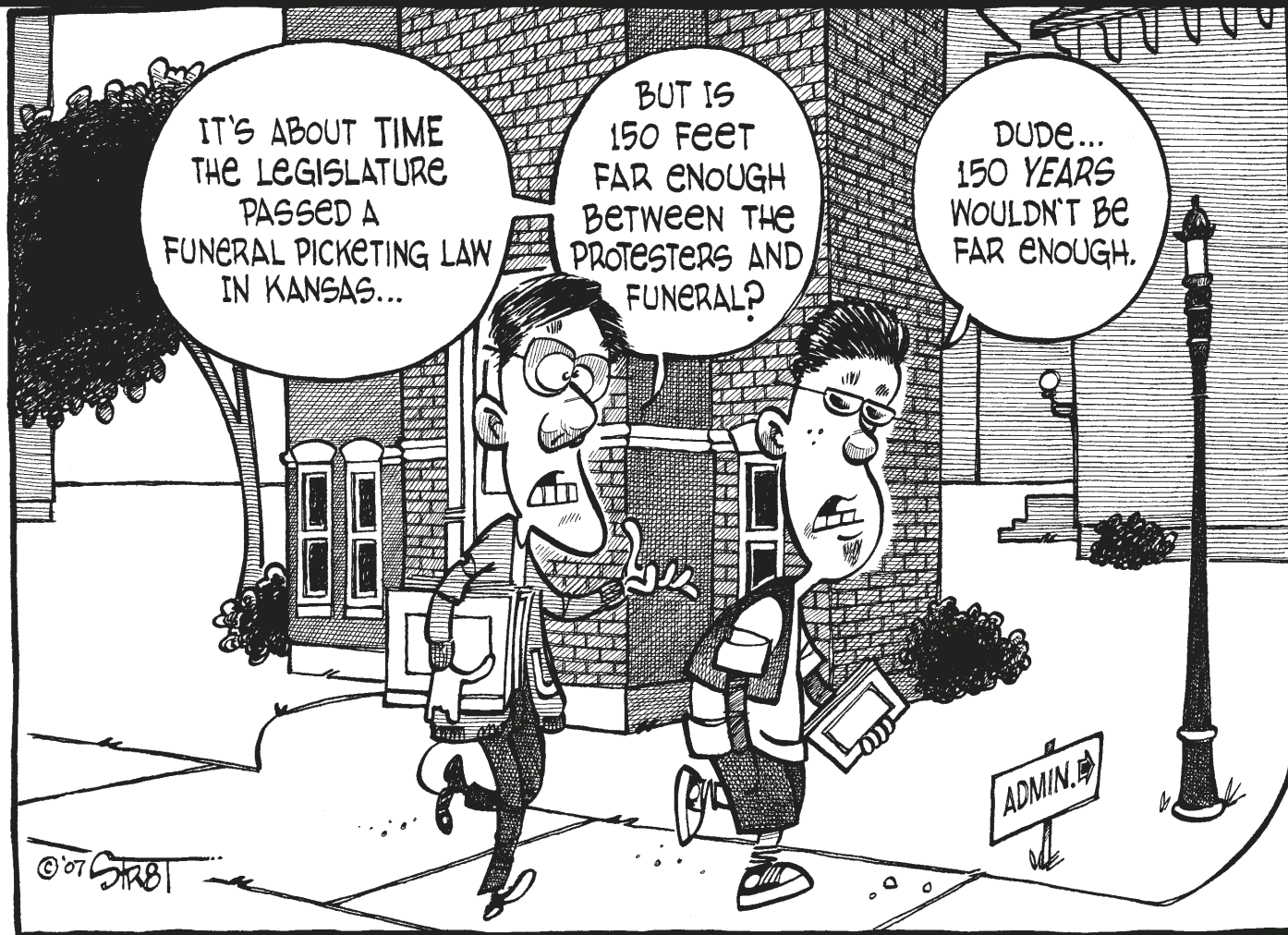
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ISSN 1063-701X
215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, KS 67654
Published each Tuesday and Friday by Haynes Publishing Co., 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, Kan. 67654. Periodicals mail postage paid at Norton, Kan. 67654.
Postmaster: Send address changes to Norton 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



Presidential campaign an evil thing?

Money is the root of all evil, so the old saying goes. If that be the case, then the 2008 presidential campaign must be about as evil as it gets. Consider the fact the candidates in the race for the White House, collectively, have raised far in excess of \$100 million dollars in the first quarter of 2007, and these are figures from just four of the 16 or so candidates. And between now and the November voting date in 2008 many millions more will be raised. It's not staggering, it's almost shameful.

To think that to become president of this great land, money — first and foremost — is the determining factor. Something's amiss, and has been for a long time, but how do we remedy it? I'll bet some of this country's greatest minds — people who could actually make a difference — are benched for their inability to dig into other people's pockets.

The way it's going, the day may come when the presidency is no longer a matter of the people, but something that goes to the highest bidder. And it'll probably end up on eBay.

I often wonder why we, as a nation, can't seem to raise that kind of money to help those among us less fortunate. How often do we hear pleas from organizations, here at home and elsewhere across the land, whose purpose in life is to reach out to those in need, but often find those cries falling on deaf ears? More times than not. But we'll take those same dollars and toss them at people we don't even know, other than by their appearances on television. Maybe if we threw less money at them

Good Evening Norton Tom Dreiling



and more at those who strive to make life better for those who really need the help, we could cut back on the awful amount of money spent to get elected president, and in the process increase the amount of money spent to better the lives of others.

Give that some thought on this Good Friday as we prepare to join family and friends at Easter Sunday services.

-td-

A story and photo in the March 30 issue of *The Telegram* (page 3) was read with more than just passing interest by at least one area resident. The story featured Hugh Apple who recently finished the first volume of "God's Masterplan."

Oberlin resident Art Shelton, a frequent contributor to the letters section of *The Telegram*, penned this note after reading the story. In part he writes:

"I enjoyed the article on Rev. Hugh Apple and the theological books he is writing. When living in Norton, Rev. Apple was a pastor at the First Baptist Church. After becoming ordained, his first official act was to preside over my sister's wedding.

"His wife, JoAnn Antrim Apple is a cousin.

"Just before the old Baptist Church was

torn down, Helen Shewey Richard and myself were the last ones to be baptized. When it was my turn, I could not help but see the seven-inch long goldfish swimming about inside the baptismal pool. Later, pastor said he would tell me nothing about the fish until I correctly guessed its name. I have been bewildered for the last fifty years.

"What well known biblical name could one give to a Baptist fish that lives in a baptismal pool at a Baptist Church? Is there more than one choice?"

Mr. Shelton also noted that in addition to Rev. Apple, there are eight other cousins who are Baptist ministers, including the Campbell brothers Richard and Walter.

I'm sure some other readers can relate to some of what Mr. Shelton passed along.

-td-

Here, according to friends, will be some of the top headlines in the year 2029:

- Baby conceived naturally. Scientists stumped.
- Couple petitions court to reinstate heterosexual marriage.
- Castro finally dies at age 112; Cuban cigars can now be imported legally, but President Chelsea Clinton has banned all smoking.
- 85-year, \$75.8 billion study: Diet and Exercise is the key to weight loss.
- Average height of NBA players is now nine feet, seven inches.
- Florida voters still having trouble with voting machines.

-td-

Have a good evening. Easter Sunday awaits.

Manhattan's a pretty good fit for me

I like to go to Manhattan and my college child is always glad to see me when I do. I flatter myself by thinking it is because of our wonderful relationship. And, in part it is. But, realistically, I also know it is because I bring treats and the checkbook!

This past weekend was "Mom's Weekend" at her sorority and since she is 21 we could go on the "Pub Crawl". I am not exactly sure why they call it a Pub Crawl but it takes place in Aggieville and you visit a lot of bars. So maybe that crawling part is just what happens eventually!

Patricia had reported that Ward Foley would be doing a program at the K-State Union at noon that Friday. Pam and Charlie came over from Lawrence. I wish I had been there in time to see them! Yes Charlie, Patricia said hello for you! Hello to all the Foleys also, especially Charlie!

On our way to check into the hotel, a young man driving flagged us down. I figured he was Tricia's friend but he seemed to be including me in his greetings. It was retiring Kansas State University student body president, Lucas Maddy. I'd only been in town an hour and already gotten greetings from Lucas and Charlie so I was feeling pretty good!

We spent Saturday doing the usual Mom's weekend stuff, lunch at the house, a boring meeting, some shopping. We looked at an apartment for next year and Patricia signed a lease. One half-block from campus and one block from Aggieville. PERFECT!

Finally, it was time for the eagerly awaited Pub Crawl. Some of the moms,

Back Home Nancy Hagman



more adventuresome than I, tried some of the crazy concoctions currently in vogue. Apparently each bar has a specialty. I am trying to diet and all I could think about was "how many calories are in that?" Is it an accident that two of the bars we visited had the names FATS and TUBBY'S? Water, please!

Whoever thought of Jell-O Shots anyway? My life ambition is to eradicate Jell-O from the face of the earth. On the other hand, since it is not possible to make Jell-O any more disgusting and gross maybe vodka would actually help!

A lot of the Greek houses were having Mom's weekend. Patricia said she heard someone ask, "What is this? Take you daughter to a bar weekend!"

We ran into the daughter of one of my sister's very best high school friends. She said, "I don't think my mom would ever do this with me." Some of Patricia's friends ran into her cousin Brandon. "I can't believe Aunt Nancy is in Aggieville!" he said. Patricia said, "I can't imagine his mother ever coming down here, either!"

I have news for those kids — their

mothers used to be and still are fun! Even Cool! How interesting that they think we are so staid and boring. I was young once (not for long) but I was. I must look way different on the outside than I feel on the same inside.

At most of the places they very carefully checked IDs. Though no one ever checked mine! Go figure!

At one bar we saw K-State quarterback, Josh Freeman. The girls flocked over to have their picture taken with him. He is pretty cute. He appeared to be rather embarrassed by all the attention. He looked so young, but then he is only a freshman, definitely not 21! Wonder how he got in there? I see in the paper Ron Prince says he has bulked up. That's my life story also. For some reason bulking up isn't seen as desirable for moms as it is for Big 12 quarterbacks. (For the record, I did not see Josh drink anything.)

Well, I had fun! Took the kid some treats. Got a T-shirt! Saw Josh Freeman, saw Jordy Nelson Friday night, saw Lucas. Found they have "Tuesday Mornings" in Manhattan.

I think I'll go back next weekend. In fact I'm definitely going back. Because Patricia is having her wisdom teeth pulled. And, we're going the next weekend because it is Open House and we are going the next weekend, because it is the Spring Game.

Then we are skipping a weekend. But we are going the next weekend for a wedding and the next because we have to move the kid!

Good thing I like Manhattan!