

This stinker belongs in the clinker

Again, the biggest news machines in the country got it all wrong. Paris Hilton is not, repeat IS NOT, worth the time spent reporting on her arrest and jailing, her unexpected release, and then her return to jail.

After all, Paris Hilton is nothing more than a rich, spoiled kid who believes obeying the laws aren't meant for her. Well, she is finding out otherwise, no thanks to the sheriff in the county where the situation unfolded.

Somewhere along the line an example needs to be made that those who live in society's glitter are not privy to a so-called double standard where justice, firm and fair, not a mockery thereof, is the expectation.

If it is difficult for most of us to rationalize why, when someone whose name lights up every marquee from coast to coast, is caught breaking the law walks away from punishment, or is rendered a slap on the wrist. Those who live such lives should be made accountable, just like the rest of us.

Many celebrities check into rehab facilities as a means of escaping the claws of justice. Some don't stay long enough to learn where the restrooms are. This practice is becoming more and more common.

Martha Stewart, when she knew the writing was on the wall, stepped up to the plate, served her time and came out of the big house as popular as ever. Ms. Hilton might take note of the way Ms. Stewart handled her situation.

One television network said it was surprised how engaged the public was by the Hilton case. Surprised? Those nitwits are the ones who shoved it down our throats. You couldn't get away from it! Another 24/7 joke.

While immigration concerns lock the country in heated debate, here we are wondering if a poor rich brat should have to sit in the clinker for being a stinker.

Come on, you big news machines, grow up.

—Tom Dreiling

Candidates just don't get it

If a person wants entertainment just check out the presidential debates. Take your pick, democrat or republican, they are equally full of fiction and sarcasm. The only hope is, with a year out from the conventions they will destroy their credibility, if they haven't already. The real tragedy, however, is the lack of any progress. Both parties are so focused on winning, they cease to connect with the real problems and those which are affecting everyday Americans everyday!

My husband always says the problem with our government is, "the very people who want to be in office are the very ones who shouldn't be." As we watch, both parties behave more like pre-school children on the playground, the more I believe he is right. With voters determined to focus on personalities rather than the issues, things aren't likely to change very soon.

I have heard people boldly brag about voting a straight ticket. No party has it right all the time. Voting a straight ticket never shows how devoted a voter is, only how stubborn.

Once had a friend say he didn't agree with anything the president was doing, but he couldn't bring himself to vote for the other party. Does he have the best interest of the country at heart or only his pride?

I decided a long time ago, people voted more on how they perceived the party's social status than their political convictions. Jack's mother used to say she believed more what the democrats stood for,

Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



but she "just couldn't stand to be called a democrat," therefore she voted republican. My dad always told me democrats wanted to help the less fortunate and republicans wanted to help themselves. Isn't it interesting how we perceive the parties.

The debates are designed to inform us of the platform of each candidate, instead it reveals more how they perform under pressure and look on camera. We have critical issues to resolve, not the least of which is the war in Iraq, deteriorating relations with Russia and other countries, threatened personal rights and a spending spree gone out of control. We cannot blame Bush, the republicans or the democrats, the election process is about us.

It is about encouraging people to vote, finding ways to get old and young out to vote. If the voting process doesn't work, then we fight to rid ourselves of an out of date voting strategy.

We form grass roots organizations to make democracy not just survive, but work and work for the betterment of us all.

Don't forget, Friday is 'Thumbs Up' day in your Norton Telegram

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

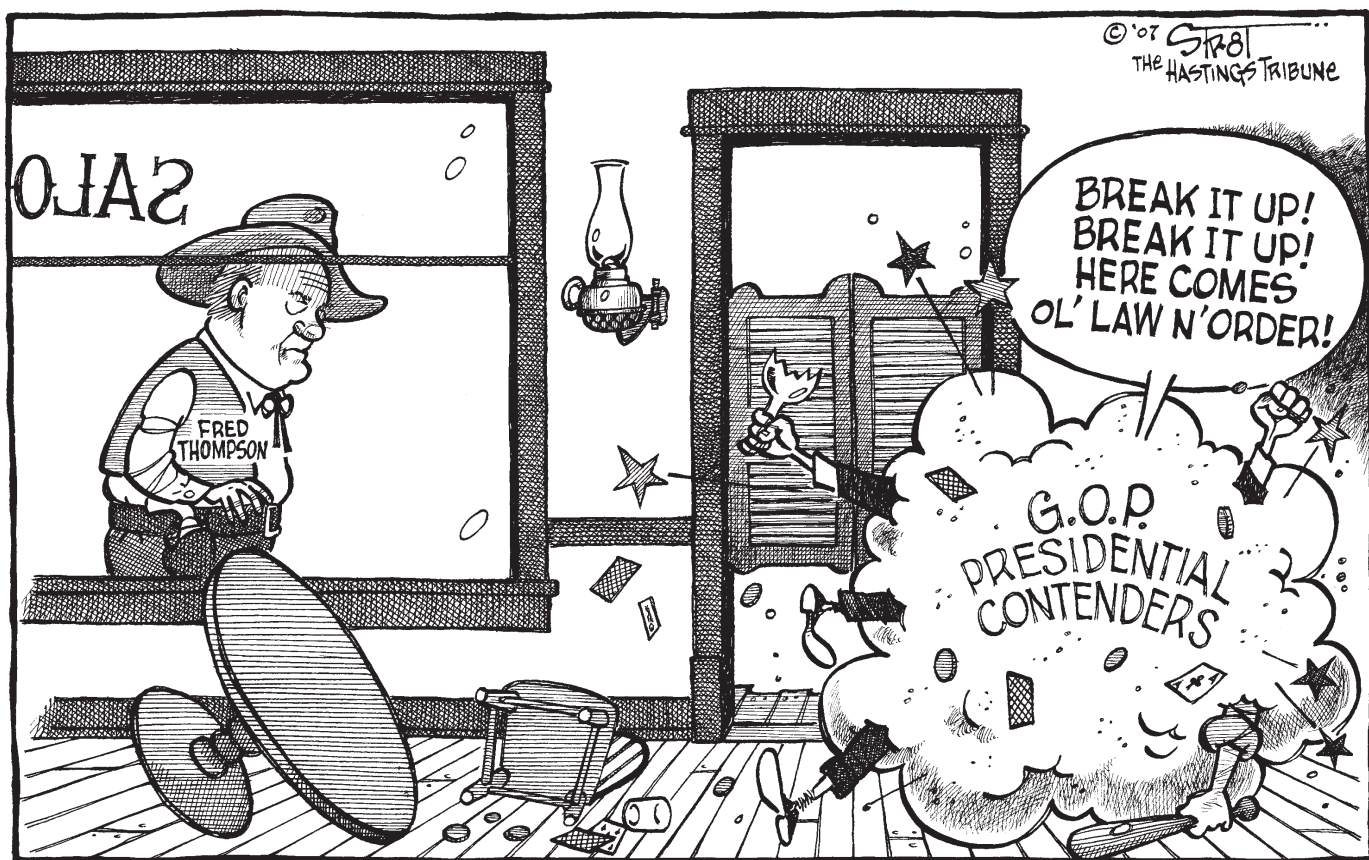
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Knowing he was prepared, comforts family

The call we dreaded but knew was coming arrived Friday. It came from my brother, Dick, to tell us his oldest son, Kevin, had died. Kevin had been sick for a long time. Cancer seems to run rampant in our family and Kevin is its latest victim. He was only 50.

I was about 10 when Kevin was born and his other youngest aunt, Cheryl, on his mother's side, and I would bicker over who got to hold him next. He was one of those babies that melted into you. He was a cuddler.

He was your typical farm kid. He and his brothers played together and worked together like farm kids do. I don't remember them squabbling, but, perhaps they did.

By the time Kevin graduated from high school in the 70s his blonde hair and round glasses contributed to his resemblance to folk singer, John Denver. He caused a stir wherever he went. He loved music, learned to play the guitar and was part of an elite singing group at his college. His quiet demeanor and charm added to his appeal.

Out Back Carolyn Plotts



Then, he met Debbie, a girl as blonde and blue-eyed as he. They fell in love and got married. They were young but both were incredibly hard workers. Kevin worked for a water softening company and Debbie worked at a hospital. He continued his education and changed jobs. He learned about commercial-type building and estimating the cost of projects. He became very good at it and eventually formed his own construction company. His peers must have thought he was pretty good, too, because he was elected president of the Kansas General Contractors Association.

He and Debbie had two sons, two grandchildren, a thriving business, a

beautiful home. They had it all. Something like cancer wasn't supposed to happen to people like them. But, Old Man Cancer isn't very discriminating. He is an equal opportunity killer.

We all want to face death bravely. Some of us don't have to wait for it — an accident makes it swift. Others live long and just go to sleep. But, some, have to endure. Like Kevin, he knew for some time that death was impending. He and his family tried every medical treatment — did what they were supposed to do. Hundreds of people lifted his situation up in prayer. And, yet, he died.

However, even in his death he offered a terrific witness. His brother, Kirk, said it was an honor to be with him during his last days. Kirk said he was amazed at the strength of his big brother. I'm convinced that Kevin's strength and courage came from the secure knowledge of his salvation. I know it gives his family great comfort.

Do you have that knowledge? If you aren't sure, now is the time to find out. Don't wait.

'Climate Change?' No, it's just Kansas!

Everyone seems to be worried about "Climate Change" these days. Recent weather events in Kansas such as the winter ice storms, the Easter freeze, the May tornadoes, flooding and the hail storm that traveled for miles and miles along Highway 36 do make a person wonder.

Until June 6 here on the farm, we escaped the extreme weather. With all the rain and cool temperatures I even found myself enjoying yard work. Every day I have been out playing in the dirt for an hour or so. Each trip to town nets another irresistible little flower to plant. I brought several things up from Kate's yard and most everything seems to be thriving. Cedar mulch, herbicides, weed barrier things have been getting a little crazy around here!

We planted three new rows of trees. Some of them did not do too well but my sister brought me a bunch of little burr oaks that grow like weeds in her yard and I filled in. A burr oak is a wonderful tree for Kansas but they grow so slow. As soon as they get established I plan to name the place "Nine Oaks" or "Two Oaks" or whatever. Not as grand as Ashley's plantation "Twelve Oaks" in "Gone with the Wind." But it is good to have goals!

We all have our theories about the weather. I guess I believe in the phenomenon called "Climate Change." But I also believe we have been in a drought here in Kansas for the last four, five, eight or ten years. (However long; I'm not exactly sure. I do remember 1993 was wet!)

Back Home Nancy Hagman



Drought periods have always happened. Was the drought a harbinger of climate change? Maybe it was the floods of 1993? How about the big back-to-back blizzards in the spring of 1987? When did this climate change start? Maybe when Adam and Eve got kicked out of the garden?

On a pretty day when I am in my garden I don't worry about all that stuff. I finally figured this yard deal out. It's like aiding in a miracle. Last year there was a weedy mess. This year there are flowers. I have a privet hedge after only three years. The hollyhocks, daisies, and four o'clock reseeded like crazy. I even got some tomato plants.

June 4 we were at Orscheln's. They had those nice lined metal baskets on clearance for \$10. Some of them were looking sad but I found one I liked. I knew I was pushing my luck. The hubby put a hook up for it on the back porch.

I put in my garden time in the front yard that evening. The wind picked up. It blew down a petunia basket. Didn't hurt the petunias much but broke the plastic con-

tainer to pieces. I quickly repotted it in a container that was intended to stay on the ground.

The wind increased steadily all night. In the morning I saw that another hanging basket had blown down. I took down my most recent purchase just to be safe. By the afternoon I was not only counting how many flower pots had blown over but also how many shingles had come off the roof. The Weather Channel was reporting gusts of 24 miles per hour in New Mexico and some of over 30 in Colorado. Not a word about the straight-line winds in Kansas.

Sometime overnight the wind died down. Kate and Junior were going to move some cows. I noticed Kate was wearing a jacket. Oh, come on! Surely she did not need a jacket.

I decided to go out and water before the wind started up again. You know, in the shade it was a little cool! The plants hadn't suffered as badly as I had thought, although the marijuana seems to be doing the best and we aren't even trying to grow that. Never mind "Four Oaks" — a more apt name might be "Windy High Hill." With the emphasis on "high"! Don't call the sheriff; I pulled up all I could find!

I hung all the pots back up and picked up shingles. Kate came back from helping her dad. Don't tell him but she found three more kittens! What a lovely day!

They always say if you don't like the weather stick around ten minutes. I say you might call it "Climate Change." I call it KANSAS!

Time to dig deep and help with the fireworks display

To the Editor,
The Fourth of July is fast approaching and the Chamber of Commerce annual fireworks display, funded solely through donations, is in need of your help.

I'm sure many of you will say, "I can't afford to give enough to make a difference." Any donation—large or small—is needed and is greatly appreciated.

Please look through your spare change or open your wallet for this great family fun night. Donation cans are located at Jamboree, Norton Shop & Save, Dairy Queen, Pamida and Russ' Jewelry or they

LETTER

can be mailed to or dropped off at the Chamber office, 104 South State, Norton. With the lower price on a one-day park entrance permit at \$4.20 per vehicle, it will enable your family to enjoy the entire event.

Each year the ground and water displays increase in number and pizzazz.

If you have not been to our fireworks

display, please consider doing so this year. It's really quite a spectacular fireworks extravaganza and the events before make it an evening to enjoy.

Come out to Prairie Dog State Park, Wednesday, July 4th and enjoy free watermelon, music and visit with neighbors and friends.

Don't let this family fun activity become a thing of the past.

Karla Reed, Director
Norton Area
Chamber of Commerce