

## Refresher course on safe driving needed

Maybe we need to begin a safety campaign aimed at informing drivers how to react to an oncoming ambulance, lights flashing, en route to whatever the situation dictates.

In town, as the practice has been used for years, is to slow down and move to the right, if possible. Assumably, that still holds true.

But what about out on the highway?

The reason we ask is because we had occasion to be on a highway one afternoon recently, and noticed an ambulance in the distance traveling toward us with its emergency lights flashing. We were on the highway so there was no need to slow down and move to the right. Where would you move to on a two-lane highway, anyway?

However, there was a car in front of us — and thank goodness with ample distance between us and them to allow us to avoid rear-ending it after it did a complete stop on the highway to allow the ambulance to pass by.

Wow, we could have easily needed the services of that ambulance if the situation had been otherwise. Thank goodness we were far enough behind the vehicle ahead to allow our brakes to bring us to a safe halt.

We have no idea how often circumstances such as this take place. But one would think common sense would prevail. After all, you are on the highway and the game plan changes.

Maybe it's time for the safety gang to give all of us who operate vehicles a refresher course on emergency vehicle courtesy — in town, on two-lane highways and the superslabs. We would happily open our columns to allow them the space needed to get this all-important information to our reading audience.

—Tom Dreiling

## Situations created a fog-like existence

Have you ever lived in a two-week long fog? I'm just coming out of one. It started July 6 with the death of my mother-in-law, then continued on July 12 with the death of my brother. Mother-in-law Sally Eberle was buried Tuesday, July 10, and brother Jim was buried Tuesday, July 17 — just one week later. Never would I have expected to lose two people so dear to me within that kind of time frame. I literally pinched myself to see if this was for real. It was!

The funeral homes were different. But then again, were they? Each provided a temporary resting place for my loved ones, and inasmuch as they died literally days apart, the surroundings allowed the brain to wander. Sally was in Kersensbrock's at Colby and Jim a week later in Cline's at Victoria. At times when I was in deep thought at Cline's, a flash back of the interior of Kersensbrock's would unfold.

Eerie. Foggy. Never had that feeling before. Of course, I've never lost family members just days apart. I think my mind was probably trying to make sense of one passing while trying to adjust to the other. They say the good Lord will never burden you with more than you can handle. I think one more good night's sleep will bear that out.

-td-

The other side of *passing* is seeing people you haven't seen for a long time. In the case of brother Jim's funeral, one of those people was the little girl that lived across the street from us on Walnut Street in Goodland. She is now a wife, mother and grandmother. I will always remember her as Pam Peter, who now is Mrs. Pam Schmidt of Catherine. Her mother, Maxine, continues to live in Goodland and her father, Wane, is deceased. Pam

## Good Evening Norton Tom Dreiling



also has a sister Lynette. Her mother, incidentally, was a native of Prairie View (and sorry I can't remember her maiden name.)

What great memories Pam's visit brought back.

-td-

I keep getting confused. I keep thinking the presidential election is this coming November. A friend pointed out that it will be held in November 2008. I guess the flurry of activity, including debates, has thrown me off. Can you imagine going through what we've already been through for another 15 months? I noticed where someone had averaged the numbers from all the polls taken a week ago, and on the Republican side the front runners, including Fred Thompson (not yet in the race), trail an unknown. That's got to be spooky. Maybe the early campaign start is turning out to be a curse instead of a benefit.

I think the Democrats, at this point, have all but settled on Hillary to head their ticket. The other wannabes will probably begin dropping out in early fall, hoping to land the party's second spot. They might as well forget it. Reports are Sen. Clinton will be looking outside those ranks for a running mate. I think Tom Vilsack, former Iowa governor, will be on the short list. He had entered the presidential derby last

spring but dropped out when fund raising cost him more than he was raising. With the help of the Clintons, his debt has been erased.

Don't forget our little early-bird presidential poll, "Tell Us 2008." Tell us who you like and add a comment if you so desire. No signature is necessary.

E-mail to tom@dewkansas.com, regular mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton 67654, fax to 877-3732, call 877-6908 or drop by the office. Our first poll, published June 22, contained votes for Republicans Rep. Tom Tancredo (Colo.), Rudy Giuliani (former New York city mayor) and Mitt Romney (former Massachusetts governor); and Democrats Sen. Barack Obama and former Sen. John Edwards.

-td-

A father wanted to read a magazine, but was being bothered by his little girl, Shelby. She wanted to know what the United States looked like. Finally, he tore a sheet out of his new magazine on which was printed the map of the country. Tearing it into small pieces, he gave it to Shelby and said, "Go into the other room and see if you can put this together. This will show you our whole country today."

After a few minutes, Shelby returned and handed him the map, correctly fitted and taped together. The father was surprised and asked how she had finished so quickly.

"Oh," she said, "on the other side of the paper is a picture of Jesus. When I got all of Jesus back where He belonged, then our country just came together."

-td-

On that note, have a good evening and a good weekend. And like the picture on the back of the map, you know who you need to go see this weekend.

## Thumbs Up to . . .

√Nina Melroy, on your 96th birthday!. (Telegram staff)

√Brenda Diederich, for changing my flat tire. Thanks so much! (by telephone)

√Dorothy Bernard, on your 90th birthday! (Telegram staff)

√Gil Otter, for the beautiful garden! (by telephone)

√Deborah Combs, on your appointment as Norcatur's postmaster. (e-mail)

√Craig Renner and Mark Keilig, on your election to school board leadership posts. Congrats! (e-mail)

(To submit a name or names, e-mail tom@dewkansas.com, call 877-6908, fax 877-3732, mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton 67654 or drop by the office. Thanks for your input!)

## Your Political Connections:

★ Governor Kathleen Sebelius, 300 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-3232

★ U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774; fax (202) 224-3514

★ U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521

★ U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran, 2443 Rayburn HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715; fax (202) 225-5124

★ State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, State Capitol Building, Room 262-E, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-7399

★ State Rep. John Faber, 181 W. Capitol Building, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-7500

## Readers offer Telegram good advice

### We Asked, You Answered Survey Responses Part 3

The Norton Telegram does a good job boosting the community. The city council, economic development and scheduled events articles are important to the community.

I enjoy the articles by the resourceful group of local writers (Deines, Hagman, Monier, Montgomery, Plotts, Woodyard and Dreiling). I consider them local talent, although some do not live in the Norton community at the present time.

I am 76 years of age and have subscribed to *The Telegram* for the past 30 years.

Overall, I believe the editor and staff are doing a great job with the news and I look forward to each issue.

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I love *The Telegram*, especially Carolyn Plotts. I read her Mom's articles for many years and miss them, but her place is well filled! I also like reading Tom's column.

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All gossip will bemuse half the people and anger the other half. *The Telegram* is a gossip sheet.

All news is controversial, and will impress or bewilder everyone.

*The Telegram* does not publish controversial items. Hence, more Nortonites read the *Salina Journal* than *The Norton Telegram*.

I do not read *The Telegram* as I obtain some information at coffee, where I heard of "rate us."

Tell me a story I have never heard before. That's news.

I am 31.

(Editor's note: Your comments, although appreciated, would indicate you do spend quite a bit of time reading and evaluating *The Telegram*. Keep at it.)

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Here are my answers to your questions about *The telegram*:

**#1. What do you like about The Telegram?**

The size of the pages. The editorial/opinion page, outstanding!

The prayer on the front page. "Briefly."

"Thumbs Up" segment.

**#2. What don't you like?** Duplicate want ads, i.e., in *The Country Advocate* and *The Telegram Extra*. Ads appear twice in each paper.

Public record section, municipal and district court listings.

**#3. What would you like to see?** Informative articles intended to educate on subjects, such as epilepsy.

Articles about locals serving in the mili-

tary.

A small part of the paper devoted to printing letters from readers who want to buy, sell or trade items, i.e., a woman looking for a dinner plate to match her set of dishes would write with her request.

An advice column similar to "Dear Abby," perhaps focusing on manners, ethics, values and morals for young people.

A weekly article about a person who lives in or near Norton, entitled "Meet Your Neighbor," which would be a biographical sketch of a person in our community and how they chose Norton as the place to live.

A cancer survivor.

Letters and e-mails from readers without names attached to generate discussion without fear of reprisal. The Vail (Colo.) Daily does this effectively.

**#4. What would you like to see more of?**

Reader input, such as this input from readers.

Human interest stories.

Season articles, such as "wedding planning" prior to June.

Coverage more frequently (equal with sports), of high school music, drama, FFA, science, math, art, social studies, driver's ed.

**#5. What would you like to see less of?**

Church listings. We relied heavily on this information when we moved here. However, printing it frequently is overkill.

Sports coverage.

**#6. How would you improve the paper?**

Photos, with color needed.

**#7. What was your reception like when visiting the office?** I am immediately cordially received. However, the staff rarely, if ever, smiles. Even while being warm and cordial, no one smiles. Is everyone over-extended and over-worked?

The office is heaped with unsightly clutter. It is not a welcoming environment. I want to escape to retreat ASAP.

**#8. How are you treated on the telephone?**

The staff must smile before they pick up the phone. The staff responds very efficiently, yet the lingering aura remains, "I am overworked."

**#9. What are we not covering you feel we should?**

There is a regionally famous calf roper cowboy in our community and no one knows about it.

I learned about a 20-year collection of fabulous jewelry and no one knows about it.

I want to read about the horse trainer about five miles east of Norton, who is out there everyday. What makes him a success?

(Editor's note: This respondent also mentioned two other situations within the community, but these border on invasion of privacy, and doubtless these people want to talk about it.)

**#10. Do we keep our appointments with you?** No response.

**#11. Do we use enough pictures?**

Yes! Over kill on sports, only.

**#12. Paper delivery.**

Paper is always delivered a day late through the mail. I believe I understand this, but can this change? I find out on Saturday about something I would have attended on Friday night. Ugh!

**#13. Are you a subscriber, or buy the paper from businesses who make it available?**

I am a subscriber.

**#14. If you were in the hot seat, what would you change, if anything?**

I would implement all suggestions listed on the previous pages. Actually, I would do exactly what Tom Dreiling is doing. What an excellent role model.

**#15. Favorite page:**

Opinion, especially the contributing writers and Good Evening Norton.

**16. Age (optional).** No response.

**Anything we missed?**

Could you publish legislative updates on what our representatives are doing? What bills are they sponsoring and how did they vote on issues?

Merge *The Telegram Extra* and *The Country Advocate* onto the classified page.

I want to learn why volunteers go to the Andbe Home and what they do there.

I am concerned about local high school students who are not in sports, the band or drama and receive absolutely no recognition in our newspaper. One of them could become a concert pianist or another a world famous horse trainer. They're working on it right now, but no one knows about it.

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Something on your mind? Write us a letter!