

## These guys, gals have short memories

There are two people we would not have wanted to be this week: Gen. David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker. Both appeared before Congressional committees to discuss the war in Iraq and where they felt we were both militarily and politically since the "surge" of a few months ago.

No matter the answer to the many questions — some hard questions, some questionable, others of the nit-picking variety — it had to be a challenge all its own to be sitting there knowing no matter what you say you weren't saying the right thing.

While watching the drama unfold, we kept telling ourselves most of the people doing the questioning are the very same people who gave President Bush the green light to invade that country in the first place. No one twisted their arms.

But that was then, this is now.

It does us no good to continue recalling the past while trying to deal with the present and plan for the future. We short change ourselves when we adopt that posture.

This is war — W-A-R — not a political football to be kicked around. When that is allowed to happen, we are, in effect, kicking around our troops.

And when Senate and House members acted the way many of them did at the hearings, it smacked of their inability to fully understand that the commander-in-chief and the military generals plot, plan and carry out the fighting, Congress pays the bill.

We're all in this thing together and it will take all of us to bring it to an acceptable conclusion. And we need to hold our congressmen/women and senators' feet to the fire. It's not a Republican issue, or a Democrat issue. It is, instead, a United States of America issue. United we stand, divided....well, you know how that goes.

Some folks reason that we should be talking with our enemies, using a diplomatic approach to ease the tensions in that part of the world. While there is some truth to that, we first have to start talking — not shouting — to one another right here on the home front.

The appearance of Gen. Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker on Capitol Hill can't be fully assessed this early, regardless of what the talking heads on radio and television seem to think. But one gets a sense their testimony was an account of how they truly feel.

At one point, when Gen. Petraeus was asked if America is any safer with the plan now being employed in Iraq, he said he didn't know. Talk show heads had a field day with that answer. Some senators at the hearing shook their heads. That's understandable because the general was telling the truth. And the "t" word isn't much in vogue these days back in Washington.

Politicians calling for a withdrawal of *all* troops now, must be kin to the negative voices that told Orville and Wilbur Wright that the silly thing they invented would never fly.

In a similar way, we "invented" the conditions that today exist in Iraq. Quarterback Bush will, in the months to come, fade back, look at the receivers downfield, and toss the ball. Whoever catches it — Brownback, Giuliani, Huckabee, Hunter, McCain, Paul, Romney, Tancredo, Thompson, Biden, Clinton, Dodd, Edwards, Gravel, Kucinich, Obama, or Richardson — will have to run for the endzone.

We will then see if the recipient of the pass lives up to his/her tough talk. Or if it just turns out to be more political rhetoric, stumbling before getting into the endzone.

—Tom Dreiling

## Thumbs Up ...

**To Chance Kinderknecht.** What a wonderful, heart-warming story. (e-mail)

To the little Almena boy (**Chance Kinderknecht**), and to *The Norton Telegram*, for telling his story. (called in)

To the **anonymous friend** who sent the flowers and balloons to our 60th Class Reunion. Thank you so much, they were beautiful. (called in)

To **Chance Kinderknecht**, the youngster from Almena who was featured in *The Telegram*. You have our love. (called in by friends)

(To salute someone, or some group, simply e-mail [tomd@nwkansas.com](mailto:tomd@nwkansas.com), call 877-6908, write 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton 67654, or drop by the office. Thanks for your input. -td)

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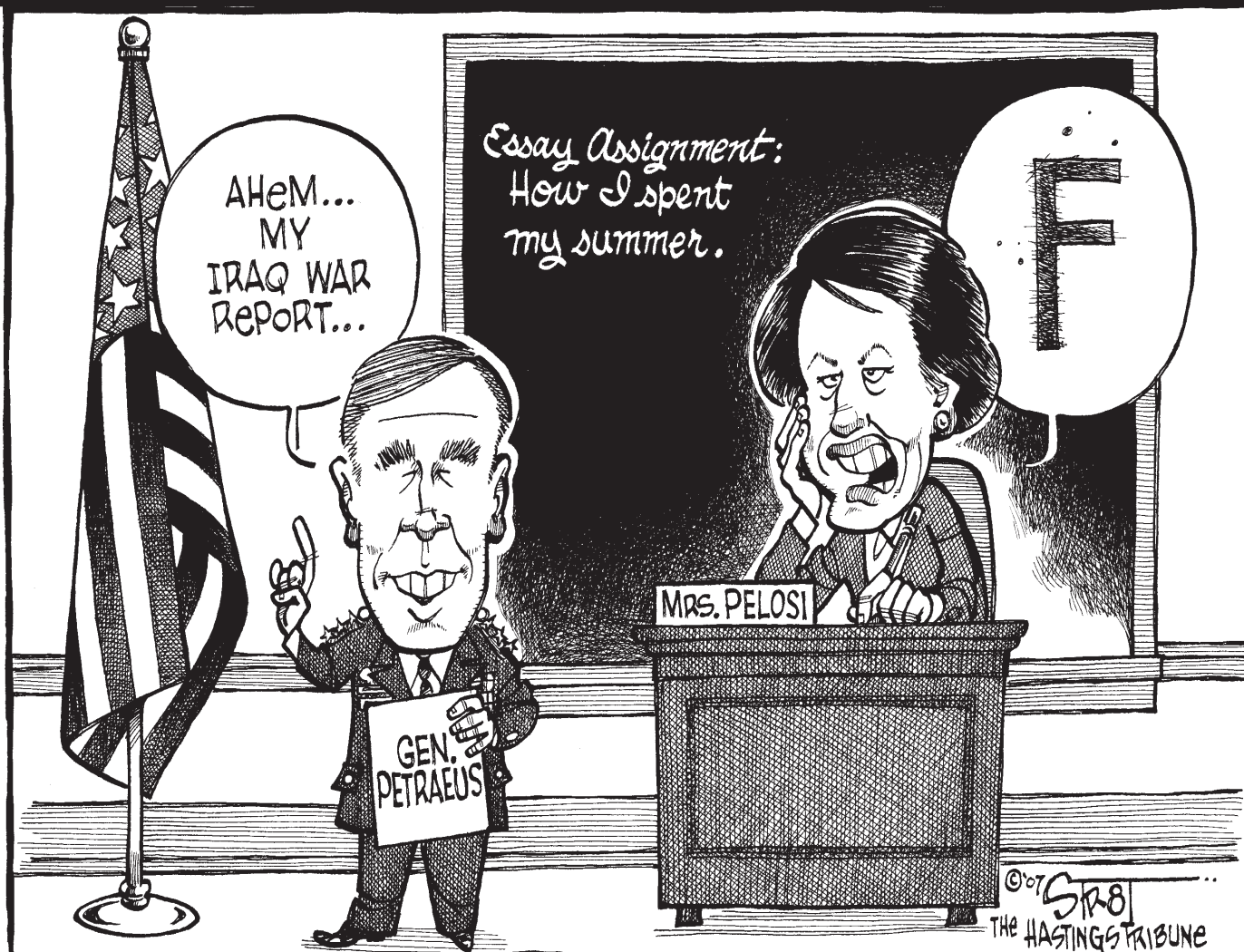
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### Nor'West Newspapers

Dick and Mary Beth Boyd  
Publishers, 1970-2002

Incorporating the Norton County Champion  
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## How did you like that little slap in the face?

The cold wave we had earlier in the week was more than a reminder, it was indeed a slap in the face that fall is just around the corner. Sweaters, even a lot of jackets and a few coats, were quickly retrieved from their resting places as residents ventured outdoors to confront temperatures in the upper 40s. I would guess that blankets were also pressed into service. And maybe a few furnaces were even kicked on to take the chill out of the house.

We are going to see more daytime temperatures in the 70s, and lower 80s, than in the 90s as we march on toward fall, which incidentally begins Sept. 23. Overnight lows will begin to hang in the upper 40s to lower 50s.

And another telltale sign is the emergence of darkness earlier in the evening and darker mornings when that crazy alarm goes off.

Then, on the first Sunday in November, we do something many of us wonder if it's necessary — move the clock BACK one hour to what we call in our time zone Central Standard Time, bye-bye to Daylight Saving Time.

It all goes too fast. How many of you can honestly say you accomplished everything you had on your "will do" list this summer? I know I didn't and my list wasn't very lengthy.

From my little book of homemade poetry:

Tan grass,  
Naked trees,  
Colorless flowers,  
What could this be?  
Fall. -td

—td—

"We all get heavier as we get older because there's a lot more information in our

## Good Evening Norton Tom Dreiling



heads. So, I'm not fat, I'm just really intelligent and my head couldn't hold any more so it started filling up the rest of me." Credit a guy by the name of Wayne J. Gabel, who frequently drops off a few goodies via e-mail.

-td-

Yes, I am back wearing neckties to work. If you remember, I mentioned in a column in early May that on the 15th of that month I do away with wearing neckties until Labor Day. I've been doing this for many years and have been encouraging other to do the same. It's always a nice 3 1/2-month break.

-td-

An older gentleman walked into a bank in New York City and asked for the loan officer. He told the loan officer that he was going to Italy on business for two weeks and needed to borrow \$5,000 and that he was not a depositor of the bank.

The bank officer told him that the bank would need some form of security for the loan, so the man handed over the keys to a new Ferrari. The car was parked on the street in front of the bank. The man produced the title and everything checked out, so the loan officer agreed to hold the car as collateral for the loan and apologized for having to charge a token amount of interest. Later, everyone at the bank

enjoyed a good laugh at the guy for using a \$250,000 Ferrari as collateral for a \$5,000 loan. An employee of the bank then drove the Ferrari into the bank's underground garage and parked it for safe keeping.

Two weeks later, the man returned, repaid the \$5,000 and the interest of \$23.07. The loan officer said, "Sir, we are very happy to have had your business, and this transaction has worked out very nicely, but we are a little puzzled. While you were away, we checked you out and found that you are a multimillionaire. What puzzles us is, why would you bother to borrow \$5,000?"

The man said, "Where else in New York City can I park my car for two weeks for only \$23.07 and expect it to be there when I return?"

-td-

If you haven't replied to our little presidential poll, please do so. I hope to have a third report on our "Tell Us 2008" poll sometime next week. You know the names, they are all household by now. Just mail your favorite name to [tomd@nwkansas.com](mailto:tomd@nwkansas.com), or 215 S. Kansas Ave. Norton 67654, fax (785) 877-3732, call either 877-3361 or 877-6908, or drop by the office. You do not have to sign your answer. You can also add a comment if you wish. Thanks for participating.

-td-

Mankind's best mathematical equation: 1 cross + 3 nails = 4 given.

-td-

Have a good evening. And cap off the weekend with a family show of unity at the church of your choice on Sunday. You'll be glad you did. And as the guy on the television commercial says, "I guarantee it."

## This storm needs best leaders possible

Jean Rousseau was a French writer in the early 1700s that influenced the thinking of many American colonial leaders. Rousseau wrote about the social contract that should exist between a people and their government. Thomas Jefferson gives a great many reasons why the English government violated the social contract with the people of the colonies.

Jefferson then asserts "...to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed..." This consent surely includes the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It supports the right of people to make their own choices and allows each to work to improve their lives and that of their families. Hard work, honest labor and the opportunity to better oneself are part of the American dream and our social contract.

## Citizen Duties Bob Strevey



During the great depression, the American dream was threatened. The leadership of this country was so dominated by a handful of wealthy people that the needs of a large part of the people went unfulfilled. The people's faith in their government was in jeopardy. Restoring faith in our democratic system of government was one of Franklin Roosevelt's greatest achievements.

The social contract is the understand-

ing between the people and their government that it will work for their best interests. Both now and in 1929, our governing elite has broken the social contract. Political leaders are pursuing policies that favor the wealthy and exclude everyone else. The policies of both the Bush and Clinton administrations promoting NAFTA and other trade policies have benefited those who run the great international corporations at the expense of American working men and women.

Unfair trade policies supported by our leaders have created, over several years, a huge debt to foreign nations. When the bill comes due, the crisis may resemble the great depression or something worse.

American citizens need to back leaders who will prepare us for the gathering storm.

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