

This fight would be worth seeing

If this showdown becomes reality, we want front row seats! If possible, we'd like to sit in the ring. Watching every move, every political punch. The fight of the decade. Rumors are running wild that former Vice President Al Gore will enter the Democratic presidential race with the Nobel Peace Prize in hand.

Should he emerge as a candidate, his target would be the frontrunner Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton. It's no secret there's bad blood between the Clintons and Gores.

Political gossip centers in the country say a Gore entry won't materialize. They say he is content with winning an Oscar and now the Nobel Peace Prize. They argue he is at the top of his game and has no interest in seeking the office he lost to President George Bush in 2000. Despite winning the popular vote, that election took all kinds of twists and turns, eventually ending up in the lap of the U.S. Supreme Court, thus becoming the biggest political pretzel of all time.

Other voices say Mr. Gore has not lost his desire to become president. If he should enter, and that's a big IF, the rest of the Democratic field might as well fold up their tents because it'll become a Hillary-Al fight. And the media will really feast on that!

How will this change the Democratic face? Sen. Clinton will, no doubt, lose her edge. There are a lot of Democrats not totally satisfied with the current field and a Gore entry would give them one more option.

Both Mrs. Clinton and Mr. Gore have eight years experience in the White House. He, in an elected role, she in an appointed capacity. Comparing the two in terms of experience, knowledge and electability, Gore wins. Sen. Clinton upset a lot of folks after husband Bill was elected president, by saying as first lady she wasn't going to waste her time staying home and baking cookies. Her first real challenge as first lady was pushing a national health care plan. That was a disaster, and she would have been better served baking cookies.

There's another issue that's hiding in the background, seldom mentioned, but could play a role if Mrs. Clinton should win the party's nomination for president. It's the Bush-Clinton dominance of the presidency. If she is elected in 2008 and subsequently re-elected four years later, the Bush-Clinton families will have run this country for more than a quarter century — 28 years to be exact. The elder George Bush served four years, Bill Clinton eight years and the younger George Bush is closing out his eight years.

When is enough enough?

That should be answered in 2008 — with or without Al Gore.

And by the way, we aren't making plans to be ringside. We side in with those who don't see Mr. Gore jumping into this thing.

He's got better things to do, like endorsing a candidate for the nomination, and then actively campaigning for success.

—Tom Dreiling

Here's what my patriotism means

To the Editor,

I have never been one to wear a lapel pin either. For years I have wanted a flag bracket on my house so I could fly a variety of flags, denoting the seasons etc. When we got this house 18 months ago I got a flag bracket, but the flag I fly is only the red, white and blue.

You see I also have a blue star flag in my window. Having a child in the military makes you think and feel a lot different. You understand how the families hurt and the kids miss their parents.

The empty places there are at the table. I get teary eyed when I see soldiers in uniform. To me that is what that flag stands for. Not the stinking politicians and media people that promote this drivel.

Where are their kids and family when it comes to defending our security and values? Yes, I want my daughter home, I wish they could all be home but I am so proud of all of them.

To me patriotism is respect when the national anthem is sung, or played. When I carry that red, white and blue flag in a parade and older veterans stand and salute, I know it isn't me they are saluting, it is the flag I carry, that is patriotism!

When I see someone in uniform I just want to salute them because I think that could be my child standing there and I

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want to give them honor.

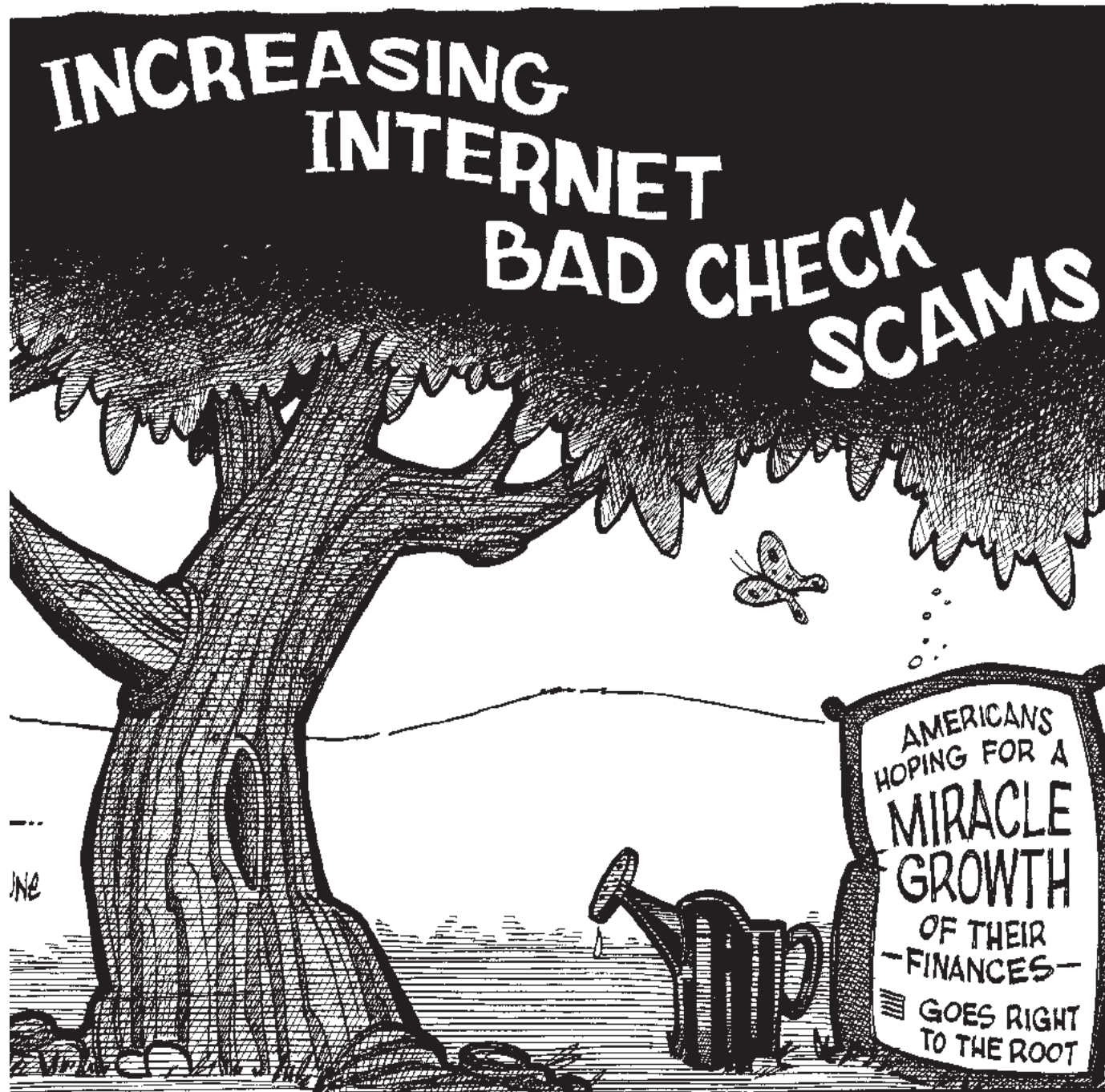
To me just wearing a lapel pin is lip service. It is like I tell the people that call and want money to send stuff to the troops. I tell them I think what they are doing is a great thing, but right now I am supporting my "one" troop all I can with boxes of stuff and phone calls.

So what if my phone bill and postage is high, it is what keeps her morale up. To me that is patriotism! Patriotism is also the people who send boxes of goodies to soldiers they don't even know, and give help to the military families that are struggling.

That is patriotism!

It is knowing our country's history and what we stand for and the sacrifices that have been made for hundreds of years by thousands and thousands of people, that give people the freedom to say what they want, but let the rest of us say what we want also!

Rosie Stockton
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Countdown to Mexico underway

Sleeping bag: check. Air mattress: check. Pillow: check. Yes, it's Mexico Mission Trip time again. Since I'm the "head cook" my list also includes pots and pans, salt and pepper, bowls and utensils. Once we're on the road, I can relax. It's just getting to that stage.

Lots of details to cover. Thank goodness I don't have to remember it all. Friend, Ed, who is making his third trip, volunteered to take care of the church's van. His wife restocked our first-aid kit and he will see to it that the van is serviced and ready to roll.

Jim takes care of our bags and bedding. All I have to do is pile my things in the front room. He makes it fit.

And, then our church family helps by providing us with groceries. Using our menu for the trip, I make up a "shopping list" and post it on the church's office window. By the time we leave, everything

Out Back

Carolyn Plotts



should be waiting for us at the church.

One lady from our congregation always sends us off with warm, fresh-from-the-oven, cinnamon rolls. What a blessing to know there are those who care so much to help others. Thanks, Mary.

Our friend and neighbor, Barbara, takes care of the home place while we're gone. The cats love her and she kinda likes them, too, I think. She tolerates the chickens but doesn't mind the fresh eggs which is part of her "pay" for the week.

Blackie and Brownie (the bottle calves we started earlier this spring) will make

the one-way trip to the sale barn Thursday. They are good looking critters and hopefully the market will stay up.

This last week at work will be the killer. The regular work week plus writing "stuff" in advance for next week. Building a house in Mexico in three days will be a "vacation" after the work of getting ready to leave.

We've dusted off our Spanish books and are practicing rolling our "Rs" in words like "tortilla" and "gracia." We're trying to teach the children accompanying us, how to sing "Jesus Love Me" in Spanish. Since we stay in a Mexican church while in Juarez, we want to attend church services there, if possible.

We have been asked why we keep doing this. It's pretty simple, really. We have been saved to serve. Someday, we physically won't be able, but until then, we are compelled to.

What is your purpose?

If you know the 'secret' let me know

There is some interesting stuff out there about our need to label perceived psychological problems. It comes in the face of ever increasing diagnosis of autism, Asperger's syndrome and other behavior disorders.

Pediatrician Dr. Perris Klass, has written a book "Quirky Kids: Understanding and Helping Your Child Who Doesn't Fit In---When to Worry and When Not to Worry."

A question he says parents need to ask is, "Is this making him (the child) unhappy or just making me unhappy?"

I love the idea of quirky kids. Because if you think about it how normal are any of us? Our house is like the saying, "Around here normal is just a setting on the dryer."

I have often been accused of some rather obsessive behavior. It used to be Free Cell. But when we upgraded computers it became Spider Solitaire. Then I saw my sister doing a Sudoku puzzle. She tried to explain it. It looked hard. I already do the crossword, the cryptquip and the word scrambles in the daily paper. That's enough brain exercise, I figured.

Until I tried it. I was absolutely hooked. I just flew right through the first puzzle

Back Home Nancy Hagman



I did. I congratulated myself and was thinking about applying for membership in Mensa when someone pointed out to me the puzzles are rated. That puzzle was deemed "very easy." I began to rethink the whole genius thing after trying a "challenging" puzzle. I also began pulling my hair out (well, not literally, although it does seem to be getting thinner!)

I love Sudoku. Instead of embracing my "quirkiness" my family seems to think I need an intervention! Even the sister, who introduced me to Sudoku poked fun at me by sending me the cartoon "Shermans Lagoon." In a series they did on Sudoku, the husband hurts himself while making dinner because his wife won't stop working on a puzzle to fix it for him. (Poor man!) When they get to the emergency room, the clerk asks, "What seems to be the problem?" The wife answers, "He won't

shut up while I'm doing Sudoku."

I identify with the situation. When my loved ones see me playing Spider or Sudoku and start in, I always ask if there is something I can do for them. The answer is always no! So just who am I hurting? Sure it wastes time, but it keeps my brain active.

A friend who had to make some long trips involving flying and waits in various offices finishing up business after her mother's death, said she was looking for something she could do while just sitting. I suggested Sudoku. She told me she had figured out the secret to Sudoku and it was no longer any fun.

Oh, really! Now I've become obsessed about the "secret" to Sudoku. And worried about my own faltering intellect because I can't figure it out. Do I have some sort of syndrome?"

Or is it my friend that has the problem? Is she really that smart or is she fulfilling her own form of quirkiness by acting all superior?

There must be a diagnosis out there somewhere!

And if anyone knows the "secret" to Sudoku let me know because I just don't get it!

Norton County praised for supporting organization

To the Editor,
The Northwest Kansas Domestic and Sexual Violence Services, Inc., has received funding from Norton County in the amount of \$250.

These funds will be used to provide direct services to victims of domestic

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and sexual violence in Kansas, and it is greatly appreciated.

It is a fortunate community indeed whose governmental officials recognize the need of all of its citizens.

Jennifer Follis, Advocate
Northwest Kansas Domestic
and Sexual Violence Services, Inc.
Hays

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