

LETTER

What gives at Andbe Home?

To the Editor,
Much of the community is aware that on Oct. 18, 2007, the Director of Nursing abruptly left her position with the Andbe Home. I am disturbed that for the fifth time in 18 months, this position is once again vacant. Additionally, at least five administrators have been employed during this time frame as well.

As concerned citizens of the community, it is our responsibility to delve deeper into the issues surrounding the practices of the current board of directors. These are the individuals that oversee the management of the facility. A day is coming in which we will all need to utilize a facility such as the Andbe Home for our parents, grandparents, spouses or our selves. How comfortable are we knowing that continuity of care is interrupted with each change in upper management?

I find it particularly disturbing that board meetings are closed to the community. I have to ask myself WHY an organization that serves our elderly population does not welcome the presence of family members, physicians and concerned citizens. I know for a fact board meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month at 7 p.m. If I have a concern with the hospital, I can attend a hospital board meeting, if I have a concern with the county, I can attend a weekly county commissioners meeting, but if I have a concern with the Andbe Home, my presence is not welcome.

While I possess first hand knowledge, the staff at the Andbe Home provide quality medical and personal care, I would be reluctant to utilize the services of the home knowing care is continually disrupted with each change in management. I personally know the most recent director of nursing, and I know she would not abruptly leave her position without good reason.

As a community, maybe we should take some responsibility for this and find out from past directors of nursing and administrators why their time with this facility has been so short. Before it is too late for our town's only long term care facility we need to start holding the board accountable for their actions.

In a letter dated Feb. 7, 1967 written by Bessie Bieber, R.N. and founder of the Andbe Home, she implored the community to keep the facility "a home — not an institution." In her last sentence in the letter she states, "May the Lord guide you in your decisions and may you be blessed with the good things of this life." We owe it to Ms. Bieber and our elderly population to ensure that the Andbe Home remains a place where our loved ones may reside in their final years, secure in the knowledge that their care will be provided in an ethical and loving manner.

Sincerely,

Amanda Davis
Norton

Thumbs Up . . .

To...The Norton Downtown Restoration Committee, for all their time and hard work on planning the Washington Street Park. It will be a great addition to downtown Norton. (e-mail)

To...The Norton County Health Department, for coming to the Manor to give flu shots. (called in)

To...Dr. Jeff McKinley, on receiving certification from the American Board of Family Medicine. (called in)

To...Kelli Tuxhorn, for the great job she has done at the Andbe Home for the past 10 months. (called in)

To...the high school cross country and volleyball teams from Norton. What a great time to be a Blue Jay! (hand delivered)

To...the crowd at last Saturday's volleyball sub-state. You were awesome! (hand delivered)

To...The Norton girls' cross country team for making school history. Good luck Saturday! (called in)

To...The Norton girls cross country team and the two boys, all qualifiers for the state meet Saturday in Wamego. (e-mail)

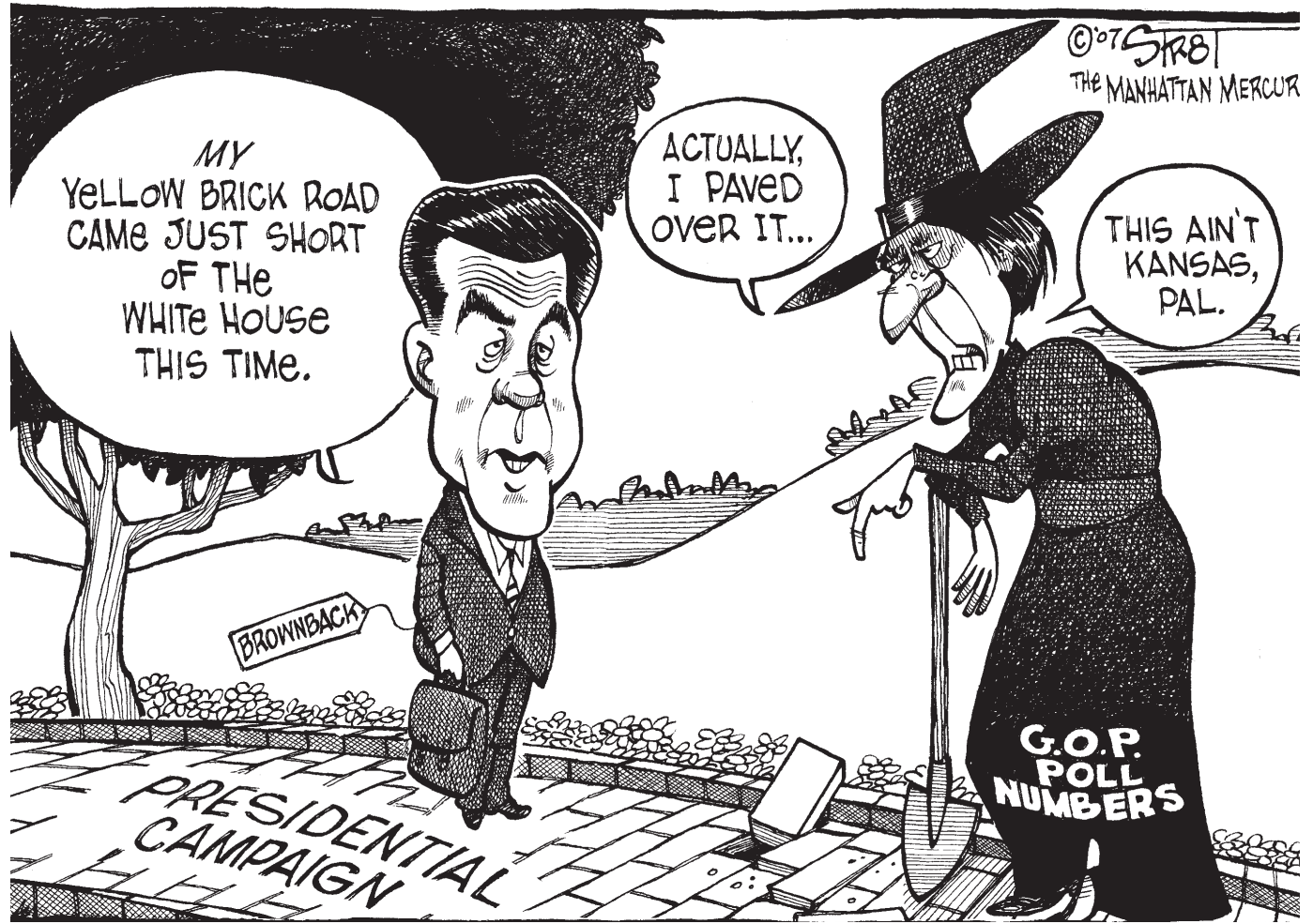
To...The Norton girls cross country team, for placing second at regionals. Good luck at state. (called in)

To...the Norton Blue Jays football team. It has been a great year — keep it going all the way to state! (hand delivered)

To...Northern Valley's Kayla Field, good luck at state cross country Saturday! (e-mail)

To...Zach Bainter and Chris Maddy, Norton High's two cross country runner boys, who qualified for state at Wamego Saturday. (called in)

(To submit a name of names for this bi-weekly column, e-mail tom@nwkans.com, call 877-6908 or 877-3361, fax 877-3732, drop by the office or mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton. Thanks for your input. -td)



It's time we revive our presidential straw poll

Well, it's time now for all of us to return to *The Telegram's* presidential straw poll, probably the most unscientific poll to be found on planet Earth. Simply drop me a note indicating who you would like to see sitting in the White House.

The Republicans are: former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, former Gov. Mike Huckabee, Congressman Duncan Hunter, Sen. John McCain, Congressman Ron Paul, former Gov. Mitt Romney, Congressman Tom Tancredo and former Sen. Fred Thompson. Sen. Sam Brownback and former Gov. Tommy Thompson have taken themselves out of the race.

The Democrats are: Sen. Joe Biden, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, Sen. Chris Dodd, former Sen. John Edwards, former Sen. Mike Gravel, Congressman Dennis Kucinich, Sen. Barack Obama and Gov. Bill Richardson.

Incidentally, the names above are in alphabetical order, not the way I think they will finish.

Simply e-mail your pick to me at tom@nwkans.com. Or you can drop it in the mail addressed to The Straw Poll, Norton Telegram, 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton 67654, you can call it in to either 877-6908 or 877-3661, or you can fax it to 877-3732.

You DO NOT have to sign it. And I encourage you to also include a brief comment. I just think it would be interesting to see how a small, rural area in the nation's heartland is approaching the 2008 presidential election.

In the 2006 gubernatorial race, our little poll attracted 103 respondents. It correctly picked Gov. Kathleen Sebelius to win, but it was a razor thin margin, 52-50. I said 103 people responded, which they did, but one of those people wasn't voting for either of the two.

To date, since we made a pitch a month or two ago for you to send in your favor-

Good Evening Norton Tom Dreiling



ites, this is how the poll numbers stand as of today:

GOP — Giuliani 6, Romney 4, Huckabee 3, McCain 2, Brownback 2, Thompson and Tancredo, 1 each. DEMS — Clinton 4, Obama and Richardson 3 apiece and Biden and Edwards, 1 each. Overall total: 31.

-td-

From the ChatterBox: The older you get, the tougher it is to lose weight, because by then your body and your fat have gotten to be really good friends. Also, when you put the two words, "The" and "IRS" together, they spell "Theirs."

-td-

Last year on this date, in case you've forgotten, our overnight temperature was 42 and the day's high was 46. And we had, during that time, a total of 2.25 inches of rain in the gauge at the Kingham farm northwest of town. A few days earlier, on Oct. 21, we had a trace of snow. So, don't act surprised if you look out the window one of these fine mornings and see the ground "painted" white, courtesy of Mother Nature or her boyfriend, Old Man Winter.

--td-

The fires in California are nightmares. The destruction is difficult to comprehend. A half-million or more people were ordered to evacuate (some officials put the number at a million). They are now thinking arson was involved in some of the fires. This could have been the work of terrorists, who look for the magnitude of

a potential "event" as they plot and plan. It wouldn't have taken much for three or four of these loonies to arm themselves with a few matches, coordinate their clocks, fan out and at the appointed time in various locations, strike a match, toss it in the brush and walk away. Terrorists in our mind look like the faces we see so often on television. But that's not always true. There are homegrown terrorists and perhaps that's what was at work on these latest fires. If this was terrorist-driven, it has to be somewhat of a failure to them because the loss of life was, thank goodness, not of the numbers first feared. Any loss of life is tragic, but big numbers are the hallmark of terrorist activity. We pray for the innocents driven from their homes, homes many will not have when they return "home."

-td-

The end of last week's column was shortened by one line, thanks to a new program we have put into our computer system. That final item should have read: "Have a good evening and a good weekend. And remember your church always gets the seasons right."

If truth be known, I wasn't paying attention to a notice my computer sent when I asked it for a page proof. It was trying to alert me to the fact not all the text was included. Now I know better. Sometimes it's just a tad bit harder to teach an old dog new tricks. Arf! Arf!

-td-

A Sunday school teacher asked, "Johnny, do you think Noah did a lot of fishing when he was on the Ark?"

"No," he replied. "How could he, with just two worms?"

-td-

Have a good evening. And just maybe a visit to the church of your choice this weekend, will increase your chances of getting the big one at your favorite fishing hole

There's something about Creede we hold dear

There's something about a wedding that makes you introspective. After our daughter was married earlier this month, we drove out to Creede, Colo., the spot we called home for a few years and the place we thought we were putting down permanent roots. We lived there for five years. It's funny how impermanent those roots sometimes are. On the other hand, we go back there every summer and plan someday to be buried there. Last summer, we picked out the plots, with a sweeping view of the Rio Grande valley.

I guess we were too young and dumb to be scared back in 1980. Steve and I were both 32. The children were 6, 3 and 6 months. The oldest had just started first grade.

We were tired of the city. We're both small town kids, and we wanted to return to small towns like our homes in Emporia and Concordia. We were tired of working nights and not seeing our children and we wanted to have our own businesses.

However, we didn't have that much money, and newspapers are expensive. A friend told us about Creede, a tiny mountain community in southern Colorado. The newspaper was for sale and the price was right.

We sold our home, quit our jobs and

Open Season Cynthia Haynes



packed up the kids and houseplants in two vehicles and headed west. It took two days to get out to Creede and most of the houseplants froze. It was mid November.

We arrived from the city to find a town, no a county of 800 people.

There were no morning and evening newspapers. No diaper service or milk delivery. There was no drug store and the grocery and gas station closed at 5 p.m. on weekdays and all day Sundays and holidays.

And we had no place to live. We stayed in a one-bedroom summer cabin at a guest ranch for about three weeks — long enough for all three children to come down with the chicken pox.

But things got better. We bought a half-finished house and finished it with the money we got from the home we sold in Kansas City. We learned that the

newspaper business wasn't quite the same in small town America as it is in the city. I learned to write, sell ads, make up pages and clean clothes covered in ink.

They were hard years in some ways. Creede was a mining town, and when the mine closed, times were tough for everyone.

But we branched out, opening a paper in the nearby community of South Fork, a ski and resort town, and purchasing *The Conejos County Citizen* out of bankruptcy to add several farming communities to our economic base.

Still we struggled, and when we had the opportunity to buy a partnership in our biggest competitor, we grabbed the chance and moved down the mountain to Monte Vista.

A lot has happened since then. We lived in Monte for seven years and our oldest daughter graduated from high school there. Then we got the opportunity to return to Kansas, and with two children, two dogs, three cats and a rabbit, we came east again.

We've been in Oberlin for 14 years now — longer than we lived in Kansas City, Creede or Monte Vista. We hope to stay, but we know that someday we'll return to Creede to stay on the mountain top forever.

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