

Hospital another big Norton plus

We were talking a while back about Norton having its own newspaper. Matter of fact, this year is the 100th anniversary year of The Norton Telegram. Not every community our size has a newspaper. A lot of communities our size don't have a lot of things Norton does.

A hospital comes quickly to mind. We have one, an awfully good healthcare facility, and staffed with people who know what a hospital's role in a community is. It's not just a brick building, it's what's inside the brick structure that counts, makes a difference.

Because Norton is the home of the Norton County Hospital, we need not travel elsewhere to take advantage of the kind of medical practice carried on right in our midst. And because our family physicians have our care as their top priority, they have links with other professionals who deal in specific kinds of care and they place us in those trusting hands when the need arises.

We have often wondered how many people drive by the hospital — conveniently located at the intersection of highways US 36 and US 283 — and have not seen the interior? We'll bet many. What they know about the place is what they see from the street. Many of us, however, take advantage of the hospital's lab as prep work for an appointment with our doctor. But that glimpse of the facility is not all inclusive.

It would probably be a real eye opener to learn exactly what can and can't be handled at the place we call the Norton County Hospital. Most of the information we get is pretty much second hand — from people who have actually been confined to the place for closer attention.

Curiosity surrounds the place. How often have you heard someone say, "The only time I want to look inside that place is when I have to be put in there." Human nature dictates that kind of comment. None of us wants to be there, but if you live long enough, chances are — in some manner or other — you'll see the inside of "that" place.

We should never fear "that" place. We should, rather, be awfully glad we've got it. If we didn't, can you imagine the uncertainty that would surround us?

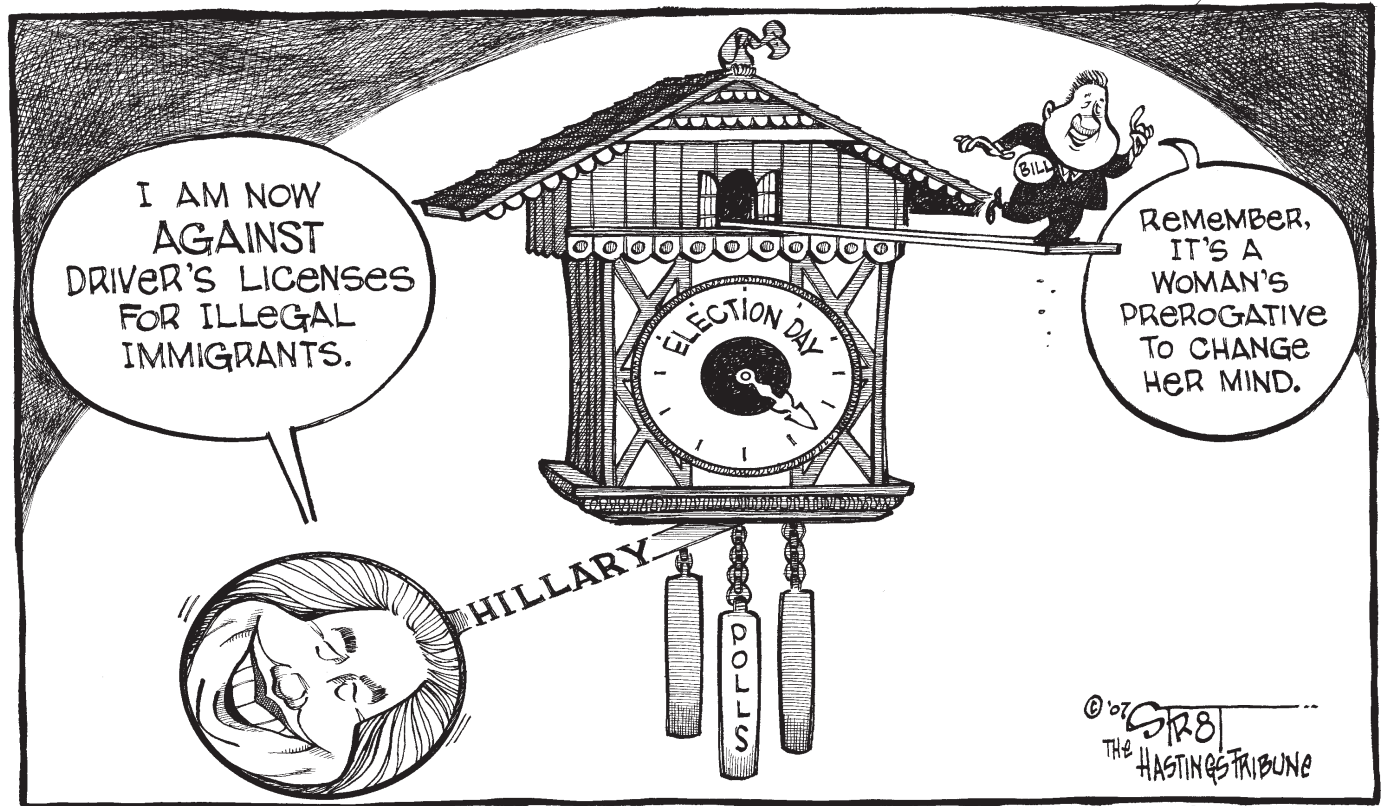
We are a small community with a larger community's healthcare options. But then again, we are Norton.

The hospital carries this information (in part) on the discovernorton.com web site: Welcome to the Norton County Hospital and Doctors Clinic! We are a 25-bed critical access hospital and rural health clinic providing medical services for residents in Norton County and surrounding Kansas and Nebraska communities. Caring for our patients is a Medical Staff of 3 physicians and 3 mid-level practitioners. One hundred twenty dedicated and skilled employees complement the Medical Staff in providing all levels of inpatient care, a full range of outpatient ancillary services and a significant number of visiting physician specialty clinics. We appreciate the support we receive from our patients and the communities we serve. **Our mission:** Caring, Commitment, Community is lived each and every day.

The hospital's CEO is Richard Miller.

Be thankful we've got what a lot of communities wish they had.

—Tom Dreiling



Wichita trip worth every mile

Hallelujah! Amen! Preach on, Brother! Sunday, we had the thrill of a lifetime when we, along with good friends Bob and Ila, Dewayne and Aurelia, Destry and Marisa, had the opportunity to worship with a congregation in Wichita.

A call from a young man named, Andrew, who had attended our chapel services while he was incarcerated at Norton Correctional Facility, let us know he was entirely off parole. His first question to us was, "Could you come and sing with me at my church?"

With a little juggling of our weekend schedule the answer was, "Yes." A couple of phone calls later, Bob and Ila were on board and so were Dewayne and Aurelia. Both couples have children in the area and didn't have much of an excuse to go visiting.

Andrew has one of the most amazing voices I have ever heard. His range is beyond tenor and is crystal clear. I don't

Out Back Carolyn Plotts



know much about music, but even I can tell he has perfect pitch and an incredible talent. His friendly nature and humble demeanor made him someone we wanted to know better. And, the chance to sing with him on "the outside" was irresistible.

The predominantly black congregation Andrew is part of was established as an outreach to people who have been in prison. It is a perfect tie-in with our outreach to the families of men in prison. They were kind enough to give me a few minutes to tell them about The Haven, the house we operate to accommodate families of inmates who come to visit for

the weekends.

We were made to feel welcome and given the time to sing three songs. Andrew joined us, and hit the high notes like I knew he could.

A lady from the congregation jumped in with us, and her strong harmony voice added to, in my humble opinion, what was a pretty awesome sound.

All-in-all, it was a great weekend. Adding to the fun was my friend Jody's company. Her daughter lives in Wichita and Jody went along for the ride. You know how good conversation makes the time go faster? Well, Jody and I talked about 90 miles an hour and the miles just flew by.

We're tired, but it's a "good" tired. Now, the trick is to get Andrew up here so everyone else can hear him.

The invitation has been extended and he has agreed. How 'bout I let you know when he's coming?

You have to hear him sing.

There are many reasons to be thankful

Just by reading *The Norton Telegram* in past weeks I found so many reasons to be thankful! The focus on Veterans and all that they have given us; the Patriot Guard's appearance at the funeral of Sgt. Scott Turner; the plans for the new park downtown, the fashion show featuring cancer survivors held recently in Hays.

When first hearing about the death of Scott Turner and the Patriot Guard's presence at his funeral I had only a vague idea of what the Patriot Guard did. This past week, a photo show by Barbara Porter was sent to my e-mail by Jane Kersenbrock. I did not have the honor of knowing Sgt. Turner. We did know his wife, Amy, and had already shed tears for her loss. Porter's slide show is beyond words, Thank you Barbara for sharing it with Jane who shared it with me.

There are perhaps many things to be angry about when it comes to the military. But I am dumbfounded that no matter what position a person holds they would fail to respect a fallen soldier. Thank you for stepping up Patriot Guard! It is amazing the Patriot Guard began in only 2005

Back Home Nancy Hagman



and already has spread to all 50 states. You can tell when something is a good idea by how quickly it catches on. Thank you Mary Kay Woodyard, for researching and writing about the origins of the Patriot Guard.

Since I am no longer routinely in Norton, the empty spaces caused by the fire in the summer of 2006 shock me every time I am. Aren't the plans now in the works for the area beautiful? Bravo Downtown Restoration Committee!

And how about the celebration of life as Rita Speer modeled in the fashion show in Hays? What a wonderful affirmation of the wondrous healing that comes both from faith and the God-given healing talents of the medical community.

They say there is always something to

be thankful for. It's just often hard to find. Phil Ramer, a former pastor at our church, always said grace before a meal. He had served in the military. He claimed it is difficult to complain about "chow" (or anything) after giving thanks for it.

There is an important lesson here. The most insignificant details of our lives become overwhelming when we forget to be grateful; when we merely concentrate on why we are unhappy. How easy it is to stay angry with a spouse or a child or a friend if all we think about is what they did that they shouldn't have done, rather than remember what a blessing they have been.

It's easy to get so caught up in it that when we face big things we have no idea at all how to cope.

These stories caught my interest because they illustrate that good things do happen in the wake of devastating events. What a privilege to see people address problems in a positive and constructive manner.

Thank you Veterans, Patriot Guard, everyone who serves.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Thumbs Up...

To... **Norman & Carol Olliff**, on your 50th wedding anniversary. (called in).

To... **Rita Speer**, cancer survivor turned model, for your part in the recent "Day of Caring" fashion show at Fort Hays State University. (e-mail)

To... **Mike McNeil**, 1999 graduate of Northern Valley High School, on your second season with the much-acclaimed "Orchestra of Voices." (called in by two "old" classmates who are proud of your achievements)

To... **Big Brothers Big Sisters** of Norton County, for an absolutely super fund raising and fun event. (e-mail)

(To submit a name or names for this bi-weekly salute, e-mail tomd@nwkansas.com, phone either 877-3361 or 877-6908, fax 877-3732, mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton 67654 or drop by the office. Thanks for your continuing input. —td)

Fort Hays State name change

"What's the big deal? Fort Hays State has been known by five other names during her lifetime. Maybe one of these times the name will connect. It's time to quit living in the past and do as this and other colleges teach us — plan for the future! I earned my bachelor's in 1982. A college by any other name is still a college, it's what you do with your time there that counts." - unsigned

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Big difference between in/outpatient

Dear Plain Sense: When talking about mental health services I have heard the terms "inpatient" and "outpatient" treatment. What is the difference between these?

The term "inpatient" treatment, or hospitalization on a psychiatric unit, applies when a person becomes so overwhelmed by a situation or stressor, or by their mental illness, that they are unable to function in their daily life. A person can be admitted for inpatient services when they are a danger to themselves (suicidal) or others, are not able to meet their own basic self-care needs, and as a result are unable to make an informed decision about their own treatment. It is clear that someone in this condition needs more intensive treatment, and this is when inpatient hospitalization becomes the most appropriate treatment option.

Sometimes people avoid inpatient treatment because they think they will "never be able to get out," or that they will come out forever changed and never be the same. In reality, most hospital stays

Plain Sense Ken Loos

are, on an average, of three to five days and primarily serve as a way to plan for dismissal to regularly scheduled outpatient treatment. Inpatient treatment provides a safe place for the patient, and as the stressors are reduced, future plans can be discussed and medications initiated if appropriate. When the person is discharged from the psychiatric unit at the hospital, they are referred to outpatient services so that further treatment and healing may begin.

For most people who experience a mental illness such as major depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety, or alcohol/substance abuse problems, treatment through outpatient services is most common. For the person who is able to function without

the need of hospitalization, arranging to meet with a mental health professional for outpatient services is much the same as going to an appointment with a family physician or dentist. The psychiatrist or therapist will provide information and work with the client regarding treatment, with the intention that the person consider and apply this to their life. Outpatient treatment means that a person is able to remain in their community, living at home and continue to work or go to school while at the same time working on psychological recovery. One benefit of the outpatient approach is that friends and family can be available to provide emotional support.

The views expressed here are those of the individual writer and should not be considered a replacement for seeking professional help. Mail questions to: High Plains Mental Health Center, PLAIN SENSE, Consultation and Education Department, 208 East 7th, Hays, KS 67601. Questions will be formatted and answered in a manner that insures confidentiality.