

Clinton, McCain not very patriotic, huh?

Not too long ago, there seemed to be an issue with Sen. Barack Obama not wearing an American flag lapel pin. Some people said he was not patriotic. Others gasped to think that a United States Senator seeking the presidency would not wear an American flag lapel pin. How terrible! Beat him! Kick him! Kick him out of the race!

Well, folks, relax. If this was the punishment offered for Sen. Obama, then let's include Senators Hillary Clinton and John McCain. And how about a general and an ambassador?

I was home Tuesday recovering from something that sneaked up on me unexpectedly, allowing me to watch the U.S. Senate hearings with General David Petraeus and U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Ryan Crocker.

Of course the general had so many ribbons and medals hanging from his dress coat that it was impossible to see if, in fact, all those colorful honors included the flag of the United States of America.

Ambassador Crocker didn't have an American flag lapel pin on. Neither did Sen. John McCain. Neither did Sen. Hillary Clinton. Neither did Sen. Joe Biden. And the list goes on.

Maybe you who also watched the proceedings weren't looking especially for the flag. I was. This was my first opportunity to see a bunch of senators gathered in the same place so I could check out if they were wearing the flag pin. They weren't, but they are all patriotic. You see, you don't have to wear your patriotism on your sleeve to convince others of your love for and support of this country.

I choose, in lieu of the flag, to wear either my Fort Hays State University lapel pin or the lapel pin given me by the United States Air Force, signifying I have a son in that branch of service (he's starting his 19th year.) And I also have a Blue Star flag that serves the same purpose, a gift from the Elks Lodge of Goodland, where I lived for nearly 24 years. I also had an 8-year commitment to the United States Air Force from 1955-1963. But you wouldn't know all that just by looking at me. And there was nothing in my dress that would lead you to that conclusion.

And you know what else? I have a pair of Air Force blue undershorts. But I don't feel a need to walk around with my pants down to prove my military service.

And that's my point. Many times it's what you don't see that tells a lot more about a person than what you do see.

And chances are the U.S. flag lapel pin you have — yes, I have one, too — was probably made in China.

-td-

The big news in the airline industry now is the cancellation of thousands of flights so passenger jets can be inspected for possible safety hazards. While reading about this problem a few days ago, I came across a light-hearted written report filed by a pilot and how the maintenance crew responded in writing. Should bring a chuckle or two.

Pilot: Left inside main tire almost needs replacement. Maintenance: Almost replaced left inside main tire.

Pilot: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough. Maintenance: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.

Pilot: Something loose in cockpit. Maintenance: Something tightened in cockpit.

Pilot: Dead bugs on windshield. Maintenance: Live bugs on back-order.

Pilot: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear. Maintenance: Evidence removed.

Pilot: DME volume unbelievably loud. Maintenance: DME volume set to more believable level.

Pilot: Friction locks causes throttle levers to stick. Maintenance: That's what friction locks are for.

Pilot: IFF inoperative in OFF mode. Maintenance: IFF always inoperative in OFF mode.

Pilot: Suspected crack in windshield. Maintenance: Suspect you're right.

P: Number 3 engine missing.

Pilot: Aircraft handles funny. Maintenance: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right, and be serious.

Pilot: Target radar hums. Maintenance: Reprogrammed target radar with lyrics.

Pilot: Mouse in cockpit. Maintenance: Cat installed.

Pilot: Noise coming from under instrument panel. Sounds like a midget pounding on something with a hammer. Maintenance: Took hammer away from midget.

-td-

Have a good evening! And this weekend as you prepare to attend the church of your choice, remember your presence speaks louder than any lapel pin.

Thumbs Up

To... **Eugene Wiltfong**, for being selected to the Kansas Teachers Hall of Fame. (called in)

To... **Norton and Northern Valley** high schools, on your Saturday evening junior-senior proms. (e-mail)

(To salute someone, please e-mail tom.d@nwkans.com, call 877-3361, fax 877-3732, mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave. 67654 or drop by the office. (Thanks for your input. - td)

Office hours:
8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.
Phone: (785) 877-3361
Fax: (785) 877-3732
E-mail:
notontelegram@nwkans.com

STAFF

Tom Dreiling editor and publisher
Christie Anderson advertising director
Dick Boyd Blue Jay sports
Carolyn Plotts society editor
Sherry Hickman bookkeeping/circulation
Vicki Henderson computer production

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Good Evening Norton
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Rock music keeps priest in touch with kids

Mike Scully might just be the quintessential Irish priest. Balding, grey fringe of hair, jutting jaw and ruddy complexion, a twinkle in his eye: give him a green hat and put a pipe in his mouth, heck, he could pass for a leprechaun.

A big leprechaun, for sure, but as mischievous as any on record. And while you might think a 68-year-old Catholic priest would be the least likely person around to spend his time listening to rock and rap music, you don't know Father Scully.

He says he started listening to the top 20 songs on the radio more than 25 years ago and found, not sin and iniquity, but inspiration for the teens and college students in his flock.

Having been a high school teacher in Hays and a pastor in Lawrence, he found plenty of common ground in the music the kids he dealt with were listening to.

Known as an inspirational speaker as well as a musicologist, Father Scully has a radio show on a Hays station from 10 a.m. to noon on Sundays that's popular with teens and college students. He spoke to students at Decatur Community High, and to the Oberlin Rotary Club, last Tuesday.

Sometimes, he said, he has to get the kids to slow down and listen to the words. Most people are so caught up in the music, he said, that they don't really listen to the lyrics.

And in rock and rap, he said, there's often plenty to listen to — and not what

On the Prairie Dog
Steve Haynes



many adults might expect. He brags that he's got every top 20 song since 1980 running around in his head.

"Can you imagine what that does to your brain," he says with a sly smile.

Inspiration from rock? Eighty percent of popular songs are about love, he notes.

"I say every love song has a message you can learn from," he said, adding that people, especially teens, have trouble talking to each other about love.

A couple of his favorites are "Paralyzer" by the group Finger Eleven, and "Never Too Late" by Three Days Grace. You can look them up on the Internet.

"Listen to the music and listen to the message," he said, adding that a lot of adults criticize teen music without really listening.

The best message from a song? someone asks.

"Something to Believe In" by the heavy-metal, death's-head group Poison in 1985.

"You'd never believe it from Poison," he said. "A very difficult song."

Father Scully came to Oberlin at the request of students who'd heard him at a

Rotary Youth Leadership camp. He went over the five principles of leadership he gave them, part of a talk that impressed the kids so much they wanted all their schoolmates to hear it.

- They are:
- Study your behavior and ask why.
 - Develop the ability to talk and to listen.
 - Never stop learning.
 - Develop the ability to love.
 - Choose a significant guide.

"And for me, that's God through Christ Jesus," he adds, "and I'd be glad to talk about that. It's not important what you choose, but you must make it something that's important in your life."

And of course, all that can be related to music.

A priest with a sense of humor who studies rock music and relates to teens. It took me a few minutes to recall the first time I'd met him.

We'd gone to church in Lawrence, where Father Scully served after leaving Thomas More Prep in Hays. He was talking about people who left Mass right after communion, ducked out and sped off for home. Many, he complained, parked right under the street-side stained glass windows at St. John the Evangelist and gunned their engines as they left.

"If you have to leave early," he grumbled, that twinkle in his eye, "at least park somewhere else."

Oh, yeah, I remembered Mike Scully. Most people do.

My feet are happiest when they are warm

Are your feet happy? I haven't spent a lot of time thinking about this until the last couple of weeks but "Mom's Weekend" at the Theta house brought the issue into the fore front! During our free time Patricia decided we should get pedicures. She even offered to pay! (With money I had given her, but never mind!)

We were going to make it a best friend and mom thing but Kelsey said her mom's feet were too ticklish.

Patricia wears sandals or flip flops a lot, even in the winter. I have cold feet. No one ever sees them. But Patricia said, "It's like wearing pretty underwear, no one knows but it makes you feel happy!"

Interesting theory kid, okay I'll play along.

First thing: my feet are not terribly ticklish but ticklish enough a couple of times I found myself giggling. It was nice to have my feet massaged, though. Did I mention we had been shopping? The chairs we sat in had a massage function. I might have fallen asleep if weren't for having my feet tickled every now and then.

Patricia got bright red nail polish with little flowers. I got bright red also but skipped the flowers. We resumed our shopping. My feet were certainly less

Back Home
Nancy Hagman



tired! We went to the shoe store. I got two new pairs of shoes, one was sandals. Alas, they had some orange on them. I couldn't wear them, unless I repainted my toenails. Anyway it rather was cold for sandals. Even Patricia ended up with shoes and socks before the day was over.

Friends knew about my weekend plans. "Did you have fun?" they wanted to know when I returned. I told them how happy my feet were.

But there was a downside to the weekend. It was the last "Mom's Weekend" for me. Patricia is graduating in December. No more kids!

Funny how I always rejoiced when my older kids went to kindergarten, college, graduated, got those first jobs, etc. New things were an adventure for us all. Not so with the youngest, when she moves on to another stage I perceive it as a door

closing. No more chances to have certain experiences again, to maybe do things better.

Good thing my feet are happy, the rest of me is feeling old. Not helped by the fact that I am now able to predict the weather just by how my knees feel. (A storm is coming!)

By the next weekend I just could not stand it that no one had seen my pedicure. I broke out the new sandals (just let them clash with the red toenails!) Several people told me how nice I looked. Perhaps it had to do with my toes.

But I imagine it's because I have a job at a place that is basically a gym, there is no reason to wear make-up or fix my hair on a daily basis, plus I wear sweats to work.

Apparently people are shocked when I actually appear to make an effort.

Being so elegantly shod did not really turn out to be such a great thing. Just like the previous weekend, it was really too cold for sandals. By the time I got home my toenails were red, my sandals orange and my feet blue.

But I've figured something out. If I truly want my feet to be happy, I don't need a pedicure. To me warm feet are happy feet. Wool socks do it for me every time!

Share your thoughts with a Letter to the Editor, or salute a friend, or group in the 'Thumbs Up' column