

### Moran's letter should have been expected

The 'breaking news' a few days ago that Rep. Jerry Moran will seek the U.S. Senate seat currently held by Sen. Sam Brownback in two years should not come as any surprise. Republican Brownback won't be running for re-election, sticking instead, to a term-limits pledge. Brownback was elected to the Senate in 1998, winning the seat Bob Dole vacated to run for the presidency. Brownback, back then, promised to serve no more than two full terms, saying he would not seek re-election in 2010.

News of Moran's plans came in the form of a letter mailed to a handful of folks in which he reportedly said the Senate campaign will be costly and urgently sought their financial support. The letter, we would rather believe, was probably 'leaked' to gauge public response to his Senate plans.

Moran's plans, if they materialize — and there is no reason to doubt they won't — is one of two key players analysts see fighting for Brownback's seat. The other is Democratic Gov. Kathleen Sebelius. Popular in her own right, she has fashioned quite a political recipe as she breezed through two four-year terms in this Republican stronghold.

But in Sebelius' case, there's something else in play. She is on the short list of names Sen. Barack Obama is looking over as he ponders a running mate. And more and more the name Sebelius seems to surface as much, and at times even more, than the other names floating around out there. So, we won't be hearing much of Sebelius/Senate from Sebelius herself, until Obama makes his veep choice. And that's not very far away. The Democrats will hold their convention in Denver in late August.

Congressman Moran, who 'owns' 69 of the state's 105 counties, will have to begin making inroads in the other 36 counties, where most of Gov. Sebelius' support comes from.

But here we are, months away from the 2008 election, already focusing on the 2010 U.S. Senate race. But we wouldn't be if it wasn't for a letter that made its way public foretelling Congressman Jerry Moran's plans two years hence.

— Tom Dreiling

### Here's a case that never should have been sealed

Kansas remains one of the most closed state governments in the United States, having multiple exemptions that allow records and meetings to remain closed to its residents. It also has a court system that allows more closed hearings and sealed documents than the national average.

Although the lawsuit filed by Planned Parenthood and the Kansas Attorney General's Office against Phill Kline is now an open proceeding, why was it closed in the first place?

The two entities sued Kline for his transfer of redacted copies of abortion records. With a judges permission, Kline moved the records from the attorney generals office to the Johnson County District Attorney's Office. Those records, however, had been stored in different locations because, Kline said, former District Attorney Paul Morrison refused to let him store the records in the office while Morrison was still district attorney.

We'll let the courts decide the issue. What we question is why the Kansas Supreme Court ever closed the hearings and sealed the records of the proceeding. There is nothing within this case that warrants secrecy.

This case should have been open to the public from the beginning. This is a gross infraction on the public's right to know. It makes us wonder what had been going on and why these proceedings were kept secret. We know it wasn't to protect patient privacy because there's no identification of patients in this lawsuit.

The court was wrong to keep these proceedings from the public.

— The Olathe News

### Thumbs Up

To... **The Norton Post Office**, for the great job they do, and all the money they spend in town. (called in)

To... **Kelly Lyon**, our community's newest painter. Good job! (e-mail)

To... **Everyone** who, in any way, made the Pre-Fair Section in Friday's Telegram possible. (e-mail)

(To submit a name or names, simply e-mail tom.d@nwkansas.com, call 877-3361 or 877-6908, fax 877-3732, mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave. 67654 or drop by the office. No signature necessary, no cost. And thanks for your continuing input. -td)

## THE NORTON TELEGRAM

ISSN 1063-701X

215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, KS 67654

Published each Tuesday and Friday by Haynes Publishing Co., 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, Kan. 67654. Periodicals mail postage paid at Norton, Kan. 67654.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Norton Telegram, 215 S. Kansas, Norton, Kan. 67654

Official newspaper of Norton and Norton County. Member of the Kansas Press Association, National Newspaper Association, and the Nebraska Press Association

Nor'West Newspapers

Dick and Mary Beth Boyd  
Publishers, 1970-2002

Incorporating The Norton County Champion  
Marion R. Krehbiel, editor



Office hours:

8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.

Phone: (785) 877-3361

Fax: (785) 877-3732

E-mail:

nortontelegram@nwkansas.com

STAFF

Tom Dreiling ..... editor and publisher

Christie Anderson ..... advertising director

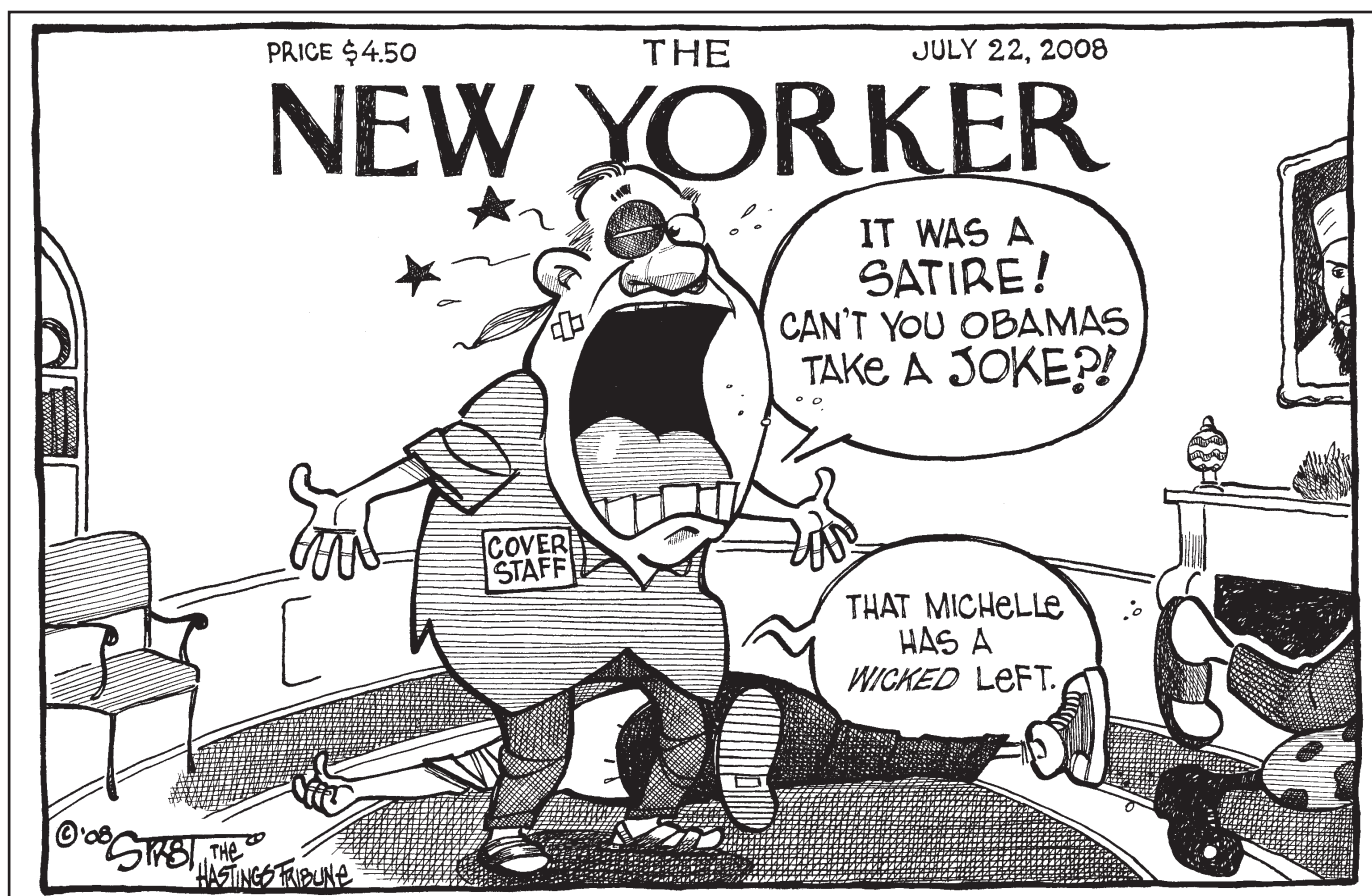
Dana Paxton ..... advertising

Dick Boyd ..... Blue Jay sports

Brandy Leroux ..... reporter

Sherry Hickman ..... bookkeeping/circulation

Vicki Henderson ..... computer production



### 2nd Amendment clear, High Court says

Where do we go, now that the Supreme Court has decided the Second Amendment means exactly what it says?

Neither gun control advocates or advocates of gun rights are likely to climb down from the barricades, but their arguments are largely emotional

Let's start with the amendment itself:

*A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.*

Simple enough. But much argument has been made about what it means. Until this year, the High Court has never really ruled on it.

In striking down a harsh gun-control law in the District of Columbia, the court apparently said it means people can keep guns in their home. That doesn't mean they can carry them around, and the District does not have a "concealed carry" law.

The law banned possession of anything but unloaded hunting arms, and the court said the Constitution calls for more than

### On the Prairie Dog Steve Haynes



that. It said, if on a 5-4 vote, that people could keep handguns at home to defend themselves.

In a city as lawless and downright dangerous as parts of Washington, that will change a lot of people's thinking.

Gun advocates are celebrating, but the gun-control crowd is outraged. It will try to overcome the decision any way it can, even if that means waiting until a Democrat president appoints more liberal justices. Is there any basis in fact for advocating gun control to reduce crime?

It doesn't seem to have worked in Washington, where the streets are hardly safe despite having had, until last month, one of the nation's strictest gun laws.

One problem with gun control is that

it keeps guns away from law-abiding citizens — but not from criminals.

Citizens who fear arrest can't keep a gun at home. Many will break the law, but if they ever had to use their weapon, they'd face prosecution.

Criminals, what do they care?

Legal guns are seldom used to commit a crime. Criminals steal guns, import them illegally, get them any way they can. They commit crimes. One more doesn't make any difference to them.

It makes more sense to have stiff penalties for any crime committed with a gun. Leave people who want to defend their homes alone.

As the court said, that's what the Founding Fathers intended, and their advice is as sound today as it was 230 years ago.

The meaning of those few words the framers put down hasn't changed, and neither has the need, at least perceived by many, to defend one's home.

Those affected by crime and lawlessness should have their rights enforced, and the court has seen to that. For now, at least.

### To each his own...my own are toads

OK. OK. I admit it. I took it. That toad in your yard, it was me. I took it. I've been toading my garden since early June, and I'm up to five now.

Steve and I go for a walk almost every evening, and when one of us spots a toad hopping his merry way down the street, across the grass or over a sidewalk, I toadnap it.

And, of course, Steve is an accessory to the crime. He helps me corral them.

Those little hoppers are hard to catch. They jump. change direction and make us look like fools running around in the dark on somebody's lawn trying to trap them without injury.

Once captured, they always seem kind of surprised that nothing is trying to take a bite out of them. They're said to be really bad tasting — I wouldn't know myself — but nothing seems to want to eat them. So, in frustration, I think, they sometimes pee on you.

This is why I try to keep my eyes on the trees and shrubs, rather than the sidewalks and lawns, for the first half of our walks. Who wants to spend most of an hour carrying a squirming, peeing toad? Not me. Not Steve, for sure.

### Open Season Cynthia Haynes



When I arrive home, I put the toads in my garden. They don't stay there, but that's where I keep "seeding" them.

So far, one has taken over the area by the garbage can, one is hopping around the auxiliary garden on the south side of the house, one is living in the sunflowers and Steve's native grass (weeds, if you ask me) beside the garage, one is in the iris bed and one is in an undisclosed location. In other words, I have no idea where it went.

Steve is really very indulgent about my love for creepy crawlies. He's lived through turtles, salamanders, garter snakes, lizards and toads besides the usual dogs, cats, rabbit and spiders. (What! You never kept spiders? What a strange family you had.)

I'm not sure where I got my proclivity for unusual pets, but I passed it on to my

children. My son kept lizards when he was in high school and my youngest daughter had a pet spider. She once spent her lunch hour, while in graduate school, rescuing frogs from the college fountain. When the tadpoles turned into frogs, it seems, they had no way to get out of the fountain and would drown without a little help from a friendly student.

Personally, I've been known to grab a garter snake while touring a high-end tourist resort's prospective golf course and carrying it around the rest of the day with the developer throwing me odd glances and my husband pretending it was the most normal thing in the world.

When we came to Kansas to look at the papers, I yelled for our hosts to stop the car then got out to rescue a box turtle, which was venturing into the path of an oncoming truck.

Again my husband smiled and the newspaper owners, who had raised four kids, sold us the company.

But, I don't want to be greedy. You can have your toad back. All you have to do is check under the zucchini in the auxiliary garden on the south side of my house — oh and help yourself to some squash, too, please.

### Now that the partying is all over...

After a week of parties to celebrate my retirement, I'm beginning to think they're glad to see me go. However, my old office mates aren't through with me, yet. I have to come back to clean out my desk and pick up some of my plants.

When I consider that for the last six years I spent almost as much time at the office as I did at home, it's easy to understand how I accumulated so much.

-ob-

The last week at the office was spiked with the anticipation of my granddaughter, Taylor's annual visit. Her mother, Kara, called me Wednesday evening. "Taylor has something she needs to ask you," Kara said, handing the phone off to Taylor.

"G'ma, it's kinda like this," she began.

### Out Back Carolyn Plotts



"I have a special friend I want to bring along."

"Well, who is it?" I asked.

"It's my pet frog," she said.

I could almost hear my daughter say, "I am NOT going to take care of a frog while you're gone. If G'ma won't let you bring him — you will have to let him go."

Couldn't have that on my conscience.

"Sure, you can bring him," I heard myself say.

Next day the phone rang and a tearful Taylor was on the line.

"G'ma, I won't be bringing my frog," she choked out.

"Why not?" I asked, not really wanting to know.

"He died," was all she could say.

We discussed funeral plans and I assured her that PaPa would make a tombstone for her frog.

"What was his name?" I asked her.

"His name was Jumpie," she said.

"Jumpie with i.e."

So, it looks like we're going to be carving a tombstone...with an i.e.

-ob-

And so, my retirement begins. As "they" say, This is the first day of the rest of my life. Who knew that on the first day I would need to clean out the refrigerator.