

### Diversity of polls means they also have favorites

**S**o you're a John McCain backer. Or perhaps Obama is your choice. Regardless, don't lose heart over what all the multitude of polls are showing. Sometimes it is a dead heat, at others a slim lead for one or the other, and then a poll or two will show an exaggerated wide lead for either, or.

Polls will reveal only what pollsters want them to reveal. It all lies in the questions asked. We don't know of any simplistic poll that simply asks: Who do you favor? Sen. McCain or Sen. Obama." There might be one or two of those out there in 'Polland', but if so they are rare.

Today's polls want to know too much, then in analyzing they confuse themselves. Contradictions then set in.

Prior to Sen. Obama's travel abroad, the race had the Illinois senator leading the Arizona senator 46-44, a statistical tie. Today Obama leads 49-40, the increase attributed to his trip. But after that buzz ceases, it'll tighten up again.

The various cable news channels will display the polls that favor their candidate, and don't fool yourselves into thinking CNN, FOX and MSNBC don't have their favorite. They do.

The American voters are a lot smarter than the pollsters give them credit for. And we would assume that some people polled will deliberately give information contrary to how they actually feel about a candidate. We can be devilish about pulling such stunts on pollsters!

When polls tell us that many more Americans are undecided about their choice for president than are, place yourself in one of those categories. With less than 100 days remaining before the November election, chances are more Americans have, than have not, decided who gets their vote Nov. 4.

Down deep, minds are already made up and will be expressed in secret on voting day. And those returns will quickly tell us the tale of the pollster.

— Tom Dreiling

### Editorial writer, columnist right on target

To the Editor,

AMEN! to the Editor for his article: "Television, Internet dividing families" and "No Child Left Behind handcuffs teachers" by John Schrock in Friday's paper. Both articles rightly put parental responsibility or lack thereof, as the leading cause of our children's failures and moral demise.

Our society has been morally lulled to sleep over the last several generations due to our failure of understanding some common sense truths of the past. We believe lies instead, because it's easier and appeals to our own selfishness. One very basic and predominant truth is this: it takes enormous amounts OF TIME dedicated to the home/family to raise emotionally whole and happy children. 'Quality time' simply isn't good enough. Nature dictates and human history of the past six thousand years bears out the simple fact that parents, especially the mothers, are the driving force of well raised children and a wholesome community. Without mothers at home, nurturing their children, holding them, teaching them, BEING there for and WITH THEM, knowing their every passion, concern, giftings and failures... our society will continue to crumble its way to a violent death.

Another basic truth lost on our culture is that the aged, the elderly... our grandparents, have become marginal members of our society instead of the solid backbone of wisdom, experience and fortitude that generations past have enjoyed.

I've seen such disregard for these pillars of our society from the churches, government policy, business... to the families. Our society caters to the 'young'. They are the greatest market share of our economy. And yet, our elders are living books filled with stories, and experiences and a wealth of character that was meant by God to inspire and give hope to the next generation. I highly recommend watching, "The Waltons"!

Yes, I know that there are extenuating circumstances in both situations. Sometimes moms must work and sometimes our elderly must have full time nursing. But by and large, these choices are more

of a default than an exception. Shame on us for being beguiled by our own selfishness that we should lose out on such precious jewels as our own children and grandparents.

Life IS WHAT YOU MAKE IT. We cannot blame anybody else for our failures. We have choices. We must think before we allow others, the media, higher institutions, religion, and the government to influence us. We must think for ourselves. And if you're a Christian, think your thoughts and make your choices within the lordship and guidance of your Savior.

With God's help, we can all change. We can all make the hard choices that go 'against the flow' for the greater good. Our family has. And it has cost us dearly financially and socially. So what. I am now just beginning to see the fruit of our sacrifices coming to bear in the lives of our children and in the depth of love and commitment in our marriage. Dedicating my life to motherhood and wifehood has given me such a deep and abiding joy and fulfillment that words cannot describe. I truly believe that is what God meant for us all along. It is heartbreaking to watch mothers, especially mothers of young children, strive to fill the emptiness in their lives with outside occupations and interests...all the while it was right in front of their noses...their families.

Children are a blessing from the Lord. They are to be provided for, loved, educated and encouraged to find their place and purpose in this ole world, by their parents. Marital love and unity is also a gift from God to combat loneliness ("and God saw that the man was alone") and enjoy life's journey with.

Our grandparents are the wellspring of life from which we came. The Bible speaks very seriously on the respect due them for having walked the trials and tribulations of this life.

Family, family, family. Like the country song line says, "I'm on my front porch lookin' in".

Keep preachin' it Tom,

Robin Somers, Norton

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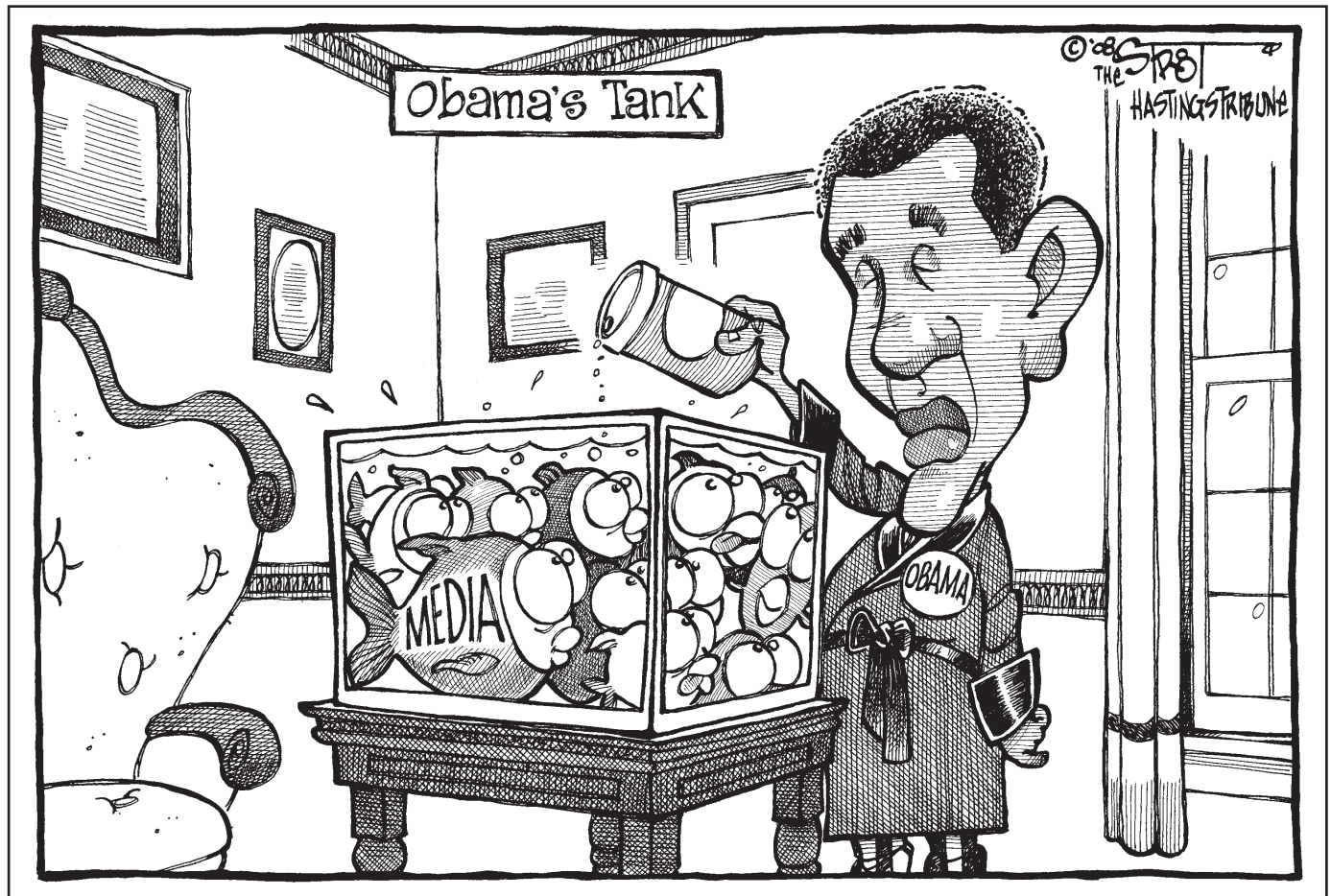
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### Nor'West Newspapers

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### Retiring? Bring a child along for company

**D**uring the past week I've been asked several times how retirement is working out. I can report that I'm starting to get the hang of it. My first Monday felt a little strange. No hustle, bustle to get to the office.

No sense of urgency to get household chores done so I could leave. No thoughts of what food I had in the house for Jim to fix himself for supper. No, I had the day before me.

I can tell right now, though, time management is going to be my biggest problem. It seems to get away from me. I can spend all morning watering flowers and pulling weeds. Then I come in the house and the sink is still full of dirty dishes.

True, my granddaughter, Taylor, is with me and a nine-year-old is a great time occupier.

In fact, it should be included in the retirement handbook as a requirement: "Don't begin retirement alone. Have a child along for company."

Taylor has been a lot of fun. One of her favorite past times is to have me tell her stories about when her mother was a little girl. She loves to hear about how her

### Out Back

Carolyn Plotts



together" a lounge room in our upstairs for the last year. We have made a space that is dedicated as a place for the grandkids to hang out. It has a daybed with a trundle, a game table, TV with video/DVD player and plenty of casual seating.

For years I've had a bolt of, (don't laugh), pink and green plaid fabric just waiting for the perfect project. And, the lounge is it.

Jim is going to make a wooden valance that I will pad and cover. Next, will be two curtain panels; then a couple of pillows and finally, if there is enough fabric, a slip-cover for a kid-size occasional chair.

Taylor was really getting into the furniture arrangement and accessorizing. She added her own touch by artfully laying a green, crocheted Afghan over the pink game table. When I asked her what color she thought we should paint the credenza that houses the television and equipment she said, "G'ma, it needs a bright color. We need to really make it POP."

I said, "Taylor, you've been watching entirely too much HGTV."

But, inside, I was saying, "Yes! A woman after my own heart."

mom played with an old adding machine my mom bought her at an auction; how her mom used to run the second-hand store by herself; and how her mom was always organized.

Having the county fair to go to every day has been fun, too. The first night Taylor asked me to ride the ferris wheel with her. She was a little nervous during the loading process.

As each seat was filled we began our ascent to the top. Then, as the ride began and picked up speed, Taylor grabbed by arm and said, "Tell my mother I love her." Such drama.

-bh-

Friday was my cleaning lady's day to come. I had a special project that I needed help with. I've been trying to "put

### A day in the life of a columnist, farm wife

**I**t seems I have been slacking off on my job here. I was going through my stack of Telegrams to clip my columns and found one on July 1 and July 15. I know I did more! I checked my computer. Not an easy task, for some reason Word is not cooperating this morning.

There doesn't seem to be anything there however. Hmhmhm.

A check of area papers brings us to the harsh realization that we had best get into the "back-to-school" mode fast! Where did summer go!

-bh-

Wheat harvest took forever. And boy, oh boy, was the hubby grumpy. If he had woken up in a cool climate with a million dollars on the bed, all his debts paid off and never had to work again a day in his life, he would have found something to be unhappy about.

-bh-

Elizabeth is in Wichita taking classes for her master's degree. She had to move Fourth of July weekend; the rental house she was living in sold!

She came home, we dumped all her stuff into the new rental house (which also has a for sale sign on it!) and she hurried back for her oral exams July 9! No pressure there!

Kate had a work related trip to Washington D.C., July 7-11. She thought we'd be through harvest before she went. As it turned out we weren't done when she got back!

You'd think Patricia would at least have had a good time. She was in Madrid. She

### Back Home

Nancy Hagman



met new and interesting people from Finland, South Africa, and New Zealand.

Here's the rest of the story. She was in Madrid, Nebraska. (I'd never heard of it either!) Her new friends are truck drivers recruited from other countries by custom cutters.

-bh-

The basement flooded twice in July. At least it was clean water. The first time wasn't so bad. The hot water heater went out. Of course it was a Saturday, after two days without hot water; it was worth any price to get that fixed. Or so I thought! Got the bill this week; OUCH!

After the repairs, I went right to work catching up on laundry. I was sitting in the living room and heard a strange noise. Maybe it was the fan.

It has a breeze feature. I hadn't messed with it but maybe someone else did. No one else was in the house. Maybe I should get up and check it.

So I did. Wasn't the fan. I sat back down. Decided I could hear it again. I got up and turned the fan off. I could still hear it. Sounded like it was coming from the utility room!

OHDEAR!!! The hot water supply line

had broken. I turned off the washer but it was full of water so I couldn't move it to shut the water off. I ran to the breaker box and shut off the pump.

It didn't stop the leak; I guess the whole 40 gallons of water from the new hot water heater had to spew out.

The wallpaper was so wet I thought it was going to just peel off into a sodden mess. It ruined my favorite Mary Engelbreit poster which was hanging about five feet up the wall. Even the ceiling was wet!

I tracked down the hubby. He was upset because I didn't go shut the water pump off. I still haven't figured out the difference between throwing the breaker and going to the basement and shutting off the pump (except that going to the basement would have taken longer).

Someday when the memory of this harvest has faded I'll ask, if we live so long! My knight in shining armor then pointed to the shop vac and suggested I clean up the basement!

I seem to recall having a washer leak, although not of this magnitude, in March! This washer is only four years old!

The supply lines were new with the washer! Call me if you would like to know which brands to avoid!

-bh-

Summer is almost over and I need a vacation! From my total lack of accomplishment lately it would appear I've been on one!

Bring on fall! I like fall!

It cools off and we have football!

### Thumbs Up

To... Doctor Silan and Tina, on your 40th anniversary celebration. (called in)

To... our current Norton County Sheriff Troy Thomson, for a job well done. We're supporting you all the way! (called in)

To... Keith VanSlike, for all the hard

work you and your staff did to make the Norton County Fair another goody. (e-mail)

To... Diane Becker, economic development director, for looking for ways to make Norton grow. You are on the right track. (e-mail)

To... Brent Bohl, sheriff candidate, who

will represent badly needed change. (regular mail)

(To submit a name or names, please e-mail tom.d@nwkansas.com, call either 877-3361 or 877-6908, fax to 877-3732, mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave. 67654, or drop by the office. And thanks a lot for your continuing input. -td)