

Former county resident featured in Hays paper

Friends of longtime Norton countian, Lorraine Long, will be excited to learn that she was featured in the newspaper where she now resides — Hays. The Hays Daily News, each Monday, features a story about someone in northwest Kansas. The persons selected are picked at random from the telephone book. The stories fall in the column called "At Random."

I visited with Mrs. Long and she said at times she feels a bit embarrassed by the publicity. When she said people are always telling her they read about her in the paper, she doesn't always know what to say. I suggested she ask them if they would like her autograph. That brought a laugh, "I hadn't thought of that," she said.

Mrs. Long was a correspondent for The Norton Telegram some years ago, covering the visits, events and activities in the New Almelo area. She grew up on a farm in Norton County and moved to Hays about three years ago. She resides in St. John's of Hays independent living apartments, according to the story. I asked her how she likes living in Hays, and she said, "I like it very much."

So, for those who didn't know, I thought I'd pass along this bit of good news about Lorraine Long.

-td-

I will be glad when the Democratic Party's convention is over (next weekend), ditto the Republican Party convention a week later. Then Senators Obama and McCain can get down to the business of conversing with the people of this country about what THEY will do, or hope to get accomplished, as president. And I hope THEY stick stinky socks down the mouths of those who pass along all kinds of baseless trash about the two candidates. And many of those nitwits aren't strangers, but people many of us once thought were above this kind of back-alley chatter. But it happens every four years, just like clockwork.

While I'm on this subject, I wonder if "truth in advertising" includes political commercials? If it does, boy, how do they get away with it?

-td-

On the lighter side of politics, a close Republican friend — who is still angry because Sen. McCain became the party's nominee, (he favored Mitt Romney or Mike Huckabee) — told me with a chuckle the other evening, "Tom, come on now. You know why Cindy McCain is at Sen. McCain's side each and every day and night of this campaign? She doesn't want him to become a McEdwards!"

I never gave that any thought.

-td-

Former Sen. Edwards — ugh, to think he might have been the Democratic nominee — cooked his own goose for good. How someone like that can even live with himself is beyond comprehension. The smiling, nice guy of the campaign days turns out to be nothing more than a worthless, slithering, garbage-coated snake. And how badly I feel for wife Elizabeth, battling cancer and looking for the welfare of two little kids, while he was out on the make, making another kid, which he said isn't his. But can we believe someone of that character? Is there really justice in the end?

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Spooky, but I heard the term "military draft" mentioned by one of the presidential candidates Wednesday. I hope he's not serious.

-td-

For readers who might have missed it, I really goofed in my last column, and was called for it by a young man. I said John F. Kennedy, at age 43, was the youngest president when he was sworn in. He wasn't. Theodore Roosevelt was 42 when he took the oath of office. Damon Freddie caught me in that one. I think my mind is slipping and it's always nice when a younger reader picks up on that unavoidable circumstance. He made the "Thumbs Up" column for picking up on my error.

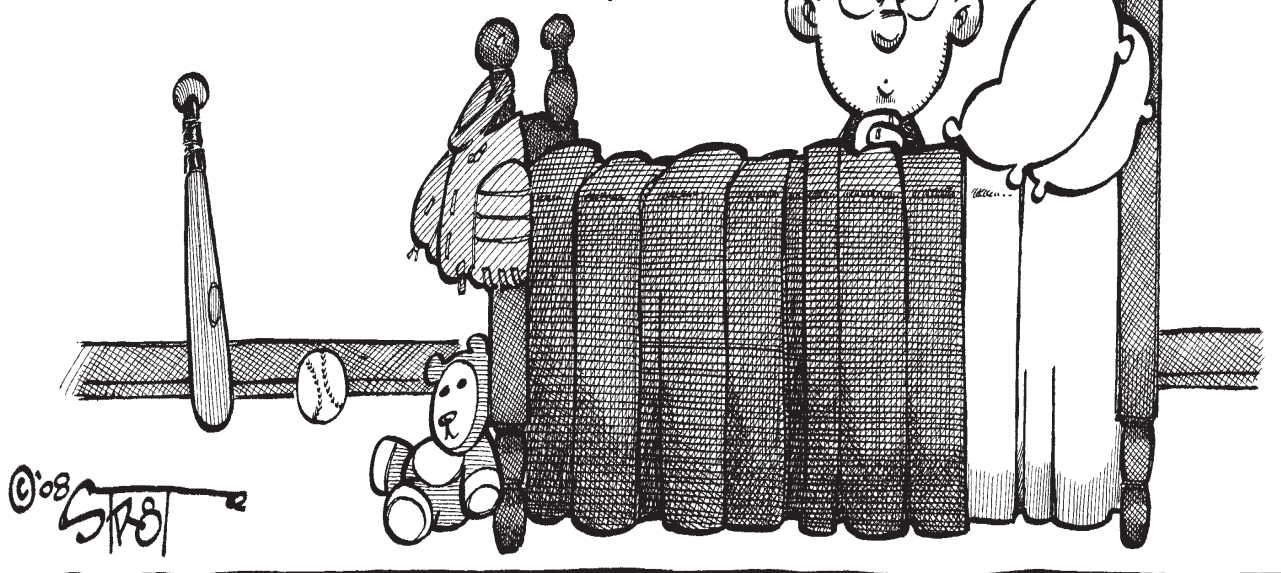
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Well, have a good evening! And remember there is no age requirement to attend the church of your choice this weekend, or any weekend.

Good Evening Norton
Tom Dreiling



Now I lay me down to sleep.
Kansas schools've started
with the teachers they keep?
It's tough to learn
science and math
when teachers leave
for lucrative career paths.



We hear little, if anything, when sleeping

We sleep with the windows open in the summer. Saturday night or Sunday morning there was a car crash a quarter mile or so north of our house. We never heard the crash; as neighbors who live further up the road did. We never heard the law enforcement, the Jaws of Life, the ambulances or the helicopter that landed on the next hill to pick up one of the victims. They decided rather than take him to a hospital and transport; they would just pick him up here. Injuries not as serious as first diagnosed we are told.

Glad to hear that, glad the neighbors were still up! Those poor guys would have lain in the ditch (almost in the creek) for a long time if it had been up to us to rescue them. The vehicle was upside down and was not really visible from the road.

I really am glad — but it just freaks me out that we never heard a thing! Besides missing out on the drama it makes me wonder, what would we wake up for?

Around the July Fourth when Kate was here, I did wake up one night. The wind was blowing hard from the north. I shut the north window in our bedroom and dozed back off. Then I heard the back door open! The light in the mud room came on

Back Home
Nancy Hagman



they know what they are doing. I'm just not taking any chances. That's me, cat rescuer! Just don't have a wreck near our house though, we'll sleep through that!

All winter we had too many cats. Junior kept catching the Toms and hauling them over to the old farmstead two miles west. It's not cruel, he feeds cattle over there, there are lots of mice and rats. He had this idea there would be no kittens if he could just keep the sexes separated. Better idea in theory than in practice. I think one day the Tom beat him home!

During the heavy rains in May we lost all the cats but Sydney and another female. Not sure what happened. Sydney had a litter in the spring but apparently lost them. The other cat, who is not too friendly herself, had hers away from the house. There were four, but lately we have only seen three and when we see them they are streaks! So Sydney's latest litter of five is very precious.

Even Junior (not a cat person) is rather taken by them! I'm not sure how to explain their existence since we no longer have a Tom! It's a miracle or the Tom did come around.....while we were sleeping...

(gneph@yahoo.com)

and went off. The door closed!

Man, did I ever wake up then. I got Junior awake; he came to pretty fast, also. We then heard Kate's voice, "It's starting to rain; the kittens are getting wet!"

There went one of my lives — over kittens that reportedly have nine! They were only days old though and worth saving. One is a beautiful calico like the silly momma Sydney who chose to have them out in the open north of the house! We had provided a box but she would not leave them in it! They settled in nicely on the back porch until a couple of weeks ago. It is hot on that west porch! It's cooler on the east and there is less traffic to the front door so a move seemed sensible.

Now they are really getting around! I have to rescue them a couple times a day. They wander off and I go find them. Maybe they don't need rescuing; maybe

We are in need of parenting specialists

The first time I heard the phrase was almost 30 years ago. Friends of ours from Southern California had become foster parents to a young child, who was confined to a wheel chair. He was unable to hold his head on his own, was blind and had seizures. The only thing that indicated his true age, was his size. This was not an infant, this was a five year old boy.

My first assumption was a terrible congenital disease, but it was something far more tragic than that. He was a victim of shaken baby syndrome (SBS).

My father used to say he found it a strange thing that we require 'wannabe' drivers to read a manual and pass a test before they could become licensed drivers and yet to become a parent required nothing but passion.

This week the news headlines told another tragic story. One that is repeated about 1400 times a year in the U.S. Another child has succumbed to shaken baby syndrome. The young father did not intend to kill his child, but he did. He did not intend to hurt the baby, but he did. In a moment of anger he shook the baby causing small tears in the baby's brain which ultimately took the baby's life. Eighty percent of SBS perpetrators are male.

Phase II
Mary Kay Woodyard



percent of its victims are male.

So how can we keep our babies safe? As with anything else we need to educate our young people. Something as simple as a parent time out can help.

Making sure the baby is safe, dry and fed in the crib, the parent can step out onto the front porch and breathe deeply for five minutes. This may give the needed space to better handle the problem. Other family members or neighbors can help the parents form a plan for when parenting becomes too much. The Shaken Baby Syndrome website offers information on how to soothe a baby and how to soothe a parent.

It goes back to the phrase "it takes a village". Some people are better prepared to deal with the stresses of parenting. Many have extended family or a large circle of friends. We have support groups for alcoholism, weight gain, agoraphobia, why not for new parents.

If car seats can be required so can regular check-ins with parenting specialists trained to spot troubled youth and parents. All together we can help overcome an incredible blotch on our family scene, with understanding, education and help.

(mkwoodyard@ruraltel.net)

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

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



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Obama, McCain: (785) 877-6908