

Roberts, Slattery nipping at the heels

A check of various television channels around 11 p.m., Saturday, brought a surprise — a pleasant surprise. It was a rerun of a debate between the two candidates for the United States Senate, incumbent Pat Roberts and challenger, former Congressman Jim Slattery.

It was an interesting debate, to say the least. What we got out of it was simply this: the television commercials for this race really push the envelope. We use that term instead of the “L” word because there’s too much of that already being tossed around.

Sen. Roberts has been hammering, via television commercials, Mr. Slattery’s poor attendance record when he was in Congress and his employment since as a Washington lobbyist, plus a few other digs. But when they looked one another in the eye on the debate stage, it just didn’t seem that way at all. After Sen. Roberts listed a litany of things he was doing for Kansas and ended each of those reminding listeners that Mr. Slattery was busy being a lobbyist, Mr. Slattery looked right at the senator and reminded him that his son is also a lobbyist. That sort of ended that.

Sen. Roberts’ appearance at the televised debate was somewhat puzzling. Usually a guy who can win an audience over with his humor, he rarely looked his audience in the eye during the debate. He seemed to have been reading from a script, and he seemed annoyed at having to share the stage with someone like Jim Slattery.

Sen. Roberts will be re-elected. He’s done his share of good for this state. And most importantly, it’s a rare bird that wins a United States Senate seat on the Democratic ticket in the state of Kansas.

If the name Slattery sort of rings a bell, you might recall that he lost his bid for the governorship to Gov. Bill Graves some years ago.

The televised debate took place at the recent Kansas Association of Broadcasters convention in Wichita.

Eleven o’clock is a late hour for we aging political birds, but it was worth staying up to experience this lively exchange.

— Tom Dreiling

Your Turn

Football team impresses couple

To the Editor,

Kudos to the Bluejays’ football team and coaches. We came from Sterling, Colo., to watch our grandson play in the homecoming game. Wow, were we impressed!

First, what team harmony, when the entire team went out with the captains at the beginning of the game and again at the beginning of the second half. The team also showed great sportsmanship to the St. Francis team and especially to their own teammates.

But mostly, we were VERY amazed when the entire team removed their helmets and knelt on one knee when the St. Francis player was injured. We have been attending all types of games for 40-plus years and were so IMPRESSED with the sportsmanship of the Bluejays.

Congratulations and pat yourselves on the back. Great game and good luck in the upcoming games.

Marv and Shary Draper
Sterling, Colo.

Eyes K-State, KU mascots again

To the Editor,

Hello, to all Norton County residents!

I’d like to start with a big thank you to all involved who made this past year’s Relay for Life such a great success. Again, give yourselves a big applause — we exceeded our county’s goal. As everyone knows, there is no ‘I’ in teamwork and that’s what it takes to have a successful relay — teamwork!

However, the next relay year will begin shortly. I’m trying to come up with different avenues to raise money, and I toyed with the idea of having the K-State Wildcat mascot and the K.U. Bird mascot here for a picture day last year. I received the quote for what it would cost per mascot and not knowing the results of everyone’s efforts to meet our goal, I put my thoughts on the back burner.

I’m once again thinking this would be a great fund raiser and opportunity to let our youngsters be upfront and personal with these mascots. So, I’m writing this letter in hopes that all K-State alumni and KU alumni will be reading this and might consider being an underwriter to pull off this event. It may be beneficial to have several people commit to underwriting this versus a single person. So, I’m reaching out to see if we can have these mascots come to Norton County and give our kids a day of having a picture taken with someone who brings them joy when they watch the universities play.

If this is something that anyone is interested in doing, please call me at 874-4405. We have to find a cure for this dreadful disease as it affects each and everyone of us one way or another.

Thank you.

Sarah Durham
Norton

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New crew knew just what to do

It was a whirlwind trip to Mexico. And, this time, we set some kind of speed record, completing the house in two days, instead of the usual two and a half. It worked out great to hook up with the other team from Silver City, N. M.. Both teams brought strengths to the table that complemented the other. So now, Eddie, Robert, Marcia, Dave, Bob, Dennis, Kim, Steve and Adeliso are our new best friends.

The Kansas Contingency was great, too. Phil worried that he wouldn’t be able to do anything, but he soon learned that there were lots of “little” jobs he could do. John brought his “mucking” boots and waded into the wet concrete when the truck arrived.

Bob and Deanna pitched in like old pros and Jim did his usual thing of helping with the framing. I did something new this year and helped with the insulation. Hard work, yes. But, the most fun you’ll ever have.

The family we built for was very appreciative. The timing couldn’t have been better because Maria and Efen are expecting their third child, a girl this time, in November. Their new home will be a warm, safe and secure place to bring their new baby to.

The house was completed by the end

Out Back Carolyn Plotts



of the second day with a few decorative touches to add the third morning.

After the dedication of the house, Maria served us a lunch she had prepared. She called the dish “flautas.” She took a small amount of seasoned hamburger and placed it along one side of a corn tortilla. She rolled it up very tightly then dropped it into hot oil where she fried it until crisp. The flautas were served with fresh, homemade guacamole, lettuce, tomatoes and, of course, hot sauce. Delicious!

When we go back in March, we will check in on the family and see the new baby. What a great feeling to know we helped better the lives of this young family.

-ob-

Months ago, I promised my friend, Vicki, that I would help with her daughter’s wedding. At that time, Angela had not set the date. But, sometime after we set the date for the Mexico trip, Angela

picked out the weekend following our scheduled return the day before. It was going to be a tight schedule.

I’m not really a “plan ahead” kind of girl. But, this time, I had to get organized. I actually had the mints, chocolate candies and meat balls all prepared before the Mexico trip.

On wedding day, everything went like clock-work. The bride’s father sang a touching song about how he had loved her first. It brought tears to my eyes. Jim admitted later, that it made him cry, too.

I took lots of pictures. It was a lovely wedding and the young couple have a beautiful life ahead of them.

-ob-

Dig out your apple recipes. I have two bushels of apples Jim picked Saturday, sitting on the back porch, another bushel that fell off the trees and more still to be picked. I haven’t been able to give any away.

Everyone who has an apple tree says the same thing, “I’ve got more apples than I know what to do with.” It’s a bumper year for apples.

Jim bit into one and he said they are still pretty green. Are apples like tomatoes? Will they continue to ripen after they are picked? I sure hope so or I’m going to be making some mighty tart pies.

Solution: having something to believe in

Newsweek reports ten percent of people polled think things are going fine. A fairly sarcastic analysis of this finding followed. For example: does George W. Bush have that many relatives?

It sets me to wondering — can people be content or achieve inner peace even though the world is in chaos? If they are does that mean they are hopelessly out of touch or callous to the suffering of others?

In a time when our presidential candidates talk about change, hope and new beginnings, perhaps a better question would be — why are 90 percent of people so worried? Because things are going to get better. We are going to have energy independence, more jobs, universal health care, national security, improvements in education and social security. You will get to keep your house no matter how foolishly you over spent. All this with a tax cut! Sound almost too good to be true!

I listened to the debates (presidential and vice presidential) except the last one. I say listened and I wish more people had done that. The television was on but I was playing games at computer so I did not watch. After each debate I heard comments about how the candidates looked. Here’s how it looks to me: people would make more intelligent choices about how to vote if they listened first and looked second.

Thumbs Up

To... the junior high football coaches for a good season. (called in)

To... the junior high varsity football team, for being undefeated! (called in)

To... all athletes of the Northern Valley School District, for your untiring efforts this fall sports season. (e-mail)

To... the school bus drivers, who deliver their precious cargo safely to and from school each day. (e-mail)

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

Back Home Nancy Hagman



I sometimes wonder if I am chronically depressed. I just can’t get very passionate about either McCain or Obama. Depression is not really negative or hateful feelings; depression is a lack of feeling.

Depressed or not I believe in our democracy. If we make a terrible blunder this year, we can correct it in four years or more drastically by impeachment at any time. Checks and balances, folks, you learned about it in high school government. It’s worked for a while now. Have a little faith!

Have a little faith not just in this country but also in yourself. My perceived depression could be extended to my dilemma with the political parties. I probably agree with the Democrats on more issues than I do the Republicans, except for one important point. It is not up to the government to make us successful, happy people. It is up to us!

Thomas Jefferson said, “A government big enough to give you everything you want is strong enough to take everything from you.”

Personal responsibility! Instead of

crying about what someone should do for you, do something for yourself. Might just work, how will we know if we don’t try?

I mentioned I did not listen to the last debate. It was on a Wednesday night: choir practice. Choir reorganized about three weeks ago as there are several occasions coming up that would be enhanced with special music. Daughter Elizabeth is the choir director, the group is short on sopranos and I like to sing. My church attendance is sporadic, but I committed to choir.

After the second week of choir practice, I noticed something. I was singing at home, in the car, in the shower. And I was happier. I told Elizabeth. She smiled. She is a music educator. She has learned a lot about psychology, how our brains work and the power of music. Apparently I confirmed some theory she learned along the way.

Our choir’s favorite is a combination of spirituals, “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” and “Deep River.” If we sound half as good as singing makes us feel, it will be wonderful.

So I missed the last debate. Somehow, I don’t think I missed much. Instead I received an affirmation, a positive thought, an assurance. “My home is over Jordan.”

I’m one of the ten percent, Newsweek. Things aren’t so bad when you have something to believe in.