

We need to bring Bolts back to the speedway

I am surprised at the sudden action taken to open up bids for a track promoter at Elmwood Park Speedway. Some how, some way, action needs to be taken to get Don and Paula Bolt back as promoters for the 2009 race season.

Don and Paula have done an outstanding job for several years promoting IMCA tracks in Kansas and Nebraska. This is a very difficult job especially with the current economy. Don and Paula know the promoting business and have always been honest and fair. We know what we have with Don and Paula and I assure you they will not leave the city with problems other area tracks are facing.

Whether you love racing or have no interest, the Elmwood Park Speedway along with Don and Paula's help has generated a lot of revenue on Saturday

Sound off!

evenings for the Norton community. Many of the drivers and their pit crews do business while in Norton.

This may be a tank of gas, eating at the local restaurant or purchasing a motel room. As small as it sounds, it is money coming into Norton that will not continue without Don and Paula as the promoters.

We need to reconsider and allow the Bolts to continue as promoters. Give them credit for the outstanding job they have done with the track and allow them to be the 2009 IMCA Elmwood Park promoters.

Robert D. Wyatt
IMCA fan
Norton

State action will impact many communities

On Dec. 1, 2008, the State of Kansas announced a "hard freeze" on new admissions to the Home and Community-Based Waiver for Kansans with Physical Disabilities (HCBS/PD). This is a service option that allows Kansans ages 16 to 64 who are qualified by disability and income to admission to a nursing home to avoid that option by receiving the supports necessary to stay in their own home or apartment and receive those supports in the community.

This wavier of the entitlement to nursing home care is typically delivered at about half the cost of staying in a nursing home. It also allows these Kansans to seek employment and continue their roles as taxpayers by shopping in their local stores and gas stations, paying property taxes, and contributing to their local economies.

This unprecedented decision to now allow any new admissions (except in the most life threatening conditions) will force the reduction in HCBS/PD recipients by 1800 Kansans.

The economic impact on our cities, towns and counties will be extreme. Each HCBS/PD customer creates 1 and 1/2 support jobs in their local community. Additionally, another half-time position is created in a local provider

Sound off!

agency, monitoring or administering state office, office of a state contractor, or another such indirect support service, like a durable medical equipment company.

By using these job multipliers, it is apparent that 2400 currently employed care attendants face unemployment as their existing HCBS/PD recipient transitions (die, move back with the kids, go to a hospital or nursing home, recover, etc.) and there are no new "patients" to move over to serve.

And, another 900 indirect jobs will have to be eliminated. That's 3300 Kansans losing their jobs as a result of this poor decision!

Are we a society that supports balancing the state budget on the backs of the most vulnerable? I call on all Kansans to contact your local Kansas Representative, Kansas Senator and Governor Sebelius to ask for a reversal of this decision and a compromise solution **before these jobs are lost.**

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Your political connection

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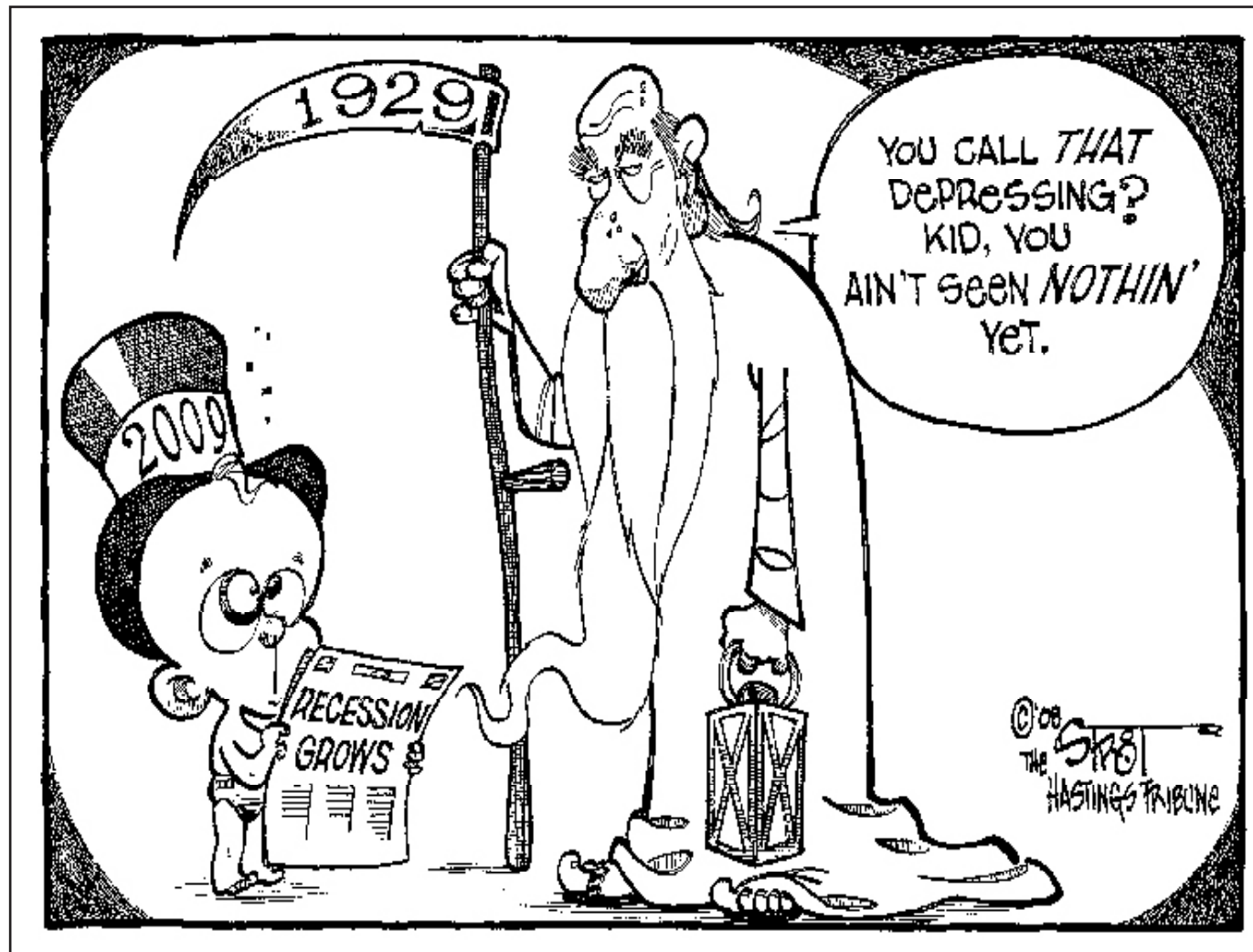
★ **U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts**, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774; fax (202) 224-3514

★ **U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback**, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521

★ **U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran**, 2443 Rayburn HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715; fax (202) 225-5124

★ **State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer**, State Capitol Building, Room 262-E, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-7399

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Time to put Mrs. Claus in her place

It's the week after Christmas and time to put away the noise-activated, rocking-humming-knitting Mrs. Claus. When I sneeze she starts humming and rocking; if I drop a book on the table she starts humming. But, she never fails to give us a little laugh. A good friend gave her to me a couple of years ago with the words, "She reminds me of you." Since I don't knit, it must be the grey hair.

Jim put up some lights, but not the multitude he usually strings all over our property. I've always said, "If it stands still, he will put lights on it."

But, this year he's not been 100 per cent. Since before Thanksgiving he's had a nagging cough plus aches and pains. Diagnosed as bronchitis, he has doctored and medicated for more than a month now. Every night he would come home from work and collapse in his recliner. I should have strung lights on him, because he was the one who stood still. Just like

Out Back

Carolyn Plotts



his favorite football team, there's always next year.

I love all those TV shows about big families: "Jon and Kate Plus Eight"; "17 Kids and Counting"; and "Kids By the Dozen". Jim cannot understand my fascination. He does not consider the shows entertainment. I think it's amazing to see how they function. Just preparing a meal is a major task. And, going to the store, forget about it. Perhaps I enjoy them because I'm so glad I'm not the mother of all those kids. But, I always

Artificial vs. real: safest Christmas tree?

In my last column I stated live Christmas trees were a fire hazard. Just to prove me wrong the High Plains Journal, which came out the next day, said, "...in their research trials, the fire safety engineers (at the United States Fire Administration) were unable to ignite a properly watered tree."

The article gave other positives of using live trees. Such as buying a live tree supports the local, or at the very least the U.S. economy, as fresh trees are not imported. 80-90 percent of artificial trees are imported from China.

Live trees also absorb carbon dioxide and produce oxygen, stabilize soil, shelter wildlife, and are even useful when recycled. Artificial trees are a toxic mess!

The article even says in the long run live trees are cheaper, even through you have to buy one every year, because artificial trees begin looking ratty after a few years and large high quality artificial trees are very costly.

That may be true for trees. I haven't priced a live tree for years. I have purchased live greenery, however and this year I went into sticker shock. It was a fund raiser at one of the daughter's schools. After hearing what it was going to cost I cut back my order (although I still should have made some member of the dance team, very, very happy). I then started looking for artificial greenery for next year!

A delay in delivery of the greenery

Back Home

Nancy Hagman



meant I didn't get the stuff until the cold snap. It is lying on the foyer floor and may never adorn my porch rail. You can't properly water that stuff but perhaps I best just deck the mantel with it, if only I had a mantel!

Still the Lord does provide; this morning's light revealed the first snowfall of the season. What could be more festive! I even had to scoop the stuff, yet I'm enjoying it! The same day The High Plains Journal with the story about the trees arrived, we got a Christmas card and letter from a friend describing their family tree for 2008. She also recounted memories of trees from other years.

I love Christmas letters and this one in particular struck a chord. In my friend's home each year the tree is different. Sometimes the ornaments are homemade or recycled. Once they cut a tree from the pasture but she reported the smell was so overwhelming they did not do that again!

One year it was purple for Kansas State. I never knew there were so many purple ornaments available until I happened to

wanted a big family and when Jim and I got married I got my wish. I instantly had five children, three grandchildren and another on the way. Now, there are seven grandchildren plus two sons-in-law. Just that many more to love. We'll see what the future brings.

Along-term cancer survivor, my oldest brother, Bob, received some disturbing news before Christmas. A lump on his leg turned out to be malignant. The treatment will be pretty aggressive but, we're optimistic that his overall good health and attitude will help him sail through.

I don't know where the year has gone but, next year, is here. In less than a month the country will have a new president; days will start getting longer; resolutions will be made (and broken); and, life will go on. A new year is like a present. I wonder what it will hold.

be on the KSU campus one Christmas! I gave into temptation and purchased some purple ornaments this year — found them in Nebraska! I'm not sure what I will do with them.

I had an idea that if we ever got the basement finished I would set up a retro tree down there. Aluminum, with a color pinwheel! I was planning to decorate it with the vintage bulbs my mother-in-law left behind, but now I'm thinking PURPLE!

It isn't Christmas to me without Grandma's lacquered pinecone tree. Somewhere in her travels she found gigantic pinecones (the one I have is about 18 inches long). She inverted them on wooden bases making charming, unique mini-trees! One of my earliest and most cherished memories is going to her house and seeing those trees.

For the most part our family sticks to the tried and true when decorating the tree. One year I put up only gold, silver, crystal, and white ornaments. The girls were very disappointed.

The beauty of Christmas is: be our trees real or artificial, decorated traditionally or new every year; as each December day passes our differences matter less. The promise of the season is the constant; in the birth of Christ we find our commonality!

May God bless us all! Belated Merry Christmas!
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Thumbs Up . . .

To... the kind woman, who bought all of us pieces of pie at the T&C Restaurant, from the Christian Motorcyclists Association Prison Team. (e-mail)

To... all our postal carriers, for delivery of the always awaited holiday season greeting cards. You are our silent heroes. (by telephone)

To... those kind people, who made our Christmas day something to remember. Thank you so much and God bless! (by telephone)

(To submit a name or names, e-mail tom.d@nwkansas.com, telephone 877-3361 or 877-6908, fax 877-3732, mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave. 67654 or drop by the office. Remember you can always wish someone a happy birthday or a couple a happy anniversary. Thanks for your continuing input - td)