

American dream, alive and well

You don't have to be a liberal or even a Democrat to be proud of our country. Our new president embodies everything that this nation stands for: hard work, independence, human rights for all.

Go ahead and disagree with his policies if you like. This newspaper has and probably will again. No president is perfect.

Barack Obama takes office amidst a euphoric time of high expectations and good will.

He faced crises foreign and domestic as he stepped up to take the oath. It was most of a year before Sept. 11 befell George W. Bush.

The new president does not face the worst of times: Terrorism is less of a threat today than it was eight years ago, the nation's two wars seem mostly won and the economy, while down, is nowhere near a depression.

That doesn't mean the country does not face tough choices. All the billions for bailouts meant to keep big corporations afloat will have to be paid for by someone. So will social programs and the continuing wars.

Soon, the threat will be inflation, not stagnation. But you'd imagine we can deal with that.

President Obama brings an aura of leadership and likability to office that his predecessor lacked. His engaging personality lights up the room when he arrives, and he's able to project that on stage or on television.

Whether he can translate that to true leadership, we'll find out. It won't be easy. John Kennedy found that out; his programs mostly stalled in Congress until after his death. It was only years later that the world really appreciated how he had faced down the Russians over Cuba.

Still, Mr. Obama has fulfilled the dream that sparked our bloody Civil War, (nearly half a million dead), the long years of reconstruction and segregation, the civil rights movement and the dawn of American acceptance for human diversity.

It may be ironic that he grew up largely outside what we think of as the "black experience" in America, but there is no doubt that his skin color and heritage represent a true shift in this nation. We will not go back to the way things were before.

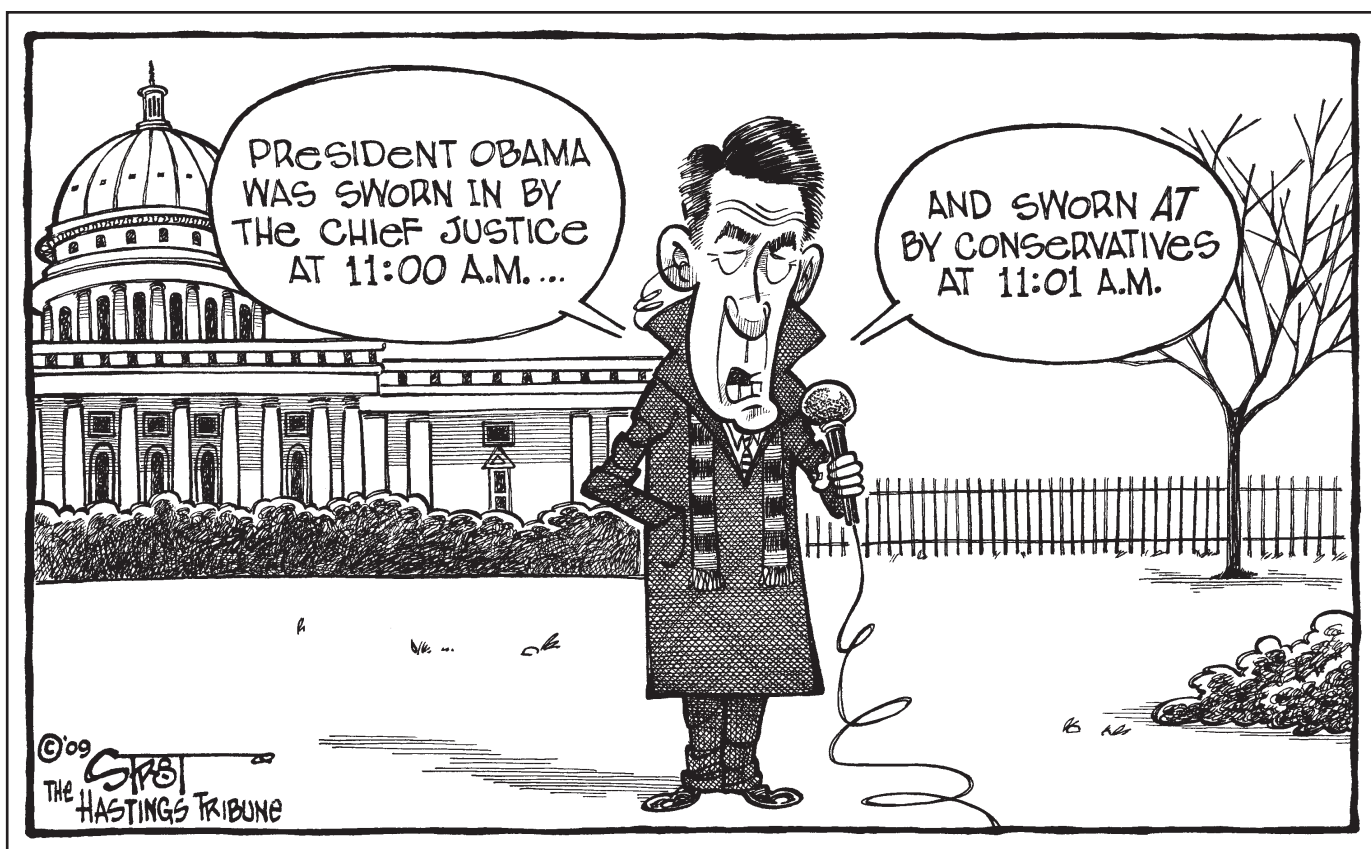
That does not mean that the battle for human rights is over or that Dr. Martin Luther King's dream has been realized. Many battles will be fought in the days and years ahead. Many people would like to take our rights — not just those of minorities, but of all Americans — in the name of security, progress or peace.

But it does mean that those soldiers who gave the ultimate sacrifice in a string of battles from Charleston Harbor to Normandy and beyond, did not die in vain.

The American dream is alive and well. After 230 years, the foresight of the Founding Fathers, particularly in the Bill of Rights, never seemed greater. The promise of the future never seemed brighter.

We wish Mr. Obama good luck and Godspeed. The arena has a way of tarnishing even the brightest star, but we can only hope — all of us — that he lives up to his promise.

— Steve Haynes



Socks aren't always just for your feet

"You should sew eyes on them," Sherry said. Vicki just giggled at my sock-covered hands. Hey guys, this is serious medicine. I'm taking care of my winter-chapped, wind-burned, sore fingers.

OK, they're right. My hands, covered with a pair of Steve's tan socks, do look a little like sock puppets without any adornment.

I knew I had to do something when I got the crack in my finger and I couldn't get it healed. I put bandages on it, but they'd get wet and I'd toss them and pretty soon I'd notice a bloody fingerprint on something. The crack was bleeding again.

I'm sort of a slow learner. It took more than a week before I decided that just covering up the wounds and putting on hand lotions were not going to work.

I remembered an old pharmacist's trick. Slather your hands with petroleum jelly and put an old pair of cotton gloves or socks on before you go to bed. Do this for several days, and your hands will be nice and soft — and hopefully — healed.

Open Season Cynthia Haynes



So, I dug around until I found the jar of petroleum jelly I had gotten a year or so ago to medicate one of the cats.

That's an old veterinarian's trick. You put some petroleum jelly on the end of a cotton swab and touch the pill, which then sticks to the petroleum jelly. You pry open the cat's mouth and shove the pill down as far as you can. Hopefully, you live through the experience and the pill gets far enough down that it stays.

I tried this a couple of times. The cat won, so I pried her jaws open and shoved the dang pill down her throat with my finger. She swallowed, and the bites healed in a couple of weeks.

Anyway, after getting the petroleum

jelly, I rummaged around in Steve's sock drawer for the oldest, crummiest socks he had. I should have gone down to the laundry and picked up a couple of mismatches, but that's hindsight. What I got was a somewhat worn pair of tan fuzzies.

The only problem was it was 8:30 a.m. and I was going to Concordia to see my mother. Since it takes three hours to get there, I figured, I might as well give my hands their first application of "medicine" while I was driving. After all, who would know or care.

I forgot about the stop in Norton. That's where I got tripped up. I couldn't take off the socks since my hands were as slippery and messy as greased pigs.

The girls got a good laugh out of the deal and it wasn't such a bad thing for me either. I named my hands Righty and Lefty and had a nice conversation with them over the next 2 1/2 hours.

Well, maybe not a conversation. They didn't say much, but they nodded in all the right places and were wonderful listeners.

Sound Off!

We need to put Bessie's picture back up

I am writing this with much concern about Bessie's picture not being in the front entrance of the Andbe Home. Her picture and plaque that said she wanted to keep it a home and not an institution have all been removed.

I have been told the reason is because her face was too stern and it made it look like a hospital and not a home. When I went to work at the Andbe Home I was just a young nurse and didn't know much about caring for the elderly, but Bessie took me by the hand and taught me how to care for the elderly. Wow! What a teacher!

Bessie's main concern was for the residents' care. She always had a prayer every morning. She would take the residents that could and wanted to go outside to work in the garden and flower beds. There were always puzzles to work on and a

quilt to quilt. I could go on and on about all the things she did, but most people know these things already.

My concern is why the picture and plaque are not in the front entrance. Dr. Robert Long had the picture taken. He and Bessie hung it in the front lobby with the instructions that it was to stay there with her plaque. There was also a plaque for administration right under it, but my concern is for the picture.

I am unable to get an answer as to when the picture might be put back up. I spent half of my life as administrator there, thirty-five and a half years, so I feel my concern is very legitimate.

If someone can prove to me that my concern is not legitimate, I will back off, but I thought it needed to be brought to the attention of the public.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Wilma Winder Norton

Picture needs to be returned

As a long time volunteer at the Andbe Home, I well remember all the efforts Bessie put forth to get a caring home opened.

Her picture that Dr. Long took has always hung in the entryway of the Andbe Home, to always remind us of a well-deserved tribute to Bessie. Let us hope we see it where it belongs, again.

Claudia Bridges Norton

Russell couple impressed with Norton

We had a couple in the store this past week from Russell. They asked the population of Norton. When we replied they said they thought Norton must be much bigger because we have such a nice downtown.

We also had someone ask what is so special about Norton that you have so much going on when other small towns are dying.

What is so special about Norton?

I think that's probably a good question for all of us to think about. We have had several new businesses open and one that moved and expanded, while other towns are experiencing closings.

I know we experienced a very helpful and resourceful economic development director, a supportive banker, county commissioners and city staff that support economic growth in our county, and a community that is showing us that they

DO want to shop in Norton.

We should all take a look at what we can do that will make Norton an even more inviting economic hub. Take your critical eye and take a suggestion from our new president and get busy doing something that will make a difference in OUR community and make Norton that much better.

Gi Mann and Cindy Boller Destination Kitchen

Your political connection

★ **Governor Kathleen Sebelius**, 300 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-3232

★ **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, Wash-

ington, 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

★ **State Rep. John Faber**, 181 W. Capitol Building, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-7500

Share your thoughts!



To... **Wally Burton**, on your appointment to the city council. Go for it all! (e-mail)

To... **Blood drive volunteers**, good luck with Wednesday's drive at the National Guard Armory. And thumbs up also to the **American Red Cross**. (e-mail)

To... **Diane Becker**, for your interesting and educational column. Your positive attitude is one of our town's pluses! (e-mail)

To... **city officials**, about time you lit up the flag! (e-mail WWII vet)

(To submit a name of names, please e-mail tom.d@nwkansas.com, call 877-3361 or 877-6908, fax 877-3732, write 215 S. Kansas Ave. 67654 or drop by the office. No charge; anniversary and birthday greetings also accepted. Thanks for your continued support. - td)

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