

### There are some things you shouldn't forget

**A**dam, "Hey dear, you forgot something in today's fruit salad. It just doesn't taste right." Eve, after giving it a quick going over, "Oh, goodness! I'm sorry. How could I have forgotten apples!"

**An e-mail from a friend** who lives in the Big Apple, and works for a firm that keeps its eyes on everything 'Wall Street,' said he, and others, was surprised that Gov. Sebelius took the Department of Health and Human Services post. Mike, a native of the Sunflower State, said, "There have been so many talented governors over the years who take these mid-level cabinet positions and are never heard from again. I think Bush's first-term appointments like this really depleted the Republican ranks.... see Tommy Thompson, Christine Todd-Whitman, Tom Ridge, etc...)"

I think Mike is on to something. I hadn't given that much thought, but after tossing it around in my head for a while, it makes sense. I think many Kansans thought the governor would position herself to make a run at the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by Senator Sam Brownback. She would have been a strong candidate and in all probability would have faced First District Congressman Jerry Moran in next year's elections.

Then again, maybe Secretary-designate Sebelius is looking toward 2012 as a possible running mate for President Obama's re-election bid. I have felt the president's selection of Sen. Joe Biden as his vice-president, would be a one-term situation. Biden's an outspoken kind of guy and I think after four years of that, President Obama might be ready for a new face at his side. Enter: Kathleen Sebelius.

**When you talk about** time flying by, think of the just completed winter sports season. Seems like just yesterday the basketball and wrestling kids were starting to gear up for their months in the spotlight. Now it's over! Where are the brakes on those machines?

**In Tuesday's story** on the relocation of Mark Keilig, President of United Northwest Federal Credit Union, Norton, an important piece of information was overlooked — his responsibilities at his new location: Mark will be senior loan officer at Pathway Bank at Cairo, Neb., near Grand Island. We wish him luck in the Cornhusker state. And of course we congratulate Denise Bailey, who will assume the presidency upon Mark's departure March 26.

**Let's see, a week ago** it was summer (temperature here in the upper 70s a day or two), this week winter with single digits (like 7 degrees). Probably the cold is more of the norm than the warm. After all this is early March and this is still the winter season. I think the fault lies in the fact we turned our clocks up one hour last weekend and we generally link that with the good days of spring. But there she is, Mother Nature, laughing up a storm as she teased us once again!

**Look who is making** a return to poli-

### Let's Chat Tom Dreiling



tics in a more public way? Newt Gingrich! The guy who turned the tables on the Democrats some years ago when the Republicans flexed their muscles and took over control of the House of Representatives, giving Newt the coveted title of Speaker of the House. I won't criticize him, because I think he could be the answer for the Republicans as they go forward. Lord knows they need it! In fact, he might be able to reign in radio talk show host Rush Limbaugh and Republican National Committee chair Michael Steele, who have their own little leadership struggle going on. Sit back, relax, enjoy the show!

**How many projects** can you think of that President Obama's stimulus package would help our community, surrounding communities and the county in general? When you are done compiling your list, then ask yourself how many of those are necessary and how many aren't. If you look closely at your list, you'll find a lot of stuff that comes under the heading, "Earmarks" or pork. Congressmen and senators are almost mandated to include projects that are really "iffy" but looked upon as "necessary" back home. Our needed projects here in Norton County would probably be called "earmarks" or pork by people in Schererville, Ind. If you are of the thinking that all earmarks should be eliminated from spending budgets, you better put on the brakes; you could be eliminating something you think is a must. And keep in mind that "earmarks" have been around as long as flies.

**The elderly priest,** speaking to the younger priest, said, "It was a good idea to replace the first four rows of pews with plush bucket theater seats. It worked like a charm. The front of the church always fills first now."

The young priest nodded, and the old priest continued, "And you told me a little more beat to the music would bring young people back to the church, so I supported you when you brought in that rock 'n roll gospel choir. We are packed to the balcony!"

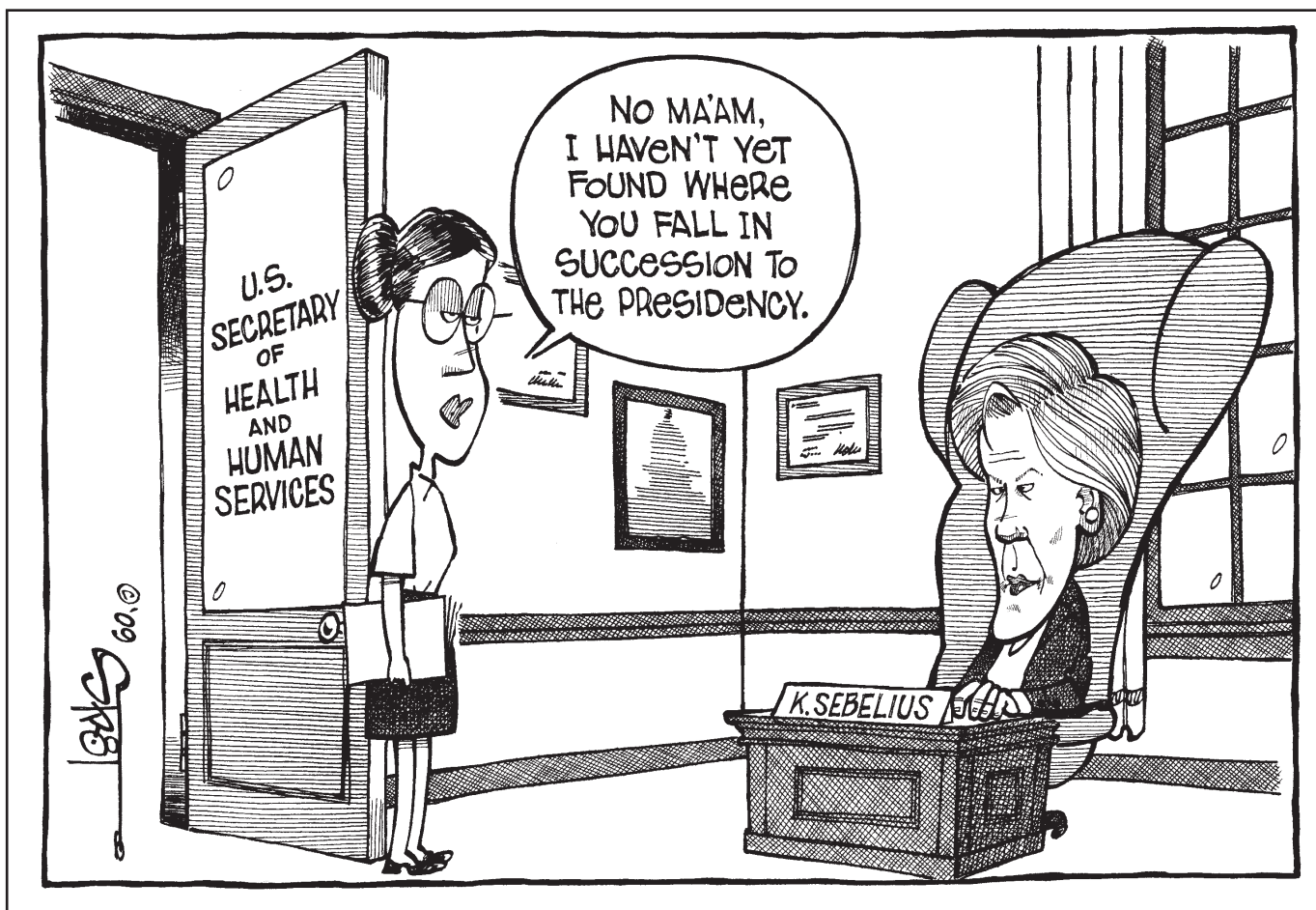
"Thank you, Father," answered the young priest. "I am pleased that you are open to the new ideas of youth."

"However," said the elderly priest, "I'm afraid you've gone too far with the drive-through confessional."

"But, Father," protested the young priest, "my confessions and the donations have nearly doubled since I began that!"

"I know, son," said the elderly priest, "but that flashing neon sign, 'Toot 'n Tell or Go to Hell,' just can't stay on the church roof."

**Have a good evening** and a good weekend! And don't forget to take your earmarks to church with you this weekend for the Lord's blessing.



### Column gets new name

Yes, you read right. I changed the name of Friday's column from "Good Evening Norton" to "Let's Chat." I also settled on the Tuesday's Snippets column to be identified as "Stop Look Listen".

The reason for the name change on the primary column on Fridays was the result of a conversation with a few friends some months ago about "Good Evening Norton." Because two of the three do not live in Norton, but live in Norton County, they said they sometimes felt like the

column was basically for Norton readers. Valid point and one I took under consideration for a few months and finally determined to change.

I guess I could have changed it to "Good Evening Norton County" but that would have exceeded the single line limitations generally accepted for a column heading.

So, I'll just simply "chat" — to whoever reads the column from wherever it is read. -td

### Some books are hard to put down

**I**am easily distracted. Monday morning, I had to drag myself away from a book about the tombstones and graves of famous and infamous men, women and lawmen of the 1800s. There is info about Calamity Jane, Wild Bill Hickok and many other lesser known pioneers.

For instance, did you know that when Buffalo Bill Cody was buried on Lookout Mountain, the governor of the state of Colorado dispatched a military tank to guard the grave?

Like I said, I had to tear myself away, but the introduction is enticing with promises of stories about pioneers, preachers, gamblers, horse thieves and women of ill repute. Maybe I'll do a book report next week.

**Boy!** Takes me back. I have always loved to read. But when I was in school, I hated giving an oral book report. While waiting my turn, my hands would be clammy; my mouth would be dry as cotton and I would break out in a cold sweat. As for listening to the reports of my classmates — forget it! I went deaf, too. Perhaps my classmates were as terrified as I was. But, at that age, all any of us could think of was ourselves and how we felt.

### Out Back Carolyn Plotts



Maturity does have its rewards. Today, public speaking doesn't frighten me. At least not if I know my subject. Give me a microphone and a chance to speak about mission trips to Mexico or prison ministry and I can wax eloquent with the best of them. I might not be so glib if I had to discuss world trade issues or global warming/cooling.

Speaking of Mexico, the trip is off! We received a call last Wednesday from the Casas por Cristo ministry in El Paso. The college group we were scheduled to escort canceled their build in Juarez. Instead, they will be working in Acuna, Mexico (a much safer area). CpC has plenty of staff there, so our services weren't needed.

We were willing, but we fully understand the concerns of the college administration for the young people in their care. Maybe the drug wars will be

settled by next year. One thing is for sure. Our children and other family members are happy. We called everyone to tell them we weren't going and they were all relieved.

Gerardo Rivera had an interesting analogy of the situation in Juarez where the drug lords and their gangs are killing each other by the dozens. He said, "It's sort of like a self-cleaning oven. Eventually, the problem will take care of itself."

We wrapped up our first week with son, James. He is appreciative of home cooking and I am doing my best to oblige him. This week's menu includes chicken-fried steaks, pork roast and burritos smothered with my green chile gravy.

He has really inspired us to stay busy on the push to finish the last three rooms. He keeps plugging away at moving "stuff" out of the way and taking down the old suspended ceilings.

He also completed wiring the upstairs and is ready to move on to ripping out the old lath and plaster. Ah, the vigor of youth. But his job search is intensifying, so we better take advantage of his enthusiasm while we can.

### Congressional belt needs tightening

**R**ecently a news program highlighted the funds used for government travel. I never balked at the cost for travel for former President Bush, either as a representative or for personal use and I don't begrudge President Obama's travel expenses. As for security costs, all sitting presidents need the best security force possible, but I do have difficulty with the travel expenses of members of Congress.

For instance, one Democrat Congressman recently served as a U.S. representative to a three day conference in England for a total cost of \$14,000. He flew first class...obviously he didn't use Expedia.com. I am not convinced of the need for congressional leaders to travel overseas on fact finding missions nor do I necessarily want some of our congress-

### Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



sional leaders representing our nation. Al Franken in Pakistan? He may turn out to be very good, but the backdrop of SNL is a difficult image to erase.

A recent 'fact finding' trip landed numerous congressional leaders and their spouses in Paris on Valentine's Day. At a time when we just passed a massive stimulus package it is hard to not see frivolous stamped all over that travel package. In today's world with

the technology available to us, it is irresponsible to not use these tools, be it conference calls, Skype, etc.

I visit with our son in Japan every day, read books to my granddaughter and can see all her expressions as I read, all for the cost of my high speed internet access. The Eiffel Tower may not be quite as breathtaking on Skype, but it certainly is a lot more satisfying to my checkbook.

If we are going to truly get a handle on our economy, a tightening of the congressional belt should be right at the top of the to do list. The economy is the responsibility of us all and it won't hurt for us to let Congress know we want some oversight of the congressional travel budget as well.

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**To... Busy Beavers 4-H Club,** for the goodies! Just what we needed and we think of you with each bite. Ummm! (Telegram staff)

(called in) **To... the Northern Valley** basketball teams, you gave it your all and we appreciate your efforts this season. (e-mail)

**To... everyone involved in agriculture,** for the tremendous job you do for the well being of all of us. (e-mail)

(To render a salute, please e-mail tom.d@nwkansas.com, fax 877-3732, call 877-3361 or 877-6908, mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave 67654 or drop by the office. Thanks for your continuing input. -td)



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