

Speaking of cheerleaders...I'd put them back into long skirts

To cheer or not to cheer is the debate in a neighboring town. The school board has decided to cancel the high school cheerleading squad for next year due to a lack of interest and because of some undisclosed issues.

The superintendent of schools wrote a "Letter to the Editor" explaining the Board of Education's position and the mother of a young girl who has dreamed of being a high school cheerleader wrote a letter, too. Both sounded disappointed.

Back when I was in school, there were no sports for girls. Cheerleading was as close to athletics as a girl could get. Then Title 9 took effect and, suddenly, girls had as many chances to benefit from all the advantages of sports as boys did. Advantages like learning good sportsmanship, earning scholarships and learning about team effort.

I'm not sure how this school chooses its cheerleaders. In some schools a panel of teachers make the choice. In other schools the stu-

Out Back Carolyn Plotts



dent body decides, which makes it more of a popularity contest.

Surely, there could be an equitable answer to the problem. Perhaps limit the number of cheerleaders to a more manageable number like six or eight; assign a teacher (not a parent) to be the group's sponsor; insist that at least a "C" average, in all classes, be maintained; not sending cheerleaders to every single sporting event; and that a cheerleader's behavior must represent, at all times, the best of what the school stands for.

It's a tough call. One I'm not prepared to make. Besides, no one would want me for a cheerleading sponsor. The first thing I would do is put those girls back into long skirts.

-ob-
Sunday, a little girl stayed home from church because she wasn't feeling well. She asked her mother, "Does God have the day off?" Her mother answered, "God works every day." Puzzled, the little girl said, "I thought God rested on the seventh day."

Funny how child-like faith cuts right to the heart of the issue.

-ob-
Our Bible study group is getting into a deep topic: Heaven. We might need a child's perspective. Everyone has their own ideas about what it will be like, who will be there, who won't be there and most importantly how do we get there.

We're finding that a lot of our ideas are preconceived notions we're carrying over from childhood. Or ideas planted from books we have read. At any rate, it's going to be an interesting study.

-ob-
I met my first midwife this weekend.

Now, that I'm "retired", I get to pick and choose stories that I

want to write. When I was given the choice between midwives in western Kansas or something about hospitals, I jumped at the opportunity.

Birth babies is fascinating to almost everyone. Especially, to those of us who have had babies. Everyone's birth experience is

unique.
I had talked to midwife Sara Sowers on the phone and got to meet her in person at the home of one of her patients. The two women have their "professional" relationship as well as a personal one. While Sara, the midwife, conducted the monthly exam of the mother-to-be, their families

were visiting upstairs, preparing to share a meal together. Children wandered in and out, comfortable in their own home, seeing what Mommy and Sara were doing and listening to their potential brother or sister's heartbeat. It was a very cool experience.

Almost makes me want to have another baby. Almost.

When in doubt revert to common sense

Between emails and TV, people live in a world of fear and trepidation. It makes me wonder how we survived all those years without the computer or television telling us of potential dangers. I can tell you how, number one, we relied on common sense. I sometimes wonder if we even remember what that is. It is a trait so rare anymore that it has to be almost extinct.

Recently I was warned of the electrocution danger from my "charging" cell phone, on top of the other warnings of exploding batteries and brain tumors. Now that is not to say bad things can't happen with cell phones, but snopes.com offers wonderful information about the things to avoid. The electrocution threat is probably just that, a threat. The occurrence, if true at all, probably took place in countries with poorly developed systems. The exploding batteries may happen when one tries to use unauthorized batteries and as for the brain tumor, well, the jury is out. So what should you do, use

Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



your land line when available and don't spend hours on the phone, any kind...a common sense suggestion.

Then there is the television ad for how to handle your out of control sixteen year old. The obvious suggestion is probably sixteen years plus nine months too late, but in place of that a parent might try 'just say no'. If parents learn to use it, perhaps children would too. Recently a friend told a story about a mom who said she could never say no to her child, it wouldn't be right. Don't get me started on that one. Unfortunately waiting until a child is 16 to regain your life, may be too late.

The ad about someone breaking into your home complete with

alarms to scare off the burglar raises some interesting questions. It features an attempted break-in, sound and all, followed by a call from the security company asking if there is a problem. The potential victim acknowledges the danger and the company informs her they will notify the police. It seems to me if I have a security system I don't want them to call and confirm I have a problem, I want them to report it. In the length of time it took me to answer their call to ask if there was a problem, I could have dialed 911. See what I mean about common sense?

There is no doubt television and email offer a fast way to transfer information, but listeners and readers, BEWARE. Not everything that comes across the email is true, nor are all ads valid. It is important for all parties to attempt to send legitimate information and/or evaluate the latest product. Not many ads or emails for common sense exist so we better draw upon our own reserves.

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Got something on your mind? Share it with a 'Letter to the Editor'

Economic Development board

(Continued from Page 1)
the request form to allow for more information.

The board also approved the recommendation from the downtown development committee of the board for 15 of 18 projects from businesses who applied for the storefront renewal project. The total cost was \$12,250.

The projects were approved with Curtis Eveleigh abstaining.

The group will be meeting with two other businesses about their applications. The 2009 strategic plan was approved that was presented at the last meeting. The board was asked to work on ideas for the next five or ten year strategic plan. The original plan expires next year.

The resolution for non-discrimination for the economic development was approved. The board

also expressed their appreciation to Elaine Mann who did not run for re-election to the city council and will no longer be a board member representing that group.

The next meeting of the Norton City/County Economic Development board will be May 12 at 5:30 in the economic development office at 113 North Norton Street. The meeting is open to the public. - Contributed by Deena Wentz

Northern Valley board

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superintendent and high school principal George Griffith.

In other school board business:

• The board accepted the audit report as presented.

• Mr. Wetter reported on the contest results for both high school and junior high and upcoming concerts and contests.

• Chuck Fessenden, high school math teacher and football coach, showed the board the new football uniforms that were purchased for the 2009-2010 school year.

• The board renewed membership in the Kansas Association of School Boards and approved the payment of the yearly fee.

• After discussion, the board decided to delay the gym floor

replacement until next year due to unexpected roof repairs and boiler replacement.

• Two nominations were received for the Wall of Fame. The board determined that one of the names does not qualify because much of the time served was before unification.

• Chris Robertson, Northern Valley Elementary principal, reported on state assessment testing and scores; requested \$500 transfer from the district general fund to the junior high athletic fund to help pay for expenses such as referees for games and medals for the students.

• Board President Gale Hays volunteered to hand out diplomas at the eighth grade graduation ceremony.

• The board thanked the First National Bank and Trust for donating \$1,000 for playground equipment in Long Island; and Ken Tharman for a job well-done hosting the Northern Valley Forensics meet and everyone who helped with the event.

• President Hays gave a "thumbs up" for a successful blood drive and thanked the 4-H club for providing canteen food for the event.

• Board member Glenn Brands urged the board to reduce paper usage by 20 percent.

The board discussed what could be omitted from the agenda packets sent to each board member.

There was no further business and the meeting was then adjourned.

Site council

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last month.

All three schools have openings in their site councils:

• High school — two parents, one community and one certified

staff member.

• Junior high — two parents, two certified staff and one business member.

• Eisenhower Elementary — three parents and two certified

staff members.

Mr. Perez, Mr. Wallingford, and Mr. Roy said anyone interested in being on the schools' site councils, should contact them, either by phone call or letter, by May 1.

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