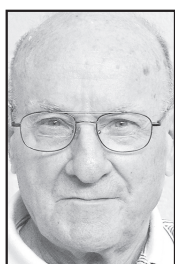


In a way, this wrong answer was right

The teacher had prepared, she thought, her third graders well for a test on all 50 states. She told them what each was known for, the capitals, who the governors are and on and on. Test day arrived. She handed out the tests face down on each desk and cautioned the students not to peek. When all tests were placed, she told them to turn them over. To their surprise, each test contained only one question and the students were told that no two tests were the same. She looked the class over, glanced at her watch, and told them to write down their answer directly below their question. As the kids pondered their particular question, the teacher decided to roam around the classroom and peek over their shoulders. Her facial expressions varied, but pretty much indicated things were going well. But midway through her trip around the classroom, she glanced at one youngster's test sheet that carried the question, "What state is directly east of Louisiana?" Jotted down beneath the question was this answer, "Mrs. Sippi."

Let's Chat
Tom Dreiling



How can an answer be so right, yet so wrong?
Well, here we go again. Those goofy emails cautioning us not to accept those new gold dollar coins because they do not contain the words "In God We Trust." If you are of the crowd offended because those words are not, to your knowledge, on those coins, let me have 'em, no problem. I'll take all I can get.

You then might want to check out this website: <http://www.snopes.com/politics/religion/dollarcoin.asp>
You will be surprised to learn, and to see, "In God We Trust" is on those gold coins. There is also a wealth of information provided. Then after you check out the site, you may want to send emails back to all those people you forwarded the original email to, and tell them that President Obama did not order God's name to be removed, as some emails contend. Nobody removed the nation's slogan, it's just the work of some idle minds who love bathing in controversial waters. And because this is a family oriented newspaper, I can't give you my description of *controversial waters*.

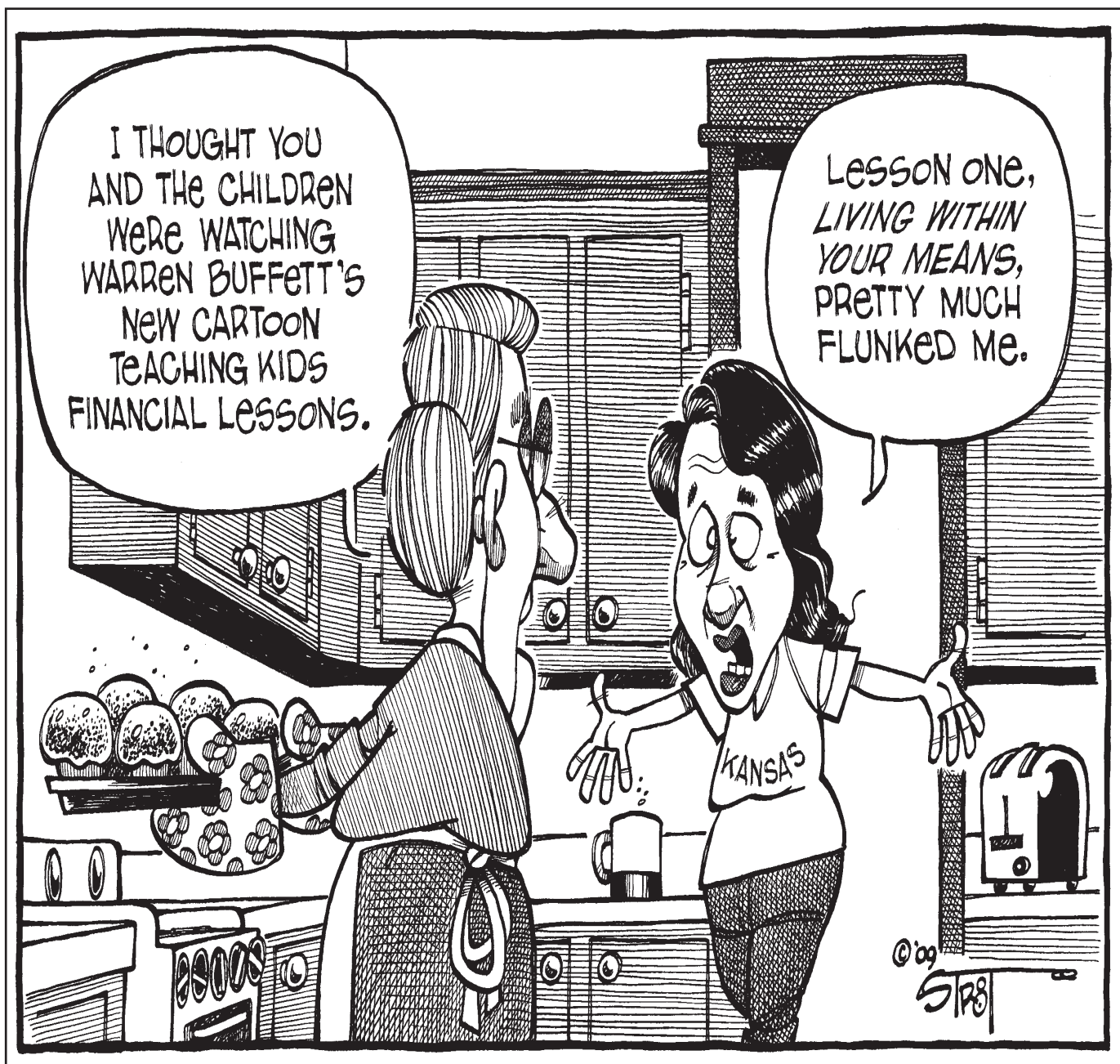
I saw a picture on page 5 of Tuesday's The Hays Daily News showing the varsity cheerleaders for the upcoming school year at Hays High School. The way the cheerleaders were positioned made it difficult to get an actual count, but I estimate there were around 30 in the photo. Wow, I wonder if that number impacts their school budget? I bring this up because I saw a TV report where some school districts are adopting a "pay as you play" system whereby parents need to shell out for their kids' participation in sports. They will also need to pay for some supplies that in the past were budgeted items. Or how about a family attendance fee? It's tough when the budget just can't absorb everything. I always feel for boards and administrators when budget time rolls around. That's when board members really earn that "no pay included" public position.

It's really too early to grade Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's job performance. But in so doing anyway, I came up with a "C". As I look back on Condi Rice's years in this position, I think Hillary has a long way to go. But then again, it's early, only seven months into the Obama administration. Too, maybe the president is barging in on her territory with his visits around the globe. There's something there I can't explain because the spark and enthusiasm Secretary Clinton displayed in her run for the White House just doesn't seem to be there. Or has the media focus on the president left Hillary standing out in the cold at the station?

We are just one week away from the first day (half day) of school. Yep, next Friday, the 21st, students in the Norton School District will get a taste of the new year with a half day session. Summer sure went fast again! And with the kids in the classroom, moms will be able to breathe a little easier knowing they are in caring hands.

I've been getting a chuckle watching the news clips showing the questionable behavior at some of the so-called town hall meetings as they relate to health care. I chuckle because some of the disrupters claim they are only exercising their right to free speech. Right they are, but free speech is a two-way street. And nothing ever gets done at a shouting match. I always say if you don't like what your representatives are doing then run for office!

Have a good evening! And as you attend the church of your choice this weekend, keep in mind that your minister isn't there under a "no pay included" policy. Be generous.



Hillary should have injected humor

Hillary Clinton didn't do women any favor this week with her snippy attitude. Her response when asked what her husband thought about China was embarrassing. Even more so when it was discovered it was actually a translation error which was supposed to have referred to President Obama instead of hubby Bill. This could have easily been averted with a little humor. Nevertheless it happened, but it is unfortunate.
Hillary Clinton was an accomplished traveler, unofficial ambassador and former senator prior to becoming Secretary of State. Does she have a ghost of Christmas past? Maybe. The same question with any other man's name might not have produced such a response, but when she felt she was being viewed as the voice of her husband, that went over the line.

Phase II
Mary Kay Woodyard



As one of only a handful (as compared to men) of women in leadership roles, her recent outburst served only to reinforce those who believe women shouldn't be in these positions. To be sure, men have these same outbursts, but as women are trying to emerge into roles where we display confidence and self-control she did little to help the cause. As with a minority trying to claim a place in society, we, as women, although not a minority, have to

work doubly hard.
Unfortunately, other women who have been in the political news of late haven't been exactly stellar either. Sarah Palin appears jealous and whiney. Nancy Pelosi is overbearing and, well, you know.
Despite my disappointment in Hillary Clinton, this was one instance and certainly not reflective of her entire career. As my husband says, life is a little like water sking; you're not going to be up all the time. It takes a life time of experiences to truly define one's value to society.
I am betting there isn't a single public servant, male or female, who hasn't looked back and said, "What was I thinking?" Actually don't we all ask that of ourselves from time to time or if we don't, we'd better start.
(mkwoodyard@ruraltel.net)

A prescription for health care reform

This month, I am spending time hearing from Kansans about their most pressing concerns. My guess is that I will hear an awful lot about health care. Given the complexity of the legislation and the impact it will have on families, patients, business owners, and providers, I am relieved that House Democratic leadership did not rush a vote on a bill prior to recess. Now, members of Congress will have an extended opportunity to visit face-to-face with their constituents about this important issue. While far from a complete list, here are several of my ideas for a common-sense Prescription for Health Care Reform.
• Emphasize Wellness and Disease Prevention — We need to start placing as much emphasis on wellness as we do on illness. Promotion of wellness, fitness, and diet help us lead healthier lives and greatly reduce health care costs. Prevention and wellness are promoted by giving employers and insurers flexibility to reward individuals who improve their health and manage disease. Encouraging medical students to become primary care physicians, who are essential to coordinating care among specialists and managing patient treatment, will help

Capitol Views

Rep. Jerry Moran



as well.
• Make Health Care Services Accessible to Every American — We need to provide incentives to low-income families to retain or purchase private health insurance that best meets their needs. This is accomplished by extending tax savings to those who purchase coverage. To assist low-income Americans, we can support community health centers and offer tax credits to obtain insurance. Also, it is important to provide financial help to caregivers who provide in-home care for family members.
• Medical Liability Reform — We must reform our medical liability system and reduce frivolous lawsuits that lead to inflated insurance premiums and the practice of "defensive medicine" where doctors order every possible test for fear of being sued. Defensive medicine costs

us between \$70-124 billion per year, which equates to over 10 percent of all our health care expenditures.
• Implement Health Information Technology — We need to upgrade our outdated health records system through the use of new technology, which will streamline costs, reduce medical errors, and eliminate redundant medical tests.
• Incentive Health Care Savings — We need to empower individuals to save now for future and long-term care needs by utilizing health savings accounts and other incentive plans. These plans enable people to take ownership of their health.
• Address the Medical Workforce Shortage — We must educate and train more medical professionals and encourage these providers, through scholarship and loan repayment programs, to practice in underserved areas.
Health care reform must make quality coverage more affordable and more accessible for Americans and allow those who like their current health care coverage to keep it. I support common-sense reform that puts patients first and protects the doctor-patient relationship. I look forward to continuing this discussion with Kansans this August.

To... golfing buddy Ruth Burd, for getting a hole in one! Way to go! (brought in)

To... all of our wonderful teachers, both old and new, good luck with the new school year. (email)

To... our good neighbor, for keeping watch over our lawn and garden in our absence. Everything looks great! (called in)

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



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