

### Everybody's talking about new school year

The smiles were wide! The giggles were many! The chatter was... well, chatter! Finally, it happened. The boredom of summer ended. School started. Friendships, that many times are on hold during the summer vacation period, were renewed. All's well with life! Yes, the Norton School District began the 2009-10 school year this morning. Although the first day was just a half-day session, it served its purpose. Now, when Monday arrives, the students and the teachers can get on with the program.

Let's Chat  
Tom Dreiling



The start of the new school year reminds me of my niece Kathy when she was just entering school and after the first day her parents asked her at the dinner table how school went today, and she said, "It was OK, but how long does this go on now?"

The beginning of a new school year also plays big in the community, even with those of us who no longer have kids in school. You can feel the air of excitement. It's the topic of conversation in the grocery store, at the coffee counters, on the street, at the post office. I guess the reason being because those of us without children in school, recall the way our children accepted the new school year. Not much changes. Most kids get the itchy back-to-school feeling as July ends and August begins. And then just like that, it's here!

And again, it's here — today!

I dropped by the practice field the other afternoon just to get the feel of football season. It was apparent those kids on that field were anxious to finally get things rolling. I smiled when looking over the younger players, potential and otherwise, glancing around to see who's there and who isn't. And what it's all about. The coaches, it goes without saying, have been waiting for this moment since the season ended last fall. Go Blue Jays!

Of course the excitement is shared by the other fall sports programs — namely volleyball, cross country and tennis. These athletes also practice hard, dream of top-notch achievement and anxiously await the first encounter. The time is now!

And sometimes overlooked as an important part of the fall sports season, especially as football goes, is the Blue Jay band! They are tuning up, working hard, memorizing music, going through drills — doing all those things that make this community proud.

It goes without saying that the Northern Valley Huskies and the Logan Trojans are also looking at the fall 2009 sports seasons with great anticipation, expectation and of course anxiety.

I first saw Tiger Woods when he was 3 years old as a guest on the Johnny Carson show. His skills at that age with a golf club were unbelievable, if memory serves me correctly. Three years old and doing that? What is in store for this kid!

Tiger Woods, it turns out, gave golf a new look and also a tremendous boost, something it badly needed. Crowds began showing up at tournaments in which he played. Television viewership went through the roof. And it continues to this day.

There are times, more notable in the last couple of years, that Tiger Woods — to me anyway — just doesn't always seem like Tiger Woods. I listen closely to the television analysts for answers when his day might have been less than expected, but their take and mine differ greatly. To me there is a simple explanation. Tiger Woods had just himself and the game of golf to be concerned with in the past. His focus on the game was top priority. Period!

Now, when Tiger Woods steps onto the course, he also brings the responsibilities of husband and dad along. While he is undoubtedly focused, there are those 'other' matters that can, and probably do enter his mind. I doubt he can put everything on hold and concentrate solely on the challenge the course offers.

He is human, you know.

Blowing a lead in the closing holes of the tourney last weekend, thanks to some putting that was uncharacteristic of Tiger, he lost by 3 strokes to Y.E. Yang. Y.E. who? Yang! Y.E. Yang! Yep, a South Korean golfer who was ranked, I believe the reports were, no. 110 on the golfing chart.

It was a stunning upset. Hard to understand how Tiger could have lost it. He was on the way to another Tiger triumph! I think we were all putting our loose change in Tiger's cup because he was winning another one!

A husband and a dad. What family thing might have entered his mind for just a split second to take his focus off the shot at hand?

In Tiger's case, it's more than just a bag of clubs he's bringing into the game now.

Life changes when you go from solo to co-pilot status, then add 'passengers' to the mix!

When was the last time you can recall a summer that had so much rain attached to it? Unbelievable! Truly, we can chant, "The drought's out!"

Have a good evening! And if you are one of those people praying for rain, I think your prayers have been answered.



### It's not about euthanasia or death panels

All of this talk about death panel and forced end of life counseling has prompted me to reflect on a few things. Several years ago my nephew, Ward Foley, encouraged me to take Hospice training. It was the most fulfilling and rewarding thing I have probably ever done. The main theme of the first night was "to live until you die". I pondered this throughout the training and when the sessions were over, I was a believer in Hospice. Although I am not an active volunteer I have over the years continued to marvel at the dedication of the volunteers and the devotion of those involved in various aspects of its operation.

Isn't it amazing we encourage, almost demand, prenatal care and justifiably so, the end result is a healthy mom and baby. But death isn't so different than birth; it is just that we are on this side of the experience rather than on the "other side". Both are journeys, not events. Both are enriched through knowledge and a sense of control or rather relinquishing of it. Studies have shown those who receive

Phase II  
Mary Kay  
Woodyard



rather it is going to encourage discussion about how we want to live as well as how we want to die, in the same manner that Hospice does. Discussions on outcome are an important part of acceptance, whether that outcome is death or life in a coma. One thing we cannot forget, all of us are terminal. Many of us have living wills, or do not resuscitate orders. This is all part of end of life counseling. We either talked with our doctors, our lawyers or our families, or best with all of these to come to a good death. It helps not only us, but our families as well.

Medicare payment of end of life counseling visits, is likely less costly than one which doesn't carry out the patient's wishes. Health care reform will give us all options. If we have cancer, how much treatment do we want? If we suffer from a painful, debilitating disease to what extreme are we willing to go? It isn't about euthanasia or a death panel.

\* [http://www.msncbc.msn.com/id/32463644/ns/health-health\\_care](http://www.msncbc.msn.com/id/32463644/ns/health-health_care)  
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end of life counseling are more at peace, consider their life in a more positive light and, oddly enough, live longer.\*

I don't represent Hospice and I certainly am not the voice of this wonderful group, but what I am is a believer in each life being offered the best death possible. Death can be a frightening thought and each of us approaches it in our own unique way. Most of us would agree one of our greatest fears is that we will suffer. One of the biggest attributes of Hospice for me is the way they are able to control pain until the end. What a wonderful gift to give a dying patient and his/her family.

The proposed health care reform is not going to kill the disabled or elderly,

### Guess what I found in my home?

At Home  
With June  
June Prout

This last week, I found out that I have a personal secretary who will listen and take dictation. This secretary is in my home 24/7 and for the most part is invisible. This secretary, it turns out it is my computer. I have just discovered this function on my computer and I am exploring and having some fun with it.

The computer has Word 2002 and I did not realize that it had this speech program on it. Once I found out about it I grabbed a headset microphone and began to explore. You have to train the program to recognize words and the way you pronounce them. This is done through a training program that is in the computer where you read excerpts from books, thereby teaching the program to recognize your voice and your pronunciations. When the program does not understand the word it will try to come up with something that sounds similar. And it can come up with some really strange stuff.

Not only is the computer learning from you but you are also learning from it. For example, if you do not speak the word clearly it will misinterpret it into something else. I am realizing that I may not always speak as clearly as I think I am. Even though we think we're speaking clearly we tend to mumble or slur our words. Just how many misunderstandings come about by simply not speaking clearly?

Unfortunately, most of us, when we don't quite understand what the other person has said, do not wish to ask for a repeat for fear that person will think we

haven't paid attention. Fortunately, the computer is more forgiving and you can repeat the word until it understands. After dealing with this program for the last few days, I think perhaps it might be better if we do ask another person to repeat what they said, so we can clearly understand it. Since I am using this program to dictate this letter, I will not speak quite as clearly and see what it comes up with:

I say I would like to derive from. What I actually said in that sentence was, "Nice day; I would like to take a drive somewhere."

For the most part the machine does pretty well and is certainly faster than I am in typing. So I think for now I will hire this "secretary" and keep it around for awhile. It's a good thing I don't have to pay it wages, benefits, sick leave and vacations or I would not be able to afford it.

(June Prout is a Norton resident)

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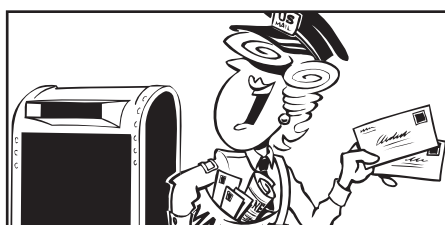
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I think maybe you (Publisher Tom) and Haynes (Owner Steve) were a little tough on the people concerning government health care.

Its the arrogant hate-God, hate-Bush, hate-America Democrat Socialists trying to shove big government down our throats that deserve the criticism.

Thanks.

R.W. Yeager  
Norton

To... the area businesses, who donated items for the new Norton School District teacher gift bags! What a welcome! Thanks sooo much! (email)

To... Tony and Verla Grysch, owners of Downtown Car Wash, for their generous donation of the car wash and funds to the Norton WKFL football teams fundraiser. (brought in)

To... Don Mordecai and all the sponsors of the Disc Golf Tournament held in Norton. This brought lots of tourism dollars to the city. (called in)

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

