

Health care reform needs a truth squad

President Obama's invasion of the Sunday morning television talk show circuit was, in our estimation, too much President Obama. No argument that he is a good salesman, but Sunday's approach was akin to shoving things down one's throat.

They said he appeared on five shows, excluding FOX News. That doesn't make any sense whatsoever. In fact, if he had to pick a network to appear on, it should have been FOX. After all, that network's leanings aren't tied to the Democratic Party's extreme left wing. And wouldn't that be the crowd the president would want to push his product to?

We didn't see the president Sunday morning. There were other responsibilities. His pitch was probably much like the one he gave a week ago to a joint session of Congress. And at all the other town hall-type appearances. Enough already?

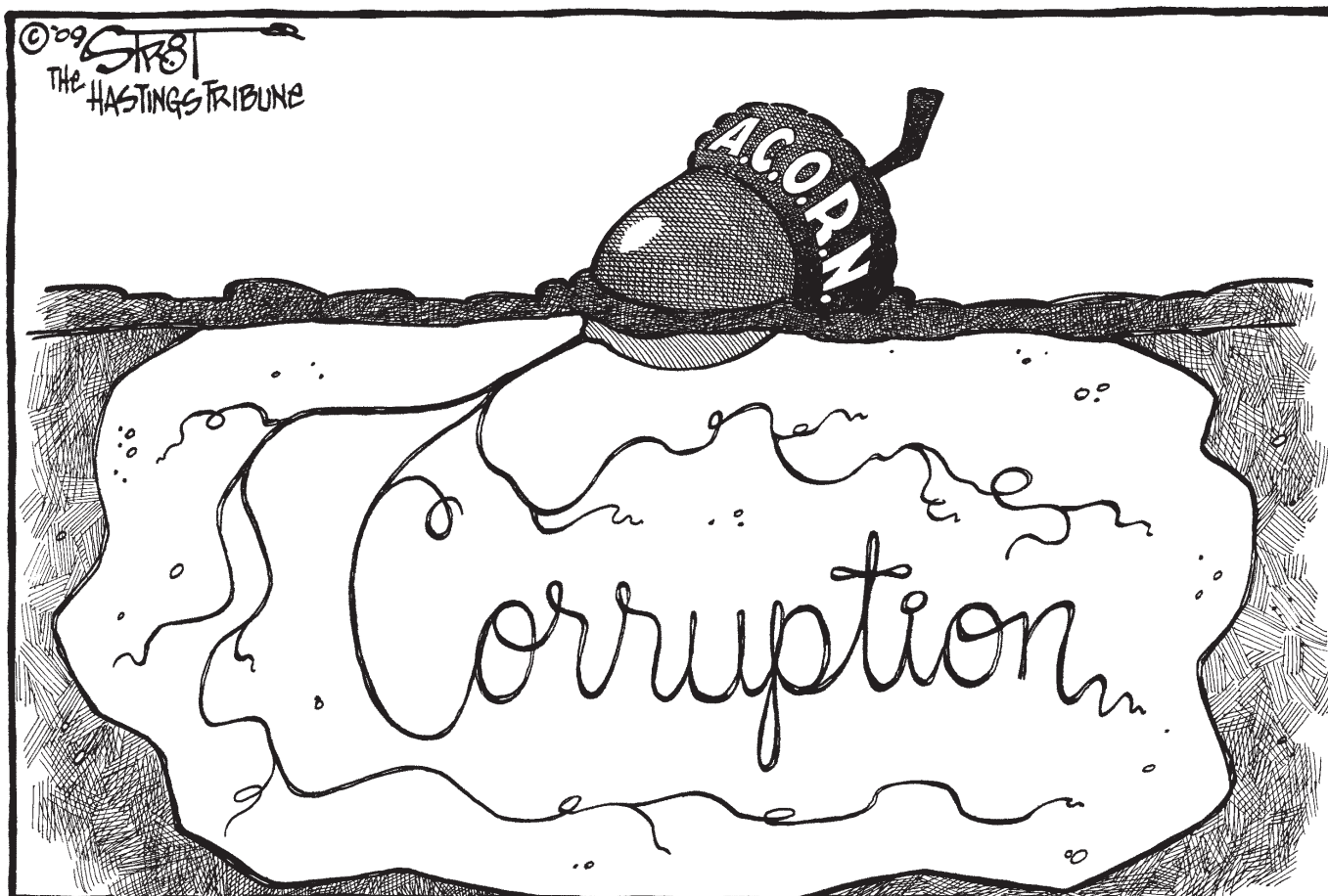
Reports Monday seemed to indicate there just might be some general agreement between the opposing forces to chisel out a compromised health care reform plan. The thing that has most Americans puzzled, we think, is his insistence that it isn't going to cost us anything. Washington, D.C.? Cost-free? Come on!

In addition to the president popping up here and there in his quest to have a health care reform bill on his desk before year's end, the first lady has packed her suitcase and is off to the races in support of his effort. Hint: the last time a first lady nose dived into a health care reform campaign, it turned out to be a bummer. That first lady is now Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

So, the sell job goes on. The line in the sand isn't quite as pronounced today as it was just a week ago. And Americans, for the most part, want some kind of reform, but settling on something is almost next to impossible as both sides exaggerate beyond belief.

What's needed more than anything is a truth squad.

-Tom Dreiling



NOTICE

Columnists, letter writers and others who frequently appear on The Norton Telegram's Opinion Page, are asked to begin sending their submissions to ebradley@nwkansas.com. This also holds true for the popular Thumbs Up column. Anyone having questions relative to Opinion Page copy, can email Ms. Bradley or call her at (785) 877-3361.

Retreat brings fun but is painful

My friend, Barbara, stopped in this morning to see if I had any extra eggs. As I hobbled to the kitchen she said, "What happened to you?"

My answer, "I spent the last two nights sleeping on a bunk bed with a two-inch mattress. That's what."

This was my annual women's retreat weekend and I always pay for it for a few days afterward.

But, just like having a baby, you forget about the pain and are willing to try it again. So, in a couple of days my back will feel better and next September, I'll be ready to sign up again.

We have more fun than should legally be allowed. We stay up way too late, play games, laugh and eat. But, we also hear a wonderful speaker, make new friends, spend quality time with old friends and attend interesting workshops.

I attended one workshop on simplifying our lives, i.e., decluttering, prioritizing and evaluating. The class leader said to ask ourselves three questions about our "stuff."

Do we need it, use it or love it. If we answer "yes" to any one of those, we may keep the item. If the answer is "no" then it should go.

I tried to find some "wiggle room" and asked her what the verdict would be if "we might" use it. Her answer was, "If you haven't used it in two years you aren't going to." A lot of my things have exceeded the statute of limitations

Out Back

Carolyn Plotts



by about ten years, so I need to start making some decisions. If I don't my kids will.

The other workshop was on marriage. We played a game of "Clue" to find the culprit that "killed the marriage."

As it turned out the guilty parties are criticism, stonewalling, defensiveness and contempt. I know I've been guilty of these "crimes" on occasion.

The final phase of the workshop was to list our husband's good qualities and describe about him what was: noble, true, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy.

I haven't shared my answers with Jim, yet, but it's probably something he needs to see.

One admonition I received from the "girls" who went to retreat with me was, "None of this better get in the paper."

Okay. What happened at camp stays at camp."

-ob-

Did you hear about the wife who asked her husband, "What's on TV?"

He answered, "Dust."

Recovery brings challenges, spirituality

When I think about spiritual experience I always come back to the quiet, unnoticeable process of my experiences.

Somewhere along the way, a piece of truth is dropped into my heart and burrows down deep to the core of my being where it begins to grow. I don't notice it at first but after some time it becomes obvious that something is happening.

My usual sense of serenity begins to become strained and I try desperately to hold on to that feeling — even after almost 14 years clean. I know the process well, I know that things will continue to become more uncomfortable, almost painful before the hint of truth can grow strong enough to overtake the lies my disease has been telling me for all these years. I find myself becoming edgy, busy, trying to "make" things "right".

I feel disconnected from my family, friends, the Universe! The pain in my chest becomes almost unbearable, like I am thrown back into the unending loneliness of my disease with no way out.

That is the time I need to continue

Where There's Hope

Carla Moore

the path more than ever, trusting the process to take care of me, even if the future looks dim.

Each time I have waited (sometimes patiently, sometimes not) for the experience to pass. I have not been let down. It does pass and when it does it's like the world is wholly new and I am connected in a way that defies understanding.

The words to describe it don't exist. I feel an overwhelming sense of compassion for others around me and I see them as I believe my Higher Power does. I find my patience seems almost limitless and my energy level raises. I find myself reaching out to others because I have a sense of worth and destiny and a need to be a part of the solution rather than the problem. It's a wonderful place. And then a small piece of truth is dropped into my heart

and the process begins again.

So, is the spiritual experience, the awakening, that feeling of connection? Yes. But it is also the uncomfortable time; the time that I don't feel I have a place.

What I have come to realize is the uncomfortable part of the cycle is necessary for me to grow. It forces me to look within myself and get rid of what doesn't fit with my new life — attitudes, memories, resentments, my way of interacting with those around me.

I become more of who I was meant to be and have an opportunity today to walk with others on the path AND WANT TO.

That's one of the biggest changes recovery has brought into my life. Spiritual experience for me is the full spectrum of being human — the good and the bad.

I'm having a spiritual experience each time I take a breath and sometimes that's a good place to start.

(If you have any questions or comments, you can contact me at cmoore@valleyhope.com. Namaste - Carla.)

Let's talk about weather

For the first time this week a touch of fall filled the early morning air. All the signs are here: overnight lows dipping into the 40s; cool, brisk winds blowing from the north; long-sleeved shirts or light jackets for the early morning hours; and a longing for something warm to drink to ward off a chill.

With the coming of fall and approach of winter it's fun to recall some of the time-tested weather sayings. Most folks have heard some of these once or twice in their lifetime.

And, if we're from a rural or agricultural background, chances are we've used some of them ourselves. We may even use them today — I know I do.

Many of the following weather signs were collected while talking to farmers and ranchers across the state. It seems there is very little people would rather talk about than the weather.

So let's talk weather. During the winter season, strong northerly winds indicate snow and sometimes a blizzard within 24 hours. Southerly winds are a sign of dry, warmer weather.

When cattle stand in a line with their backs toward the northwest, you can figure on a heavy, driving snow.

Insight

John Schlageck

Dense fog at dawn is a sign of clearing skies by mid-morning.

The absence of birds around water denotes an approaching storm.

White fluffy small clouds are a sign of fair weather ahead.

Odors become easier to detect just before rain. High pressure usually traps odors like a lid due to air density, while lowering pressure releases odors.

When you see lightning in the north, rain is likely within 24 hours.

When distant sounds appear louder, rain is usually on the way.

Rising smoke is a fair weather sign. When you see smoke going downward or showing very little rise, rain is likely.

Birds perch more before a storm because the low barometric pressure makes it more difficult for them to fly. When you see hawks circling high in the sky, this is a fair weather sign.

When frogs begin to croak, look out for rain.

Hens and other barnyard fowl pick at themselves — oiling their feathers — just

before a rain.

Lots of dead skunks on the road mean plenty of moisture is on the way. Another good sign of approaching wet weather is the aggravation of corns, bunions or arthritis pains.

These signs are surprisingly accurate because they are based on generations of farmers, ranchers and other people who have observed cyclical changes in the weather.

Today, meteorologists watch weather patterns via satellites. Much of what these satellites detect while orbiting the earth hundreds of miles overhead, we can see by watching television, dialing up on our computer or listening to the radio.

There is plenty to be said for the folk wisdom of our ancestors. They watched and charted weather patterns for generations rather than just a few hours or days. It's fun to hear their conclusions handed down from one generation to the next, and anyway, what would we have to talk about if not for the weather?

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THE NORTON TELEGRAM

ISSN 1063-701X

215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, KS 67654

Published each Tuesday and Friday by Haynes Publishing Co., 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, Kan. 67654. Periodicals mail postage paid at Norton, Kan. 67654.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Norton Telegram, 215 S. Kansas, Norton, Kan. 67654

Official newspaper of Norton and Norton County. Member of the Kansas Press Association, National Newspaper Association, and the Nebraska Press Association

Nor'West Newspapers

Dick and Mary Beth Boyd
Publishers, 1970-2002

Incorporating the Norton County Champion
Marion R. Krehbiel, editor

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