

### Workplace stress cited as a concern for workers

Workplace stress is often listed by Americans as the number one stressor in their lives, as the recent altercation between a Washington Post editor and writer shows.

According to Washingtonian.com, a fight broke out Friday between veteran feature editor Henry Allen and feature writer Manuel Roig-Franzia.

The fight seemed to be about an article written by Roig-Franzia and another writer with Allen calling the article one of the worst he's seen in 43 years.

The incident shows how workplace stress can cause employees to go overboard.

According to the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, one-fourth of employees view their jobs as the number one cause of their stress and problems at work have been closely associated with many health problems.

The center defined job stress as "harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources or needs of the worker. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury."

There are numerous causes of workplace stress. A job may be too demanding physically or emotionally. Stress factors include designation of tasks, management style, interpersonal relationships, work roles, career concerns and environmental conditions.

Many people list interpersonal relationships as a cause of stress, including relationships between coworkers.

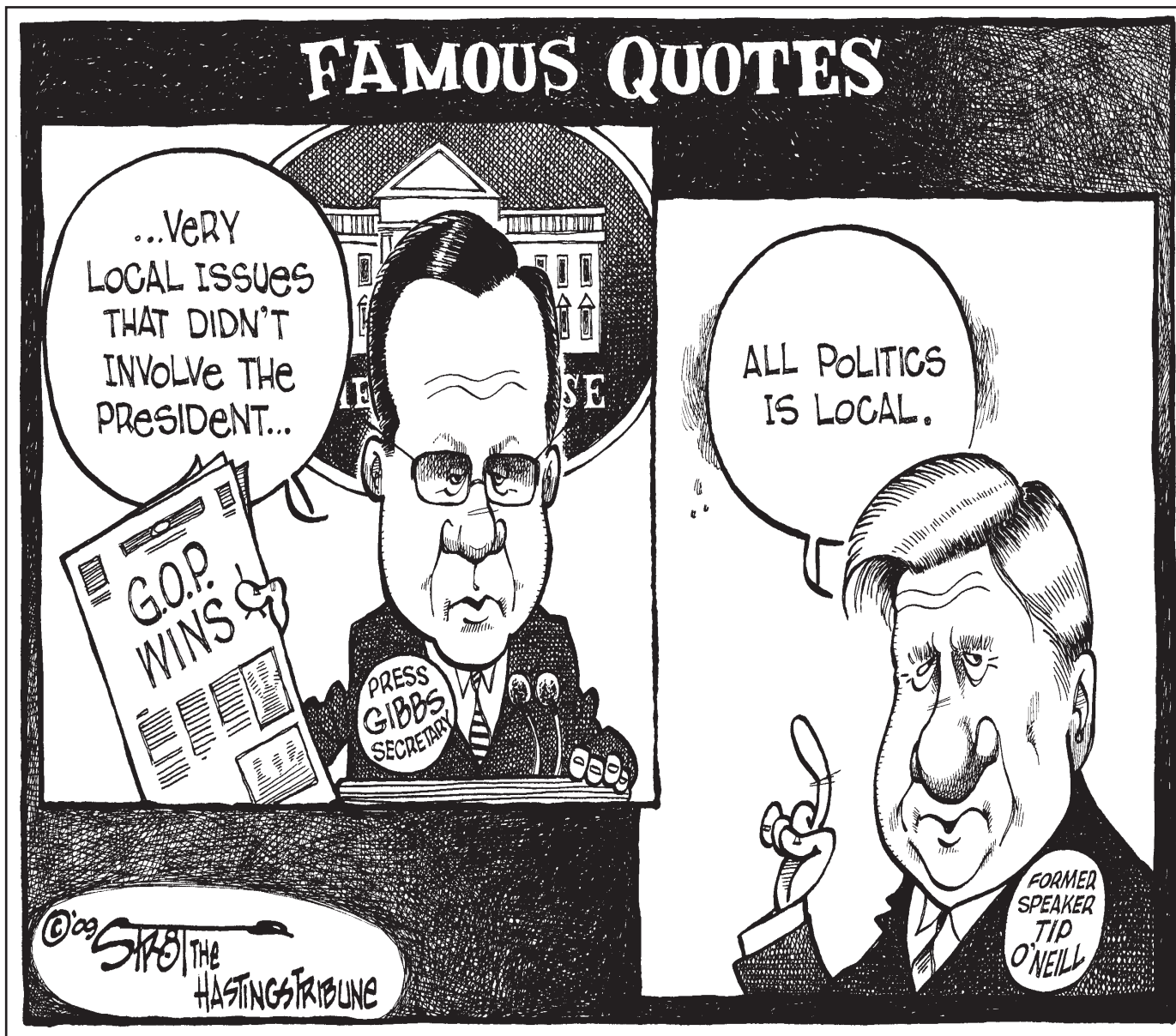
A 2000 Integra Survey found 10 percent of respondents said they work in an atmosphere where physical violence has occurred due to stress in the workplace. Of the people surveyed in this particular group, 42 percent said yelling and other verbal abuse is commonplace.

The University of Pittsburgh Medical Center estimated health care expenditures are nearly 50 percent greater for workers who report high levels of stress.

Other studies show working conditions are associated with increased absenteeism, tardiness and high turnover rates.

Solutions range from employers stepping in with solutions to employees changing their schedule or finding other ways to relax.

-Erica Bradley



### Sincere gratitude

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Norton School District and the Norton Community for the gracious manner in which Goodland was assisted in a difficult weather situation on Thursday night, Oct. 29.

When it was determined that we could not return home safely, Norton school officials went to work immediately to find places to house all of the stranded Goodland students, coaches and administrators. Many Norton homes were graciously opened to us.

The school district and community went above and beyond and then some. Early Friday morning, Norton High School generously prepared and provided a wonderful breakfast for Goodland before we were able to get back on the road and safely return home.

We are so appreciative of your kind-



ness and concern. Thank you for your great example. Many lessons were taught and learned as Goodland experienced being on the receiving end of the great services rendered by Norton School District and the Norton community. Your actions have defined you as a first class district and community.

Sincerely,  
Shelly P. Angelos  
Superintendent of Schools

### We still have a ways to go

The late German physicist, Max Planck, once said, "New ideas do not gain acceptance, their opponents simply die out." The election of an African American strengthened my belief that we are indeed becoming a more civilized and accepting nation. Having said that, the actions of a Southern justice of the peace last month, made me realize we have a ways to go.

Case in point is the Louisiana Justice of the Peace Keith Bardwell. The long standing (34 years) officer of the court recently refused to marry an interracial couple because he was thinking of the "children" which might be born to the union. He declared he was not a racist as he frequently married black couples and invited them into his home. It reminded me a bit of a southern friend of ours who said, "When he was growing up they loved their nanny like she was family. They always gave her presents at Christ-

### Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



mas." He failed to mention they also gave her a substandard salary.

Bardwell stated after being forced to resign, "I would probably do the same thing again," he said. "I found out I can't be a justice of the peace and have a conscience."

One of the greatest threats to our nation rests in former Justice of the Peace Keith Bardwell's statement. Whose conscience are we using as our guiding light? Extreme fundamentalist religious followers of any faith, Jewish, Christian or Muslim, believe the rules should be interpreted

and enforced by them. They believe they are to be the national conscience. They interpret their particular book of faith in their own manner, drawing on the sections they believe and categorizing others as just random writings with little relevance.

Regardless of the national progress, the south and certain groups remain a stronghold of racial discrimination, religious judgment and violence as a solution. New ideas are particularly difficult to embrace when one lives with rigid beliefs and no interest in learning how they came to accept those beliefs. The positive aspect of this is that this young couple realized what this justice of the peace was attempting to do and decided, "Enough already." Although this is not the first time Bardwell has done this, it is thankfully the last.

Mary Kay can be reached at [mkwoodyard@ruraltel.net](mailto:mkwoodyard@ruraltel.net).

### The big game

The big game. The Western Kansas Football League Championship in Hays on Lewis Field, Nov. 1. On one side, Great Bend, ranked number two, all 26 of them and they are huge. On the other side our Norton fifth grade Blue Jays, ranked number one. The Norton stands are filled with parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, brothers, sisters and friends. We are all excited and concerned about our players, can they pull this off?

The kickoff, and Great Bend runs in for a touchdown. A groan from the Norton stands. The extra point is no good. The score 6-0. Now we have the ball. No score on that possession. what! Our boys held them, our smaller team held them. Hope rings in our collective hearts. Back

and forth, yes! We have a touchdown. Oh no, the extra point is no good. Score now 6-6. The clock is running, the game is tied. Overtime. We win the toss. Our boys line up at the 10 yard line. Can we do it, YES! Groan, conversion no good.

Now it is their turn. No gain on the first and ten, the stands are alive and noisy, no gain on the second and ten, Norton is on its feet and screaming, pushed back and fumbles on third recovered by Great Bend, the Norton fans are wild, a pass to an open man, pass blocked. PANDAMONIA. Coaches hats are in the air. A field of blue. A field of blue popcorn erupts on the ten yard line. Score 12-6. The NORTON FIFTH GRADE BLUE JAYS have won the championship!!!

Harriett Gill, proud grandparent

### House guests and fish

What's the old saying, "House guests and fish stink after three days."

And what if your house guest gets the flu?

That really stinks!

Not just for the hostess, also for the house guest who was struggling long distance to keep her students on task. She claims she heard the government kids' shouts of joy when it was announced a test was postponed! The classroom is only a couple hundred miles away, so it is possible.

Truly her father and I were glad she was at our house as her fever raged. It gave me a chance feel all needed, reminded me why I did not become a nurse and to be thankful for those are.

There are things to be grateful for in every situation. She got better! Her father and I haven't gotten sick YET! And we got to just spend time together with no other agenda; no place to be hurrying off to. Just rest and quiet! AHHH

Having a sick person in your house gets you to thinking about health insurance. That and watching the news every night!

The daughter called her doctor for advice. I visited the local pharmacy to get what was recommended and got additional help and support. She got better. But she was worried she would have to visit a doctor here. Her insurance has a confusing hierarchy of preferred providers. "If I have to go to the doctor here it won't pay!" she moaned.

I usually always have to pay for office calls so I have to bite my tongue. What whiners we have become in this country! But the larger issue is: if she had been really, really sick and hospitalized, her insurance would have insisted she be transferred as soon as she was stabilized.

### Back Home Nancy Hagman



And how would transfer have occurred? And where would it be to? I don't know. If she could not speak for herself, how would anyone even know the insurance would not pay?

At least she did discover after she got to feeling better and got on line, our county hospital is a preferred provider.

Time for anecdotes, all true, I promise!

Man I know hurt his back. Ruptured disc, when it happened it was so loud the person standing beside him heard it pop. Works for a big, big company. Great insurance or so you would think. Goes to doctor. Can't have an MRI until he has six sessions of physical therapy. Physical therapist is appalled. None the less spends three weeks on addictive pain killers etc, before finally satisfies insurance he needs surgery. Wakes up from said surgery free of pain.

Friend's kid in college breaks leg. Insurance won't pay for surgery. Lucky for him, she happens to live close enough to the insurance company's office and is retired so she has the time to spend the day camped there until she got the procedure paid for.

Woman we know needs to have a certain level of something or rather in her body. Say a good range is 10-14. She goes into hospital. The minute she gets close to 10 treatment is discontinued. Of course she is not really healthy. If they got her up to a 12 she might actually have

some good days, enjoy life a little; not just spiral downward until she is in hospital again. This is Medicare.

All my anecdotes happened in the past six weeks! They are not isolated cases. If you haven't heard an insurance horror story you aren't listening!

So tell me, who is our current health care system working for?

Is anyone out there all that happy with their health insurance?

How does having alternative treatment save money when the only true alternative is surgery?

Why don't we want to change the system?

And the biggest question of all; how is involving the government going to help?

Unfortunately I only have questions. I don't have any answers.

As I said before I can't understand how we have become such a country of whiners. People who go into a tailspin if they have to pay for a little office call. We can't seem to take responsibility for anything from having our teeth cleaned to having our dog neutered (yes some of the economic stimulus money is going towards spaying and neutering pets) unless someone else pays for it.

On the other hand, insurance policies are contracts. Isn't it only reasonable to expect them to be honored?

Fish stinks!

Getting the flu stinks!

Health care stinks!

But my sweet daughter who spent the week at my house, I'm very sorry if I inferred she overstayed her welcome, whines or in any way stinks.

Her I love, my insurance not so much! If you are loving yours I'm betting you haven't had a claim lately!

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Office hours:  
8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.  
Phone: (785) 877-3361  
Fax: (785) 877-3732  
E-mail:  
[nortontelegram@nwkansas.com](mailto:nortontelegram@nwkansas.com)

### STAFF

Dana Paxton.....general manager  
advertising director  
Dick Boyd.....Blue Jay sports  
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