

Plenty left to say about Tiger Woods

Until Tiger Woods tells us what *really* happened, he'll remain a scar on the golf course. And this won't be achieved by holding news conferences where only selected people are allowed to ask questions. Those aren't news conferences, those are Tiger Woods-controlled, waste of time, public relations gimmicks. Period.

We would ask Tiger Woods, who is back on the golf course, where his wife and children are as he arrogantly makes his way around the course at Augusta (Ga.) National in preparation for the Masters. They took off on a flight across the pond, again raising questions as to whether the Mrs. and the children have any place in his life. A supportive wife stands by her man.

We would tell him his attempts to apologize for his mistresseseseseses shenanigans were a farce. Those so-called apologies were as frigid as the deep freeze in the basement.

We would tell him if he wins the Masters there will be countless numbers of former fans not cheering, but turning thumbs down.

Tiger Woods has to come clean, quit hiding behind his golf clubs and act like a grown man for a change. But that's difficult to do, apparently, when you are among the richest of the richest. That kind of wealth eventually takes over and common sense is driven into the ground.

We understand Tiger Woods has a new 'advisor.' We can't say he's doing the golfer any good. Matter of fact, he might be doing just the opposite. But the advisor, we would imagine, is getting a golf bag full of money so he is doing himself a lot of good.

There are those who will call us all wet, that he will regain the confidence of the masses he once enjoyed, and that Tiger Woods will be the Tiger Woods we once admired before the sex scandals sent him looking for a hiding place. An innocent man doesn't go into hiding.

There are probably golfers in this weekend's Masters who, on camera for the sake of the game, will speak approvingly of fellow golfer Tiger Woods. But down deep they are probably thinking otherwise. Now with Tiger Woods back on the course, and we would suppose as the heavy Masters favorite, it will be interesting to see if challengers might find hidden talent in an attempt to send the tiger back into the wild. And if Tiger Woods prevails, it would be appropriate to attire him not in a Green Jacket but Blushing Red. Maybe even have a mistress do the honors.

Gotta do things up right. Right?

Over the weekend

Over the weekend, I spoke at a women's salad luncheon about Mexico missions. A member of the audience caught me off guard when she said, "I sure miss Sunflower Sue." All I could say was, "I do, too."

Perhaps that is what caused me to admit this morning how much I am like her. I was putting away lunch makings and noticed the mayonnaise jar was empty. Naturally, I reached for its full replacement and then I reached for the rubber spatula. How many times did she chastise me over the years because I might have left one fourth of a teaspoon of "whatever" in a jar before discarding it. Yet, there I was, scraping out every last speck of mayonnaise from the old jar. I could almost hear my mother say, "If you take care of the pennies, the dollars will take care of themselves." One of her other euphemisms was, "A woman can throw more out the front door with a teaspoon than a man can put in the back door with a scoop shovel". Which translated means: If you are not a thrifty homemaker your husband can't make enough money to fill the difference.

I am constantly amazed by the growing number of young women who not only admit, but seemingly brag, about not cooking. Perhaps they don't know how, but I would think after a week of eating out they would have to starve for the remainder of the month. Even if they made semi-prepared and boxed food from the store, it would still be cheaper. Used to be a woman knew the way to a man's heart was through his stomach. Now, she spends her own money and if she wants to spend it on fast food I guess she can.

When Jim and I were first dating, I

Out Back Carolyn Plotts

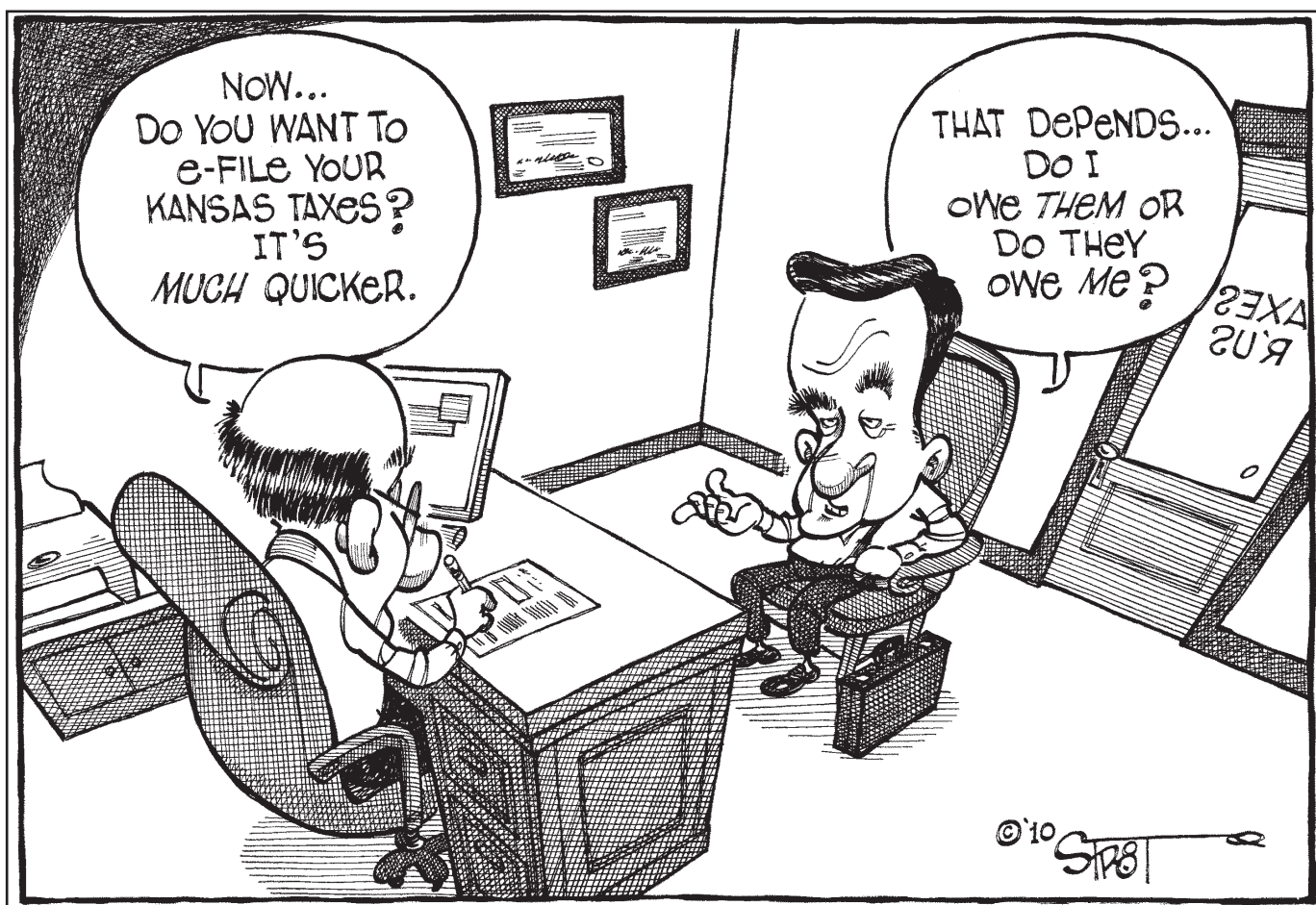


overheard him telling a friend, "Not only can she cook; but she will."

I haven't complained about my back for a week and I'm not about to start now. Except to say that I'm trying not to overdo it pulling weeds and getting flower beds ready to plant. The weather has been so beautiful I can hardly stand it. I noticed that I have tulips blooming and the hosta I planted last year is pushing through. Jim and I are talking about where to permanently plant some of the trees we have been nursing along for a couple of years. One is a blue spruce so it needs lots of space. We also have ash, cottonwood and a weeping willow.

While listening to news of the thwarted plot to bomb Times Square and the New York City subway system I immediately thought of my sister, Kathryn, who lives within walking distance of the Square. I called to see what her "take" on the situation was but, she was gone. Her son answered the phone and when I mentioned it to him, there was this long silence. Finally he said, "Didn't know anything about it. We hear that kind of stuff all the time."

That's just one more reason I'm glad she's moving to Florida.



Cost cited as reason for health care bill

One of the most often cited reasons for passing health care reform is the problem of costs - health insurance costs and health care costs.

Everyday, many Americans face difficult decisions about whether to continue to pay for health insurance when their premiums are increasing or how to pay for health care - sometimes a life-saving intervention - that isn't covered.

With costs skyrocketing, it can be too much to bear for the family budget. This is the number one complaint I hear from Kansans, and for me, the number one reason I believe we must reform health care in America.

However, for those that think this bill is the answer, I warn them to look much more closely at the fine print. The problems are far deeper than the \$940 billion price tag that will still leave 23 million people uninsured; the tax hikes; the Medicare cuts and the mandates.

The biggest problem is that health care costs will actually increase for many Kansans under this so-called reform. Here's why:

While it's true that your insurance company will not be able to drop you should your treatment become expensive or refuse to cover your pre-existing health condition, these mandates on insurers are not paired with any meaningful way to ensure that people continue to buy insurance when they are still healthy.

This means that the young and healthy people who keep premiums low by subsidizing those in the risk pool who are already sick, have no incentive to buy insurance until they themselves get sick. When the insurer is forced to pay

Costly reform Sen. Pat Roberts

out more and more claims without having this young and healthy population to keep costs down, premiums for the sick will rise at an even higher rate than they already have.

In addition, your premiums will rise even higher as hundreds of billions of dollars of new taxes on health insurers, pharmaceutical companies, and medical device companies get passed on to you, the consumer.

Likewise, this bill adds 16 million new people to Medicaid and cuts half a trillion dollars from Medicare. We already know that Medicaid and Medicare severely underpay providers like doctors and hospitals, resulting in an annual "hidden tax" of nearly \$90 billion per year on those who purchase private insurance. Expanding Medicaid and cutting Medicare will only increase this hidden tax, raising premiums even higher.

Moreover, this bill will greatly expand the federal government's control over what your insurance company covers. For example the bill empowers the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, the very body that recently reversed its longstanding recommendation that women get mammograms to check for breast cancer at age 40, to decide which tests and treatments get covered by private insurers under federal law. Cost will be the factor, not medical need.

This huge increase in government control will also have the tragic unintended

consequence of leaving the next generation of life-saving drugs undiscovered. As the government refuses expensive new treatments, pharmaceutical and biotech companies that do the cutting-edge research won't have the money to invest in better cures.

I want to leave you with one last story that makes me wonder if the congressional supporters of this bill even really understand what's in it. At President Obama's bipartisan health care summit last month, Representative Louise Slaughter told a sad story about a woman being forced to wear her dead sister's dentures because she could not afford her own. This story was used to create an emotional response in support for health care reform, but there's just one problem. This bill doesn't actually cover dentures or dental care. In other words, it would not help this woman at all.

Leaders on Capitol Hill know that this bill doesn't have the support of the public, based on a variety of opinion polls. Nevertheless, they are determined to ram it through. In the House, leaders are so desperate to enact the bill that they want to avoid asking the members to vote on the unpopular health care reform that will reform one-sixth of our entire economy. Instead, they are preparing to substitute another bill for the vote and "deem" health care passed as a part of it. That has never been done for such a major piece of legislation, and many scholars believe it is unconstitutional.

I urge the House and Senate leaders to stop this insanity. It's too important not to get it right.

No more bacon and eggs?

Insight John Schlageck

I love to eat. Like millions of fellow Americans there's nothing better than the food grown and produced on this nation's farms and ranches.

I'll eat a thick, choice rib-eye steak hot off the grill any time. And make sure it has all the fixings - baked potatoes, steamed green beans, salad, fresh bread and a glass of red wine.

I also like a home-cooked omelet with my Sunday morning paper. You know the kind, three eggs filled with sautéed mushrooms, diced red peppers and onions, cheddar cheese, wheat toast with a couple strips of bacon on the side and a tall glass of cold milk.

And dessert, who doesn't enjoy a great piece of apple pie, with ice cream, all produced by farmers and ranchers across Kansas and this country of ours?

You can't beat good food, prepared right. There's nothing like it.

That's why it's so hard to stomach hearing about the many ways our Kansas and American farmers and ranchers are under siege today. Still every year we expect farmers and ranchers to grow more and more food with less land. And every year they do so.

But the attacks and smear tactics come from all sides. Environmental groups, animal welfare activists, everyone seems to have their own agenda and the media just can't seem to tell the whole story.

That's the reason we in agriculture must tell our story. Consumers are people

wooden chicken coop. Like a lot of things from the past, nostalgia might appear to be better than it really was. Many of our grandparents were barely able to eke out a living while raising a large family.

The days of yesteryear on the farm took a lot of hard work from sunup to sundown. Many still went hungry or broke and times were lean.

Today's animal husbandry, or care and feeding of livestock, is no accident. Rather, it's because of the dedicated men, women and children who raise and care for this state's livestock. For generations, Kansas farmers and ranchers have watched over and nurtured cattle, hogs, sheep, chickens and other livestock from sunup to sunset - every day of the year.

The more comfortable these animal producers make their animals, the more productive they're going to be and the better opportunity they'll have to make a profit.

The health and welfare of livestock trumps everything else on the farm, even a producer's own comfort. That's been the recipe for success for nearly 150 years and with any luck it'll be the same for another 150 years.

John Schlageck is a leading commentator on agriculture and rural Kansas. Born and raised on a diversified farm in northwestern Kansas, his writing reflects a lifetime of experience, knowledge and passion.

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

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

STAFF

Dana Paxton.....general manager
advertising director
Dick Boyd.....Blue Jay sports
Erica Bradley.....managing editor
Harriett Gill.....society editor
Sherry Hickman.....bookkeeping/circulation
Vicki Henderson.....computer production

