

Catching up on my list of snippets

Someone once said, "A fool and his money are soon parted." What I want to know is what can the fool without money be parted from? The best response to that question will be highlighted in my next column. Get those thinking caps on.

Also, many of you have been wondering about the Snippets. Well, today you need wonder no more. I've picked out some that pretty much cover several of my recent columns. If yours is not among those today, don't give up because I hope to continue writing for a long time.

I will also be talking in today's column about what I learn from watching daytime television with a Reporter's Notepad on my lap.

The Snippets!

Re: My move to Colorado - "You ought to move back to Kansas now that we have a REAL, as in Republican, governor!"

Re: Obama's spending - "...Seems like Obama is still on a spending spree and is spending money we don't even have. ...a little fiscal responsibility in the House now after four years, but stymied with a Democrat Senate and vetoing pres."

Re: Drugs - "...the fact is they spend more on direct-to-consumer advertising than on research and development. ... And most of the 'new' drugs they bring to market are just old drugs, minimally reformulated..."

Re: Addiction - "I love to listen to C-SPAN Radio, sure beats the other drivel out there, and I learn lots."

Re: Addiction - "To be so fortunate with your addiction; if I could get my 40- something unmarried son off his problem, I'd buy him the biggest television set I could find and let him watch FOX, MSNBC and CNN and all the sports he wants, forever!"

Re: Addiction - "I gave it a try. Doesn't work for me. Might be a case of lazy brain as I'd rather someone else do my thinking. Thank you."

Not contributed to any column - "I still have not seen nor read anything supported by the Republicans that makes me want to change my vote."

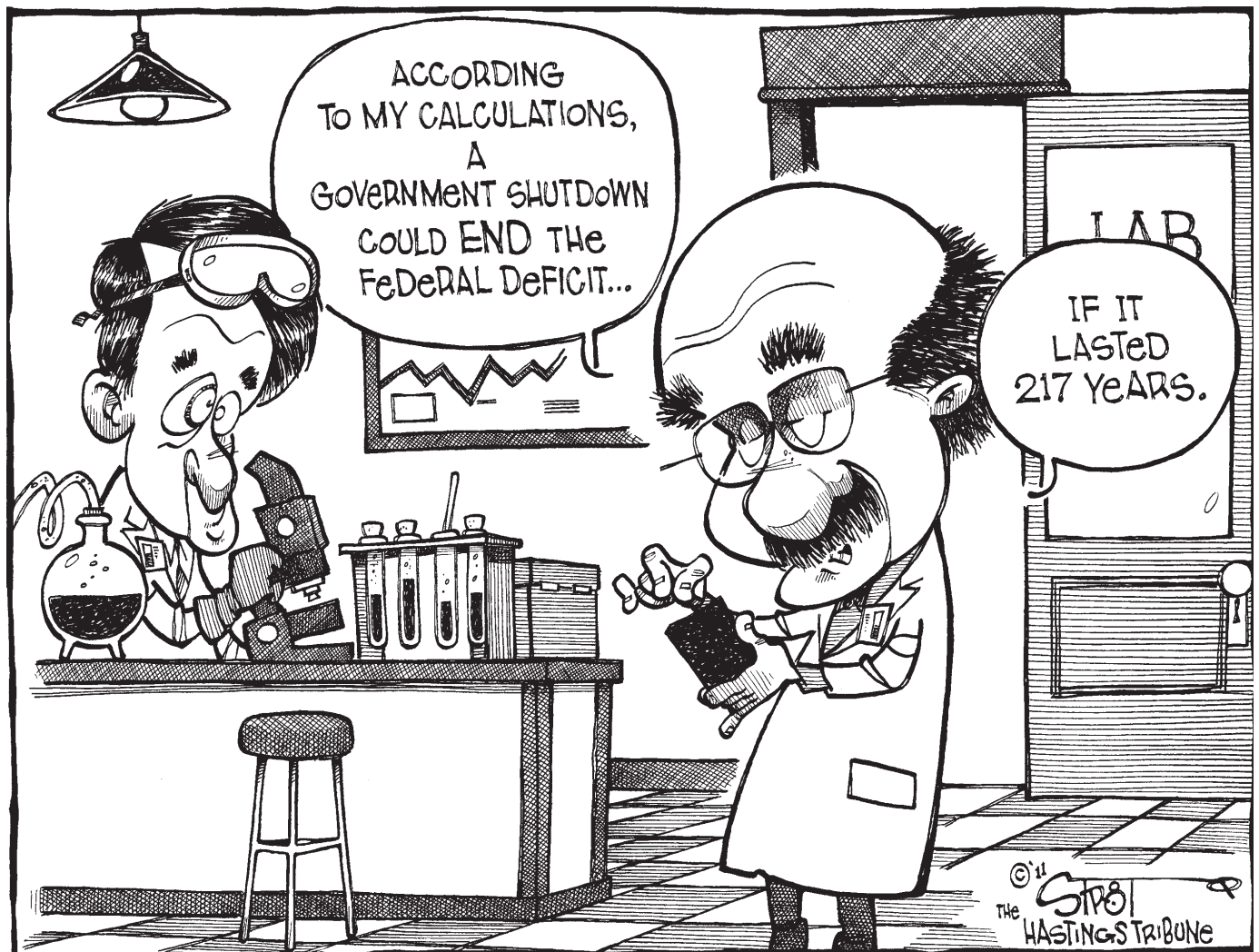
Re: Term Limits - "Term limits would eliminate the process of running for reelection before they even know where the men's room is."

Reminder: Letters to the editor need to be sent to that department at the newspaper, and letters require a signature, etc. When I mentioned that no signature is required for Snippets, some readers thought they could sneak in a letter or two unsigned; doesn't work that way. Send your Snippets (up to four sentences) to my e-mail, which appears at the bottom of this column.

In retirement I do find time to watch television. But I also read and spend considerable time on my computer. All the while I jot down notes of things that catch my eye or ear, and I enter that in my Reporter's Notepad. To wit:

- 1) A company is now making padded bikini tops for 7-year-old girls. Come on, Moms, where are your voices?
 - 2) A Home Owners Association is trying to shut down a lemonade stand kids are operating to help a project at their school. Rules are rules, even when kids are involved.
 - 3) A sign in a demonstrating crowd read, "God Hates You!" I was unaware that God was in need of a spokesperson.
 - 4) Rutgers will begin allowing guys and gals to share the same dorm rooms. I bet there will be a mad dash of new enrollees!
 - 5) Lindsay Lohan is reportedly dropping her last name. That sounds to me like defeat because that's the way jail personnel refer to their inmates.
 - 6) Someone in Iowa, I believe, won the recent \$319 million Powerball jackpot. Who needs \$319 million? This winner should talk with some past winners and find out how something so big can end up being a terrible nightmare.
 - 7) If you leave your ground floor bedroom window open (minus a screen) to allow Lunesta to fly in, you just might find something else crawling into that open window. Better to be safe than sorry.
 - 8) Then there's the couple whose car breaks down in what looks like a really remote area of nowhere. He goes to the trunk and low and behold pulls out a new car. The couple jumps in and drives off, leaving their broken down mess blocking the roadway. Nothing like reality, huh?
 - 9) Have you noticed that all the people who get fired by Donald Trump on "The Apprentice," never buckle their seat belt when they are driven off in that beautiful, black long car? An opportunity missed.
 - 10) The newest book is now on the shelves, "Clinton, President of the World." No wonder President Obama feels uncomfortable around him! That'll do it. Later!
- Tom Dreiling is a retired journalist, now living in Aurora, Colo. He edited and published newspaper, in Kansas and Wyoming during his 44-year career.

Stop
Look
Listen
Tom Dreiling



Keeping busy in my everyday life

So far, I have managed to: answer about five e-mails; fix a cup of coffee; post an entry on Facebook; take some chops out of the freezer for lunch; make three phone calls; and order something on-line. I am such a procrastinator. Can't think of anything to "say" so, I do everything else but. Think, that is. "They" say the secret to writing is to just write. So, here goes.

I've come to realize there is a difference between having an exciting life and having a busy life. Even though I think I waste an inordinate amount of time, I am always busy. Our trips to Mexico could be called exciting though nothing out of the ordinary has ever happened to us. It's for sure the four days of driving to and from are not exciting. Except that time we about got side-swipped in Dallas. That was pretty exciting.

By exciting, I guess I mean lavish vacations (scratch the lavish) to exotic locales; attending Hollywood premieres; or inaugural balls. We wouldn't know what to do on a lavish vacation...except think how many houses in Mexico we could build with the money spent on having "fun". When, indeed, we have more real fun working our buns off building a house than we ever could on some sunny

Out Back
Carolyn Plotts



hyacinth and several naked ladies (don't know their real name) are sprouting up in the wierdest places in the lawn. I'm marking their locations so when they are done blooming I can find them again and move them to the new bed. That's the plan. Won't know the result until next spring.

That's the thing about gardening. It's an activity based on hope and delayed gratification. You put a seed or bulb in the ground with the hope it will sprout and grow. Then, you wait. And wait. Maybe it comes up. Maybe it doesn't. Maybe your husband mows it down. Maybe he doesn't.

-ob-

Phase One of my sister-in-law's kitchen remodel is about done. Jim is tweaking the cabinet doors and shelves now. This week we'll tear out the other side of the room. That means no stove or oven for Donna until it's done. That's okay, though, she is set up to "camp out" in the dining room. She's got her crock pot, electric skillet and microwave at the ready. If that gets old she can always have her husband bring pizza home for supper.

beach. Besides, I never have to worry about what to wear. My vacation wardrobe consists of t-shirts, a good pair of leather gloves, sturdy shoes, socks and slacks.

Perhaps someday we will take a real vacation. Until then, we'll spend our travel money and time on mission trips and going to see our kids and grandkids.

-ob-

A splash of color caught my eye as I was at the kitchen sink making coffee this morning. Yes, I have tulips blooming. I transplanted them a few years ago to the protected south side of our rental house next door and, there they have thrived. I hope they can survive another move because I want to make a new flower bed around the bay window on the south side of our house and I want some early blooming flowers in it. Right now, my tulips, daffodills, one lone grape

Food safety guidelines to follow

Insight

John Schlageck

Food is deeply entrenched in family values. While most people don't acknowledge it, a recent nationwide survey reveals people value the joy and pleasure that results from eating.

Without question, emotions are also tied with what we're eating for lunch or dinner. Emotional connections to our food sometimes make potential risks within our food supply appear frightening to some.

How people look at risks provides a clear understanding of why consumers react so strongly to food safety issues. People often perceive unfamiliar things as risky if they can't control the outcome, if their exposure is involuntary, if the effects are irreversible and if it's caused by human actions or failures. Food-borne illnesses are an example of the results of actions uncontrollable and unforeseeable by the consumer.

Depending on where you look for figures, approximately 5 million illnesses each year and 4,000 deaths can be attributable to meat and poultry products, according to Centers for Disease Control. About 9,000 people die and at least 6 million become sick each year from food-borne infections.

Today, more and more livestock producers are doing their part to ensure a quality, safe and healthy product. With each passing generation, consumers become further removed from the farm and ranch that provides them with the food they eat. As these same consumers become more detached from the farm, they've decided to look for and buy "brand name" products including food that often implies great quality, safety and taste.

Livestock producers today are partici-

pating in cattle identification programs, including the Beef Verification Solution. Such programs allow an individual producer to track his/her cattle from the cows to the calves to the processing plant as the marketplace continues to demand exact animal traceability to satisfy consumer demands.

The main reason for traceability or an animal identification program is to know exactly where each and every animal comes from. With the new programs it can be traced throughout the entire life cycle to determine it is healthy and disease free.

And while beef from such programs must meet strict U.S. Department of Agriculture standards to ensure its safety, like the food industry and our government, we have an obligation to keep food healthy and safe, the way we handle, store and cook food can mean the difference between a satisfying meal or a bout with E. coli or salmonella.

Purchasing, storing and preparing food, especially traditional and new meat and poultry products may present challenges. As a wise and safety-conscious shopper, it is our responsibility to keep food safe once it leaves our local grocery store or meat market.

Always buy food from a reputable dealer, with a known record for safe handling. If you don't know if the meat is fresh, ask a neighbor or friend who's shopped there before.

U.S. Department of Agriculture

(USDA) advises to buy dated products only if the "sell by" or "use by" date has not expired. While these dates are helpful, they are reliable only if the food has been kept at the proper temperature during storage and handling. Although many products bear "sell by" and "use by" dates, product dating is not a federal requirement.

When we purchase products labeled "keep refrigerated," do so only if they are stored in a refrigerated case and cold to the touch, USDA advises. Buy frozen products only if they are frozen solid. Never buy something that feels mushy.

Buy packaged precooked foods only if the package is sound - not damaged or torn.

Avoid cross contamination. To prevent raw meat and poultry from contaminating foods that will be eaten without further cooking, enclose individual packages of raw meat or poultry in plastic bags. Position packages of raw meat or poultry in your shopping cart so their juices cannot drip on other food.

Always shop for perishables last. Keep refrigerated and frozen items together so they will remain cold. Place perishables in the coolest part of your car during the trip home. Pack them in an ice chest if the time from store to home refrigerator will be more than one hour.

When it comes to making sure the beef and other food on your family's table is healthy safe and tastes great - it's a team effort. Everyone from the livestock producer, packer, retailer and family who buys and prepares the finished product has an obligation to follow sound, tried and true steps to ensure each and every one of us eats a healthy food product.



Thumbs up to the front page story and photos last week on the Yellow Ribbon Rally held at the Norton Christian Church. We need to honor our veterans everyday. Called In.

Thumbs Up to all of the volunteers that helped with the Norton Jr. Sr. Prom, dance and post-prom. We know that a lot of time, energy and effort not to mention lack of sleep, went into making the evening a night to remember for the students. Emailed In.

Remember to send Thumbs Up to: nortontelegram@nwkansas.com, call 877-3361 or mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, Kan. 67654. There is no charge for rendering a Thumbs Up. Thumbs Up are meant to give recognition for a positive person or event in the community.