

To honor and remember those that gave so much

Nearly 150 years ago, the United States observed its first Memorial Day. Designed to honor and remember those who were killed in the Civil War, the tradition has become an important reminder that we must pay tribute to those who have given their lives in the name of American freedom and liberty. Since then, more than 430,000 American men and women have died in the line of duty. Their sacrifices are the reason why you and I enjoy full exercise of the rights we have today.

Earlier this spring I had the incredible privilege of greeting an Honor Flight of WWII veterans who had come from Kansas to Washington, D.C. to visit Arlington Cemetery and the WWII Memorial. It was a very moving occasion to stand with these men as they watched the Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Many of these men likely knew one of the nearly 300,000 American casualties of that war, and have lived with the memories of those losses for their entire lives. One can only imagine the thoughts and memories evoked in their minds during the ceremony. They were there in Washington to honor and remember those who gave their lives to protect and defend freedom.

America stands as the symbol of freedom to the world, but remembrances like Memorial Day remind us that freedom is not free. The hundreds of thousands of men and women who bravely fought and died for America have paid the ultimate price for freedom, and for that we should be most grateful. Whether standing near the miles of headstones in Arlington National Cemetery or beside a sole gravesite in Western Kansas of a fallen soldier, it is incumbent on each one of us to never forget the sacrifices made in the name of our country. Grieving parents, widows, children, and siblings deserve to know the heartfelt appreciation of a grateful nation. In my family, six of my eight uncles who served our nation in the military were abroad all at one time. I know the toll such service can place on the families back at home.

So while television advertisements tell us that Memorial Day is the unofficial start of summer and to commemorate the weekend with barbecues, let us recall the true and sole purpose of the day: to honor and to remember those who have sacrificed for America and for what she stands, making it possible for you and I to enjoy the freedoms and liberties we have. This Memorial Day, I ask you to remember specifically Sergeant First Class Clifford Beattie and Private First Class Ramon Mora Junior, who were assigned to Ft. Riley and who were killed in the line of duty on May 22, 2011. Their families need our prayers today.

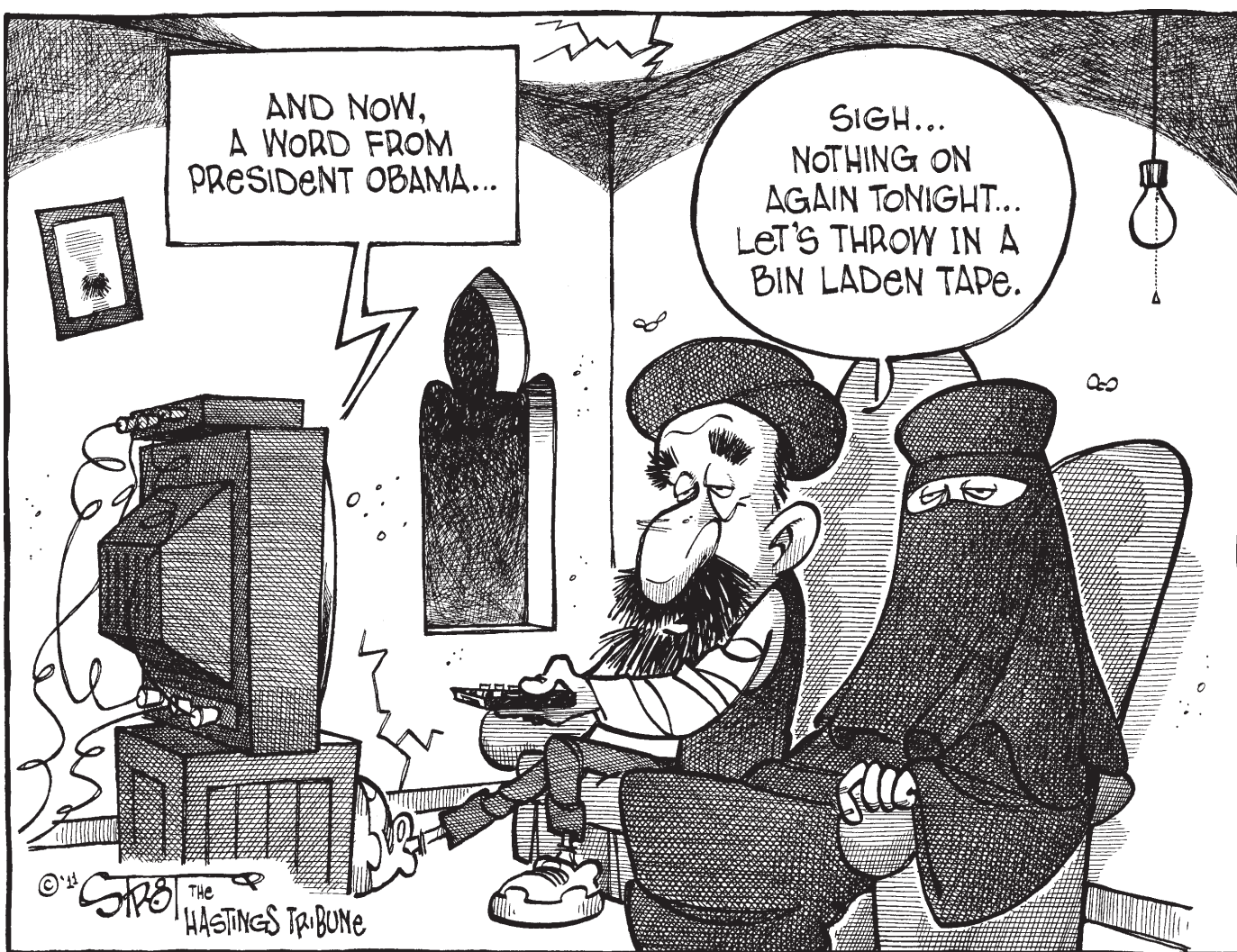
May God continue to bless America, to comfort those who have lost loved ones in the line of duty, and to watch over those who are serving her in harm's way. —Congressman Tim Huelskamp

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

- ★ **Governor Sam Brownback**, 300 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-3232
- ★ **U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts**, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. roberts.senate.gov/public/ (202) 224-4774
- ★ **U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran**, Russell Senate Office Building Room C-4, Washington, D.C. 20002. moran.senate.gov/public/ (202) 224-6521
- ★ **State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer**, State Capitol Building, Room 300 SW 10th St., Room 225-E, Topeka, Kan. 66612. ralph.ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us (785) 296-7399
- ★ **U.S. Rep. Tim Huelskamp**, 126 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. huelskamp.house.gov (202) 225-2715 or Fax (202) 225-5124
- ★ **State Rep. Rick Billinger**, Docking Building, Room 754, Topeka, Kan. 66612 rick.billinger@house.ks.gov (785) 296-7659
- ★ **State Rep. Ward Cassidy**, State Capitol Building, 300 SW 10th St., Topeka, Kan. 66612 ward.cassidy@house.ks.gov (785) 296-7696



Thank You Veterans for all you have done!



Are cats cool because they just don't care

Cats are cool! They have an attitude and are never going to let anyone know they care!

Ours cats are such cool mothers they display all the maternal instincts of a rock. One morning as I hastened out the door to work I discovered one poor newborn right in front of the door! All the cats were off enjoying the breakfast we so generously provide.

The dog appeared to be babysitting! As always happens in this situation. I got an accusing glare: "Look what one of those cats did! Abandoned her offspring again! And you had ME fixed!!!!"

I did not have time to ascertain who the mother was, but I did find a box to place the poor thing in. By the time I got home it was gone! I can't bear to think of what happened. I left the box and in a couple of weeks Sydney climbed in and blessed us with five babies.

Three days later I checked the nursery and there were three more! Big kittens with their eyes open. Apparently the second mamma decided the box looked better than the hiding place she had. I got another box and separated the litters.

Niece Becky said all their kittens died from neglect. Those mothers came

This Too Shall Pass Nancy Hagman



from our house; do you notice a pattern here? She also reports their dog, a huge chocolate lab, seemed more distraught about the loss of the kittens than anyone except her daughter, Gracie!

Last summer we had a kitten that could best be described as "special needs". Gracie came for a cookout and fell in love with the thing. It seemed so fragile I feared it would not survive the evening. Gracie wanted to take it home.

The adults conferred. I really admire how Josh and Becky are raising their kids. They are polite, helpful and concerned about others. They love the outdoors and animals. Becky felt if the kitten did die, Gracie, four at the time, would still have a valuable experience. So off they went, kitten in tow.

As soon as Gracie heard we had kittens again, she was ready to take them to her house. We convinced her they needed a

few weeks with their mothers.

Now that Elizabeth is home she is the keeper of the kittens. Between Gracie and Elizabeth's Face Book postings, it appears all the kittens will have good homes!

This past week we had relatives visiting from Alaska with Logan, 8, and Marlee, 4. There is nothing like a box of kittens to entertain kids!

After they left Elizabeth said, "Kittens need kids!" That's an interesting take. We tend to think pets are good for kids because they teach them responsibility. But cats need people? I'm sure they will be annoyed if word of that gets out!

I remember "special needs". It was right for Gracie to take her. If her life was short so be it. Very few living things have the opportunity to be so greatly loved! Happy ending: that particular kitten survived and thrived.

Much is made of the differences between "Dog People" and "Cat People". I am convinced my dog can tell when I'm physically or mentally hurting. The cats might know but do they care? I doubt it. They are too busy being cool!

Do we have what it takes to be number one again

Last October we acknowledged the 1957 launch of Russia's Sputnik. I remember the day it was announced and, even as an 11 year old, sensed everything had changed. Suddenly America's status as number one was being threatened. Because of this unexpected feat, Congress created the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in 1958.

My favorite scene in Apollo 13, recounting the events of that flight, is when they laid the "junk" on the table at NASA and said, "This is what they have to work with. Get them home." And they did. This 'can do' attitude is a combination of need, creative spirit, passion and SKILL.

In 2009, South Korea surpassed Finland for the number one spot in math. Finland now ranks number two, fol-

Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



lowed by Switzerland, Japan, Canada, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Belgium, Australia and Germany in the top ten. Notice anything?

Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education, said the findings, "to be brutally honest, show that a host of developed nations are out-educating us."

In the 2009 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

report, the U.S. ranked 25th in math, 17th in science and 14th in reading out of the 34 countries. China continues to make gains and a major factor may be their decision to replace rote learning. Too frequently in the United States, I feel, we have taught to the tests. Why? Because of the expectations of politicians and parents. Rather than encouraging creative thought we want visible rewards.

My husband says, "America is at its best when it has a competitor." We answered the call of Sputnik and there are plenty of mountains left to climb. Giving our children time to create and a passion to learn; giving our teachers the freedom to teach and becoming a nation excited about life, not things, might go a long way. mkwoodyard@ruraltel.net

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

OFFICE HOURS:
8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mon.-Thur.
8 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Friday
Phone: (785) 877-3361
Fax: (785) 877-3732

E-mail: nortontelegram@nwkansas.com

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

STAFF
Dana Paxton.....general manager
advertising director/
email: dpaxton@nwkansas.com
Dick Boyd.....Blue Jay sports
Harriett Gill.....society editor
email: hgill@nwkansas.com
Vicki Henderson.....computer production
Marcia Shelton.....office manager



Dear Editor,
The United States Government should not send one more penny to foreign countries until it aids the complete recovery and reconstruction of Kansas, Missouri, Alabama, Mississippi, and all of the other states and citizens that have recently suffered from floods and tornadoes.
American First!
R.W. Yeager
Retired Contractor



Thumbs up to all of those donating to the tornado victims of Joplin. I am proud of our close-knit, caring community. What we offer will make a huge difference to the victims. There may come a time that we need the help of others. Emailed in.

Letters to the Editor and Thumbs Up:
e-mail dpaxton@nwkansas.com,
or to write 215 S. Kansas Ave. 67654