

The lack of accuracy in political titles

Is it just this 'Man of the Plains' who gets tired of hearing people call others what they aren't, but at one time were?

A year or so back, media folks were all excited because five presidents were together in the White House! Sorry, that can't happen and it didn't happen.

Factually, what happened was four former presidents met with the current sitting president, President Barack Obama. The former presidents were George Herbert Walker Bush, William Jefferson Clinton, George W. Bush and Jimmy Carter.

These guys were presidents but upon leaving office they also left their title behind for the next president to lay claim to. That's the way this thing works.

But we toss around titles like they are a forever charm that is worn around the wrist. Not so.

How often have you heard Mitt Romney called Gov. Romney in this campaign season? Often! It's been many years since he was a sitting governor.

Or Newt Gingrich called Speaker Gingrich? Far too often!

There are many former mayors still referred to as "Mayor," as is the case with governors.

Donald Rumsfeld, believe it or not, was recently introduced as Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, as a member of a panel discussing military affairs.

Even high-ranking retired military officers find themselves still referred to their rank despite wearing civilian clothes.

Whatever happened to the word "former?"

This may be an insignificant concern to many readers, but sadly accuracy just seems to have taken a back seat. One of my instructors at Fort Hays State (not a university in 1954 when this took place), Katherine Rogers, told me that accuracy is everything and without it you have written nothing. We were briefly discussing something I had hoped would find itself into the college newspaper. It didn't, a real blow to this tiny seed in the garden of developing journalists. But I learned from that rejection.

So, now that I am retired, do I now consider myself a former journalist? I am still writing, aren't I?

Did you look over the greeting cards you received in the mail this Christmas season? I mean, really close? I did, although I usually don't. I was speechless to read on the back of several of my cards these words: Hallmark, MADE IN CHINA. China? You got to be kidding! What's more American than the name Hallmark? I rarely read the back of cards so I don't know if this is something new or if it's been in play for quite a spell.

Regardless, it turned my stomach!

I've been following newspaper and television reports as they relate to the OCCUPY bunch and I am still waiting for them to occupy probably the most important place around. I'll give you a hint: my bottom and a seat in the place I call "most important," were made for one other. Give me a newspaper to read and I'm good to go.

Snippets

"...At least Ron Paul has an excuse for his insanity; he's from Texas!..."

"Gingrich might be what the last four letters of his name spell, but he still hasn't got enough to finish the job. ..."

"Romney reminds me of a high school kid who just got his first kiss. So excited he swallows his words. ..."

"...Looks like House Speaker Boehner is between a rock and a very uncomfortable place. The Tea Party's out to get him after he caved in to the Democrats on the payroll tax holiday issue. ... The stage is being set for a GOP/TP showdown!"

"The Bachmann girl needs to take some night classes to bring her up to speed on the courses she apparently flunked while wasting a desk in school. President? She's gotta be kidding! ..."

"...Texas Guv Perry is nothing more than political waste."

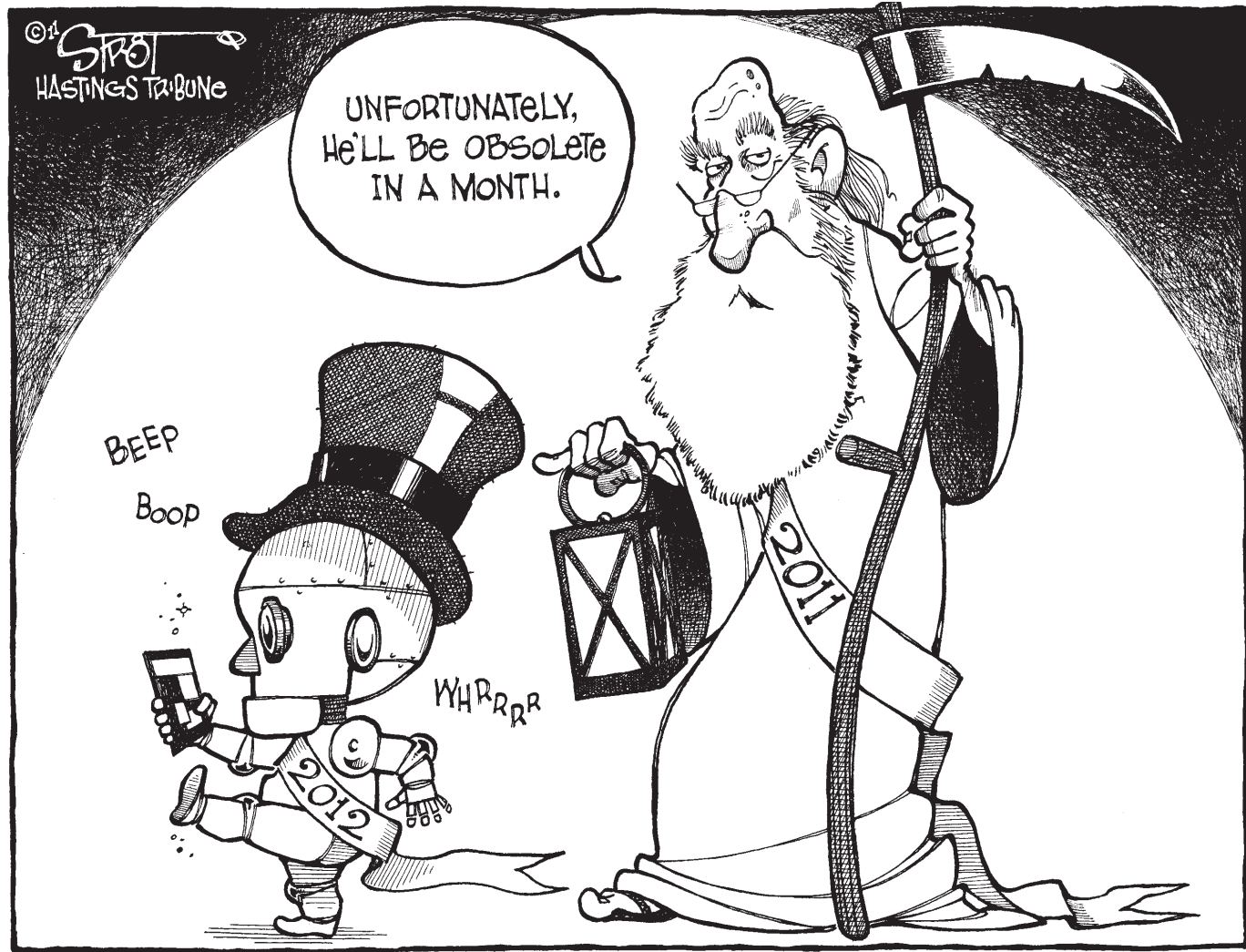
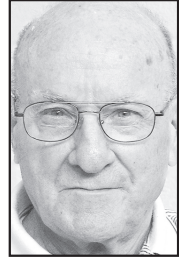
"Some call Joe Biden the best vice president ever. Now that's what I call a real gaffe!..."

Peace!

Your comments on anything that appears in your favorite newspaper coming from my computer, are always appreciated, regardless of the tone. Please keep them within three sentences. Simply email me at :milehitom@hotmail.com

Man of the Plains

Tom Dreiling



Simplify life by getting rid of things

So here I sit on the first day of the new year, contemplating what was, what is and what is yet to be.

There may have been some bad times in 2011, but I can't seem to think of any right now. All our needs and many of our wants were met; we never bounced a check; and our health (barring injuries) has been excellent. We've been blessed with wonderful friends, loving children, fulfilling work and a purpose for our lives. Life is good.

Looking ahead, I expect more of the same.

Our lives are not very complicated, although sometimes we make them so. If there is anything Jim and I both want to do in the near future it's to "simplify." That is an overused buzz word, but to me it means to pare down, get rid of nonessentials, eliminate the clutter in our lives. And I don't mean just the pile of last year's magazines. I mean find new homes for many of the things we don't use, but hang on to "just in case."

Perhaps I'm in this "get rid of it all

Out Back

Carolyn Plotts



who have so little, but are so willing to share what they do have. Everyone could learn a lesson from the world's poor. We would learn what is really important: Our faith, our family and our friends.

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My kids think I should start the declutter exercise by burning some of my mission trip work clothes. I have certain garments that I only wear in Mexico. Kind of a tradition.

We spent two nights in Dallas and my oldest daughter, Halley, drove me to a store with one of those do-it-yourself photo printing kiosks to print the trip pictures. As we were walking through the parking lot, I said, "I hope these clothes are all right. Everything else I had was dirty and in the wash."

Halley replied, "Mom, you look like a homeless person. I can't believe you were giving them clothes. It looks like they gave you clothes."

Perhaps it's time to retire the work wardrobe. Goodbye, old friends.

mood" because 24 hours ago we were still on a mission trip in Mexico. The family we built a house for had next to nothing. Mother and father both were mentally challenged and the mother was physically challenged as well, with a withered hand and a halting gait.

The house the family lived in was little more than a cardboard shack. Cracks all around let in the cold wind and rain. And yes, it gets cold in Mexico. Every year, hundreds of poor people die from exposure and hypothermia.

Still, this family always had smiles on their faces. They were obviously proud of their children and welcomed us into their lives with no reservations. I am always humbled by people

Our people and our policies, speaking as one voice

Agriculture in Kansas has always been about people – farmers and ranchers who share the same vocation, although perhaps different commodity interests and sometimes with a slightly different political bent.

Dedicated members of various farm organizations have always come together under the common bond of unity and spoken with strength on behalf of their ag industry while maintaining their independent farm and ranch lifestyle.

Farm organizations, including Farm Bureau, epitomize this. Steeped in a tradition of strong, active leadership, this group of agricultural advocacy volunteers has made this organization a dynamic voice for agriculture year after year.

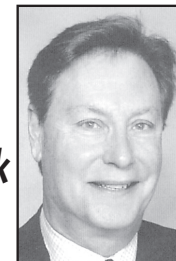
Members number nearly 40,000 active farmers and ranchers, who live in different parts of the state, with different farming practices and different backgrounds. Such diversification is a real asset when looking at issues impacting agriculture from many points of view.

One farmer or rancher may be a student of policy, while another may be strong in conservation and still another may look at how their farm organization can make inroads for them as producers. The strength of such advocacy organizations lies in their ability to take people with areas of expertise, reach consensus and speak as one voice.

Farmers and ranchers take ownership in their individual organizations. These groups of leaders are intent on developing and promoting the most

Insight

John Schlageck



profitable and permanent system of agriculture. They're also focused on maintaining the most wholesome and satisfactory living conditions in their county. They believe in the highest ideals of community and rural life. They're dedicated to a citizenship that remains active in local, state and national affairs.

With such a rich heritage comes the expectation that these farmers and ranchers, from St. Francis to Baxter Springs, will take care of the business of farming and ranching and any and all concerns in the policy arena in our state's capitol.

Some key areas of concern during the 2012 session will be taxes, school finance and water.

In the tax arena, the Governor is expected to introduce proposals to reduce the current three state income tax brackets to two and substantially lower the rate; reduce the corporate income tax rate; maintain statewide sales taxes at their current level and possibly eliminate some sales tax exemptions.

Kansas farmers and ranchers support a fair and simpler tax policy, but it should not come at the expense of property owners paying higher property taxes.

Related to school finance, elements

of a new K-12 funding formula include but are not limited to reduction of equalized state supports from 20 mills to 15; eliminating the cap on Local Option Budgets; and an equalized, local-option sales tax pool.

Farmers and ranchers who belong to Farm Bureau oppose increasing the LOB without voter approval. They also support weightings and favor minimal reliance on the property tax to fund schools.

Water will also be at the forefront among farmers during the 2012 session. Farmer members of Farm Bureau support the concept of water flex accounts to provide water right holders greater flexibility in water utilization and profitability. At the same time they would like to protect the source of supply and respect existing water rights.

Farmers continue to support voluntary, incentive-based, stakeholder-driven management plans in over-appropriated areas.

These proposals can provide immediate, much-needed help to drought-stricken Kansas areas. They can also lead to long-term policy improvements that will help manage a dwindling natural and economic resource while protecting property rights.

And while all farmers and ranchers remain busy with their own lives, families and community, they also understand the importance of political involvement. They know politics has a lot to do with preserving their way of life.

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

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