

## Giving both sides of the story

This is a rebuttal to my own letter to the editor, printed Feb. 16 in the Prairie Dog Press.

I was told (not to my face) that many of the statements and accusations I made were untrue. That being said, I decided to confront the issues instead of letting the truths/untruths grow and grow. On Feb. 22, I sat at the Almena (Senior) Community Center with six of the afternoon patrons to try to get to the bottom of this ongoing dilemma.

I was assured very adamantly that the Center was not left in a mess with dirty dishes in the afternoons. In fact, it was reported that when the card players came in, there were dishes and messes for them to clean up. Since a volunteer hostess doesn't get paid, no clean-up should be expected in the afternoons, unless it was made then.

It was vehemently denied that the card players "booby trapped" the doors with carts and trash cans, unplugged the refrigerator, etc. According to them, the pantry was barred from their inspection with a broom handle and an aluminum cart.

It was also denied that any of them threatened the cook with her job. In fact, according to one senior, he was threatened with his job by the cook.

When asked what the afternoon group wanted out of all this fussing, they all agreed that the cook should have more checks and balances (more food should be made on-sight, such as biscuits, garlic bread; not all food should be purchased from the Almena Market; money could be saved if supplies were purchased in bulk from other sources; the meals could be better and tastier; leftovers should be utilized in a better way. They should be served at a later date; inventories should be allowed by people other than the cook and helpers). After all, says one of the afternoon people, the food belongs to everyone who frequents the Center. They don't necessarily want the cook fired, they would like to just see the Center break even.

There are several incidences that have allegedly occurred without the Board of Directors' approval, including cashing in a memorial fund. Also, they want to look at last year's audit sheet before the election on March 12. Donations of cash and paying electrical bills and naming the cook as "manager" were not in any minutes as being approved by the Board, nor was there mention of combining the offices of Secretary and Treasurer, although there is an amendment to Article IV, Section 1 (approved Feb. 7, 1999) uniting these two offices. According to the afternoon people, this amendment was rescinded and is in Board meeting minutes approximately a year ago.

It is their opinion that the Center is being run by a few people, of whom only one is on the Board of Directors and another isn't even a member.

I spent an hour with these afternoon people. They were as sincere in their denials and accusations as were the morning people. I'm sure everyone of them, morning and afternoon patrons, believes they are right.

I hope this time, I have presented both sides accurately. It saddens me greatly to watch this feud destroy years-long friendships. Our town is too small to have such a major disagreement brewing.

There will be an Almena Community Center election for two Board of Director positions (President and Secretary/Treasurer) on March 12 at 7 p.m. at the Center.

Pat Ambrosier  
Almena, Kansas



Thumbs up to Eisenhower Grade School and the Sunshine Learning Center for being Power Panther participants. Called in.

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## Defeated by a night of Bible trivia

It's official. The news is out. We're not as smart as we think we are. There! I've said it. Now, how to live with the shame.

When Jim and I were invited to be on a team to compete against other teams in a Bible trivia contest as a fundraiser for Relay for Life we jumped at the chance. Actually, I jumped and volunteered and told Jim what we were doing.

There's no way to really prep for a Bible trivia contest - you either know it or you don't. And, it's not like you can take "the" reference book along or phone-a-friend. No electronic devices were allowed either, so there went the Kindle. But we weren't worried we had two other really smart teammates, so "bring it." How were we to know there would be an entire section on "The Chronicles of Narnia" or a huge number of questions on Disney movies? Both categories soon revealed to us that we were in trouble.

There were a couple of disputed questions. Was it really Solomon's temple or Herod's temple which was the most ornate; and what country the apostle Paul was a citizen of, the Roman Empire or Cilicia? We swept the general knowledge category. One of our teammates knew there are four subspecies of wild sheep; we all agreed on the correct guess that the tortoise has the longest life span of any animals in America; and somehow my husband

### Out Back

Carolyn Plotts



knew that the Bristle-Cone Pines are the oldest trees in North America. He also knew that caliber and year of manufacture is the reasoning behind calling some ammunition "thirty-ought-six" (30-06).

At the end of competition our team came in third. A semi-respectable showing, but I really wanted to take home that grand prize - Milky Ways are my favorite.

Just wait 'til next year. Our team starts Spring Training next month and we'll be ready.

-ob-

Spring reminds me that Tax Season is upon us. And with another Mexico mission trip fast approaching, I need to have our taxes done before we leave. Ay-yi-yi! Where will I find the time to do that? Probably the same place I find time to spend on Facebook or doing research on HGTV and the Food Network. It's going to be a priority for the next week.

It's not like the nation's economy would tank if we don't send in our

paltry little share. I guess I'm just glad we are in the portion of the population that actually pays taxes. It means we made a little money and are willing to support our country (agree with it or not). It falls into the mentality of be glad you have dirty dishes - it means you have food to eat. Or be glad you have laundry to do - it means you have clothes to wear.

-ob-

My preacher stepped on my toes Sunday during his sermon. He was talking about change and somehow brought up the subject of reality shows. Then he started naming names and included "Gold Rush."

Now, stop right there. You've gone too far. I know it's a total waste of my time and it plays on people's deep-seated natural greed. Lots of the language has to be "bleeped", but there is just something about rooting for Jack and his crew to find their Glory Hole; or young Parker to save the family's mine; and maybe hoping the Dakota Boys get their come-uppence.

Jim won't watch it and always finds something else to do if I am. All I can say is, the season is over. Mother Nature has sent them all home with thousands and thousands of dollars worth of that illusive gold. Its lure will bring them back when the ground thaws and I'll probably be back too.

## Dressing for safety on the Kansas farm

If Billy Crystal's Fernando character were to visit a Kansas farm this spring you can be sure he wouldn't be telling too many farmers, "Darling, you look marvelous." You can also bet not too many farmers step into the cab of their tractors wearing any of the high fashions portrayed on the pages of GQ or Esquire.

Looking good is great when you go to town, but safety and comfort are much more important when dressing for farm chores.

Let's begin with the head, after all that's where thinking about safety should start, says Holly Higgins, Kansas Farm Bureau safety director.

Head injuries are common on the farm and tend to be serious, Higgins adds. When doing work that involves head hazards trade your familiar ball cap or straw hat for a hard hat.

"When you're spraying chemicals, wear a wide-brimmed hat that is impervious to liquids," she notes. "Make sure the brim is wide enough to keep chemical spray from drifting down on the back of the neck or face."

Eyes have been labeled the "window to the soul" but just like all windows they can break if something is hurled, splashed or sprayed into them.

### Insight

John Schlageck



Safety goggles and sunglasses should be just as much a part of your daily garb as a good pair of steel-toed shoes, Higgins says. Throw away those athletic shoes unless you're slated for a track meet somewhere off the farm.

Sunglasses are important because they lessen eye fatigue after long hours in the bright Kansas sun. Some believe quality eyewear can also lessen the chance of cataracts in later life.

While people often consider the farm a place of quiet tranquility, many farmers experience hearing loss, the safety specialist says. As a general rule, whenever the noise level reaches 85 decibels, farmers should reach for ear protection. While farmers don't carry testing equipment to measure decibel level, they should wear protection when in doubt.

Higgins recommends ear muffs rather than ear plugs because the latter can cause compaction of ear wax which

is difficult to remove.

"Loose fitting clothes remain a definite no," she says. "If you plan to stay in the sun most of the day wear long-sleeved cotton clothing. Natural fibers allow the skin to breathe and offer protection from the sun's harmful rays."

Avoid wearing sweats with long draw strings that hang from the waist or around the neck. These strings are made of extremely strong nylon or other artificial fibers, Higgins says. These fibers don't rip or tear as easily as clothing like cotton. It's easy for dangling draw strings to catch in augers, power take offs or other moving parts.

Proper fitting clothing is important for both daylong comfort and stability, she says. When spraying chemicals, wear waterproof or impervious footwear that won't absorb chemicals.

Take off your jewelry in the field. Rings hang up on bolts, sharp corners - just about anything found around a farmstead. Don't risk losing a finger or some other limb.

While the safely dressed farmer will not make the fashion pages of GQ or even his local newspaper or social media, you won't find him/her on the obit pages either.