

Human rights council elected to address topic

In a little-noticed abomination last month, the United Nations elected a batch of countries to its Human Rights Council that should demonstrate to the whole world just where the U.N. stands on human rights.

This bunch of demons – China, Russia, Cuba, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam and Algeria – will bring a lot of collective expertise to this so-called world body. It's going to be hard to find a larger collection of human-rights violations than these nations have on their collective ledger.

Where to begin? China, where the government decides how many children couples can have, where there is no political opposition and where dissenters often just disappear? Cuba, where the people have been impoverished by decades of one-man rule, and dissenters are allowed to flee over the ocean in leaky boats?

Or Russia, where those who speak out against the leadership wind up in jail? Where elections end with one man holding the reins of power, no matter who is president? Saudi Arabia, where women can't even drive a car in public?

Or maybe you'd rather live in Vietnam or Algeria?

This Gang of Six was elected to the council by the U.N. General Assembly, giving us a glimpse of how much of the world values human rights. The election prompted a howl of protest from independent human-rights groups, but to no avail.

Other nations in this year's class, the Associated Press reported, included Britain, France, the Maldives, Macedonia, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia and South Africa. Most have somewhat better credentials for the task.

Seats are allocated by region, with all 198 member nations voting by secret ballot. That makes it hard to figure out how the choices are made.

A group called Human Rights Watch noted that five of the new members refused to even allow U.N. inspectors to visit to check alleged rights abuses. China, Russia and Algeria each has more than 10 outstanding unfulfilled requests.

Activists from Tibet protested across the street from the U.S. Headquarters in New York, hanging a banner that said "China Fails Human Rights," something of an understatement.

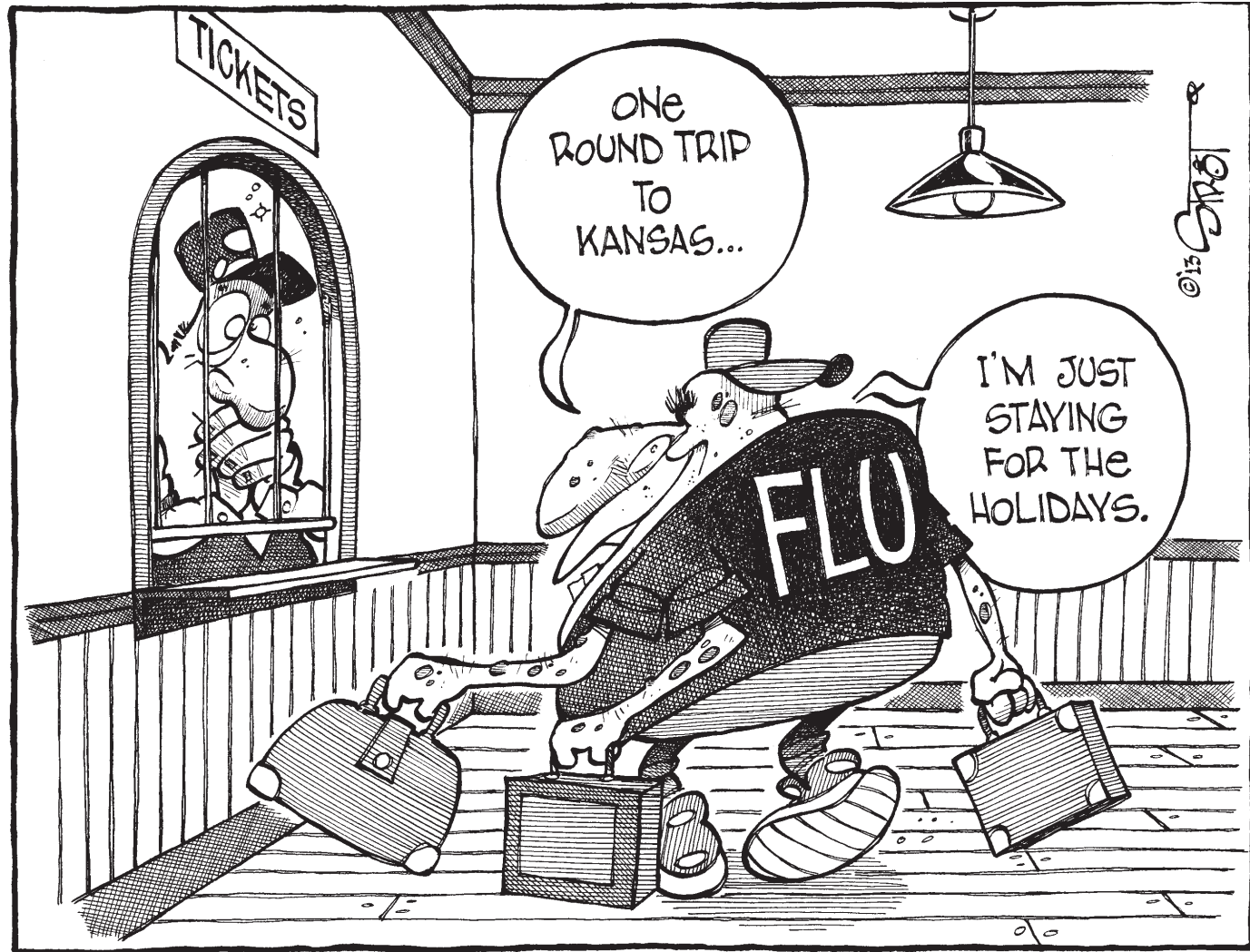
The head of a Geneva-based group UN Watch denounced what it considered the worst of the worst, the AP reported:

"China, Cuba, Russia and Saudi Arabia systematically violate the human rights of their own citizens.... For the U.N. to elect Saudi Arabia as a world judge on human rights would be like a town making a pyromaniac into chief of the fire department."

The group criticized the U.S. and the European Union for not denouncing this charade. It and like groups pointed out that while the council regularly cites Israel over the Palestinian issue, it has not once adopted a resolution critical of Russia, China or Saudi Arabia.

All of which is a pretty good argument for declaring that our world organization has a long way to go before it can be considered a champion of rights, any way you look at it. You could argue that no nation is perfect in this field, certainly not ours, but it's obvious the U.N. has no grasp of the issue at all.

— Steve Haynes



Oh, the joy of Christmas time

Days are flashing by and I can't seem to get one thing accomplished. Christmas is almost here and I don't have one box in the mail to our kids.

At Thanksgiving, the adults in our family agreed to a "no presents" policy – just the kids. So, it's gift cards for the teenagers, but that still leaves 7-year-old granddaughter, Ani, and the two little great-grandsons. Plus the Christmas goodies for each family. Problem is, said goodies have been stacked on the breakfast bar for a week and some of the containers are beginning to look suspiciously empty.

This time, I can't blame Jim entirely. I make a white fudge that should rightly be called "Crack Fudge" because it is so addictive. I find myself taking a piece every time I walk by. From the looks of the almost empty container I have been walking by a lot. I'm going to make one more double batch and get it in the mail before it has a chance to disappear again.

—ob—

Fruitcake is one of those things you either like or you don't. There doesn't seem to be any middle ground. It's been years since I made fruitcake. After real-

Out Back

Carolyn Plotts



izing the cost of all the ingredients, it's going to be years before I do it again. (At my age, I don't foresee it ever happening again.)

But a promise is a promise and I told my boss that I would make a fruitcake to represent our office at a fruitcake contest being held after the local high school Christmas concert. I followed the recipe pretty close. I didn't have currents or dates, so I doubled up on the candied cherries and nuts. In the freezer I found a half empty bag of shelled sunflower seeds, so in they went. The rules of the contest stated that no alcohol was allowed so I substituted rum extract. Although reading the label I saw it contained 25 percent alcohol.

I should have planned ahead a little better because it takes about 3 1/2 hours

to bake a fruitcake. It was 2 a.m. before the cake came out of the oven. I let it cool for the prescribed 20 minutes before trying to take it out of the pans.

Trying is the operative word because it did not want to come out. Finally, after much prying, it did, but in pieces. The cake sort of separated in the middle.

Did you know that fruitcake can be stuck back together? Neither did I, but it can. Using a pancake turner, I carefully slid it under the cake still stuck to the bottom of the pan. Then, with a flick of the wrist, I inverted it back onto its other half. Press and push. Push and press. Presto. Change-o. It became one again. Just so it holds together long enough for the contest. Because, judging from the crumbs I sampled, it actually tastes pretty darned good.

—ob—

The children at our church had their Christmas program Sunday night. The director/mother asked if I would play the part of a southern talking, silver-haired, cooking show hostess known as "Paula Queen." What do you think? Type casting?

The blind leading the blind, like mother, like daughter

Open Season

Cynthia Haynes



I'm done taking directions from my eldest daughter. From either of them, in fact.

I thought after living in Georgia for a dozen years, she knew her way around. But that was before she got me lost not once, but twice, on a single expedition.

Oh, we got where we were going. We weren't even that late. But I realized that I'd known where I was going, and I don't even live in Georgia.

Don't get me wrong. Both of my daughters are bright, intelligent young women with good careers, well respected by their peers. I just have to remember they are related to their mother.

And anyone who knows Cynthia knows she has a lot of common sense, but no sense of direction. She makes up for it by going around the block a lot. Her record for a block is about 50 miles on a side, by the way, but she did get home that same day.

She always gets where she is going. So do the girls. But taking directions from them, well, that's not something I recommend.

We started out Thursday afternoon to take Taylor, our 3 1/2-year-old granddaughter, to the zoo in Columbia, S.C., which is about an hour from her home near Augusta, Ga.

Cynthia and I met Taylor's mom, our younger daughter Lindsay, at work and picked up the kid seat and a backpack full of supplies a toddler might need – milk, snacks, wipes, toys, potty seat, a change of clothes, plus the instructions:

be sure she goes potty before you leave school. Be sure she goes potty before you leave the zoo. You get the picture. We picked up Felicia, who was having a bad day at work, then went to get Taylor. I found my way to suburbs just fine, then I made my first mistake: "I turn right up here, right?" "No, daddy, turn left." "You sure?" "I'm sure."

Well, who am I to argue with a girl who's sure? But after going left for a couple of miles, I was pretty sure we'd missed the preschool. I turned back, found the school where I thought it'd been, and we got Taylor. Getting Taylor out of class would make a whole other column, but there's not time here. She proudly told all her friends she was going to the zoo.

And here, I have to admit, I did miss my turn for the freeway. Felicia chided me, but I knew two ways to get to it. We got to the zoo with an hour of daylight, and Taylor ran from animal to animal, ohhing and ahhing.

After Taylor said it was time to go home, we got back to the freeway. Felicia said to go through town and take

Highway 1 out of town so we could stop at a Sonic. Taylor wanted a shake. I nodded, drove east.

"Where do I turn?" "Just keep going." "Here." "No." "Next bridge." "No, I think you keep going."

Only that was taking us out of town to the east, and I knew better. Made a U turn. Started south. Pretty soon, I was convinced it was the wrong road. When we passed under a rail line and then by the regional airport I knew we were lost. By the time the four-lane boulevard turned into a two-lane track, so did Felicia. She consulted her iPhone.

"It says we turn right on Boiling Springs Road in 9.2 miles," she said.

And I knew that was at least in the general direction we needed to go, toward the freeway home.

Meantime, we were getting farther and farther away from town and farther into the country and – we missed Boiling Springs Road, got off on Highway 6 instead. Not to worry; the iPhone sent us down Bethany Church Road instead, back to Boiling Springs. You gotta love southern road names.

And if that has you confused, then join the crowd. Each road got narrower and darker and more winding than the last, until we reached Highway 34, and that led to I-20 and back to Augusta.

We made it home. We weren't even late.

But next time, I'm taking my Garmin and not listening to any daughter directions. They're sweet, but I've learned my lesson.



Thumbs up to the gentleman who left money at the Norton Dairy Queen on Thursday to pay for meals for anyone who came inside the store to get their meal. It lasted well into the evening. Brought in.

Thumbs up to the ladies of St. Francis Society for the nice tea they had for the senior citizens on Thursday. Called in.

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

Remember 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. Also remember all Letters to the Editor must be signed.

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

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

Kansas Press Association



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

STAFF

Dana Paxton..... General Manager
Advertising Director/Managing Editor
email: dpaxton@nwkansas.com

Dick Boyd..... Blue Jay Sports
nortontelegram@nwkansas.com

Michael Stephens..... Reporter
Society Editor/Area Sports
mstephens@nwkansas.com

Vicki Henderson..... Computer Production

Marcia Shelton..... Office Manager

Call Dana for your next ad. 785 - 877 - 3361!