

Saddam's capture doesn't end trouble

One more down. U.S. troops caught up with Saddam Hussein over the weekend, opening the last chapter in a sorry history of murder, deceit and brutality.

Dragged out into the light and given a quick physical at U.S. headquarters, Saddam did not seem all that fierce. He had few friends, no command, no forces. His last two bodyguards tried to run when U.S. troops approached.

He was spirited out of the country, taken to an undisclosed location where American military experts will interrogate him.

The one-time dictator appeared in film clips to be confused and disoriented, but his defiant nature reportedly came to the surface later, when Iraqi leaders were taken to see him in person.

The ex-despot said he had been "firm but fair" and dismissed the thousands found in mass graves as "nothing but thieves."

Though his camp was armed and the dictator wore a sidearm, not a shot was fired as American troops swooped down on the huts of a sheep farm.

They found the mighty Saddam in a hole under one of the huts. He had a quarter of a million American dollars, but few friends.

There was dancing in the streets of Baghdad, and more than a few smiles even in his nearby hometown of Tikrit, but Saddam's capture will not end the violence in Iraq.

That will take, as President Bush pointed out, months, perhaps years, as the country develops a new government and outside forces are hunted down and eliminated.

American troops are going to be there for a while, and yes, American blood will be shed.

Regardless of what Democratic partisans say, the U.S. is in this for the long haul. We are winning. Casualties have been light by any standard, both during the campaign to take Iraq and during the occupation.

No loss of life is good, but we have to accept when fighting a war that there will be some casualties. Opponents who crow happily at every American setback are not doing this country a service.

Sen. Jay Rockefeller was quick to pronounce Sunday that the fighting will continue because the terrorists "are not fighting for Saddam, but against the United States."

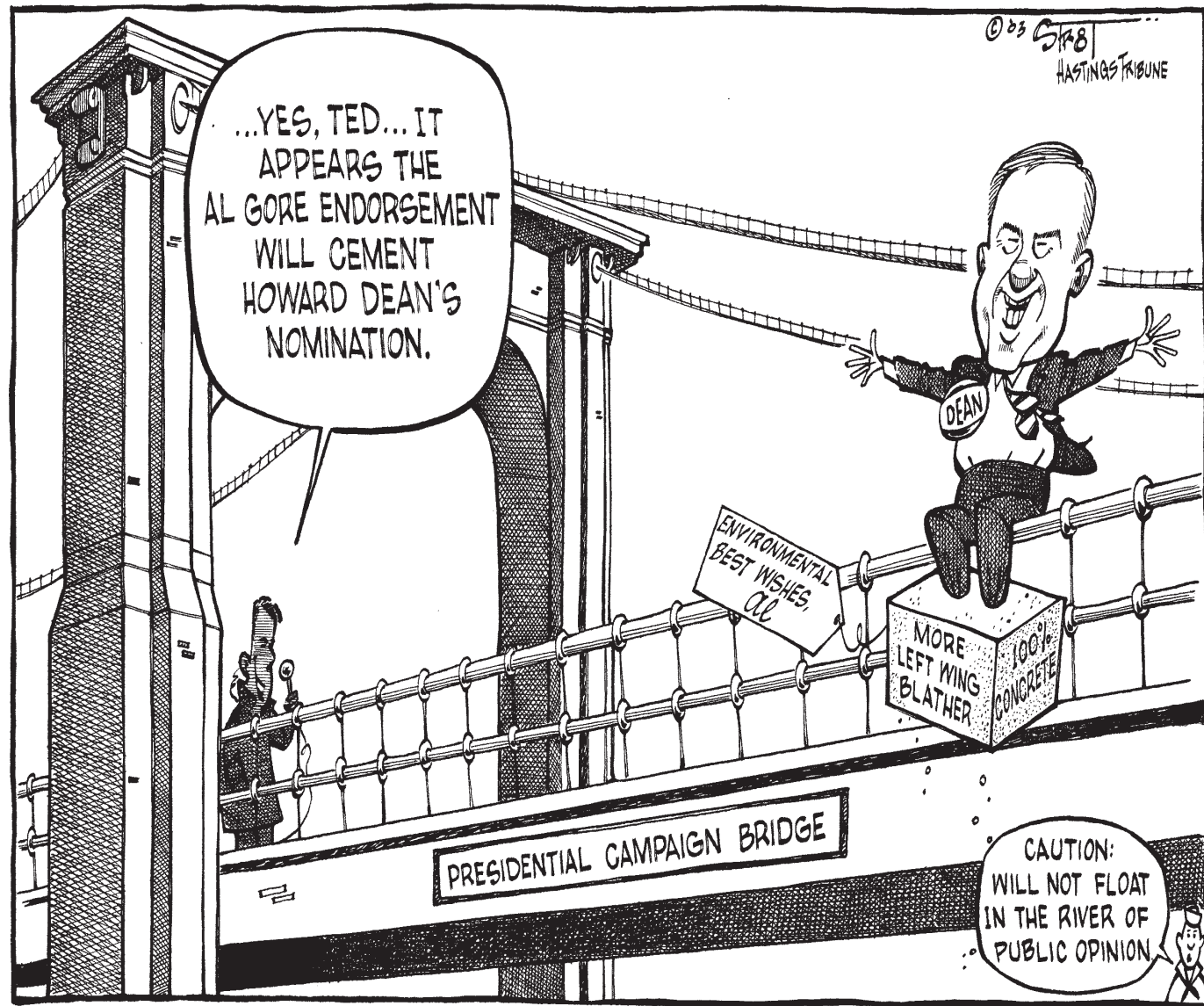
Of course they are. Some of these people are sworn enemies of this country and everything that we stand for. They hate the West, they hate democracy, they hate the idea of freedom for their countrymen.

But the U.S. has and will prevail. We will win the war on terrorism.

Eventually, we'll find Osama bin Laden as well. Others will take his place.

We will defeat them as well. But for now, there's cause to celebrate.

We got him. — Steve Haynes



Flu had her down and out for week

The past week is a blur of mentholatum ointment, humidifiers, cough medicine with codeine and, ultimately, a trip to the doctor.

Jim has played "Nurse Nancy," but I'm afraid I was never awake long enough to appreciate his bedside manner.

I'm not entirely sure I had the flu, but if it wasn't, I don't want to get any closer to it. Whatever "it" was left me completely exhausted. I came home from work late last Monday night and immediately fell asleep.

I scarcely roused for the next 24 hours. For days after, I had no strength, and couldn't stay awake for more than an hour or two at a time. My temperature would be 102 degrees one day and down to normal the next. All I drank was water and all I ate was rice.

This is the sickest I ever remember being. I tried to go in to work Thursday. Bad idea. I was trying to write an obituary for Friday's paper when it dawned on me that if I didn't take care of myself, someone would be writing my obituary.

Now that's a sobering thought. What would my obituary read like, anyway? Would the reporter know me well enough to give it that personal touch? Or would they just say, "She was a member of this club and that and will be greatly missed."

Out Back Carolyn Plotts



I've got a lot of living left to do, a lot of places to go and things to do. I'm not afraid to die, but I'm not in any hurry either.

For now, I'll tell "The Grim Reaper" to get to the back of the line. My number hasn't been called yet.

—ob— Kara flew from Dallas to Washington on Saturday. She will be attending one of the White House Christmas parties with her sister Halley, who works for the White House.

When we awoke Sunday morning to the news that Saddam Hussein had been captured, I had to call to see what Halley's "take" on the situation was. I should have known better. After all, it was still before noon.

I woke them up and told them the news. So much for my Washington "insider" perspective.

Watching the President give a news

conference this morning, a reporter asked him what the procedure would be to bring Saddam to trial. Mr. Bush gave the appropriate response by saying the Iraqi government would be involved in those decisions, and the Iraqi people would decide his fate.

Then, almost as an aside, he said, "I know what I would personally like to do to him." He went on to say his personal feelings were not important at this point. It was to be the judgment of the Iraqis who had suffered at the hands of this dictator.

But everyone knew what he meant: "Give me ten minutes in a room alone with him." We all have our own idea of what justice we would mete out to a person like Saddam.

But how can you punish a person like him? Execution seems too swift and easy. Yet, civilized people couldn't do to him the things he did to people. He enjoyed inflicting pain. Mostly, in my opinion, he enjoyed the power. Power over people's lives.

Perhaps the best punishment of all would be to make him spend the rest of his life with absolutely no power over anything. And a television set tuned to cover the politics of a democratic Iraq. Now that would be punishment.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

To the Editor
Concerning the new policy of not using crosses to decorate graves at the cemetery, it appears that political correctness and cultural sensitivity are trying to invade Norton, right here in the heart of America. Our city council fell prey!

Political correctness and cultural sensitivity allow a situation in which an infinitesimal, inconsequential minority of people try to dictate to the majority of citizens.

These attempts are the cornerstone of small groups of individuals and radical agitators trying to wish their agenda into the mainstream. They are characterized by the man that wants to remove God from the Pledge of Allegiance, secularists that want to remove God from our schools and

other American traditions, others that are trying to corrupt our learning institutions from grade school through the university level, down to the handful of disgruntled, would be fans that dislike Indian names used for mascots of sports teams. These people are misguided at best, and looney at worst. In most cases, obviously, it's the latter.

It's time for the overwhelming majority to tell these infinitesimal, inconsequential minorities that they can, in words that they might possibly understand, stuff it!

The council should reverse its decision.

R.W. Yeager
Norton

We should always be thankful

THANKSGIVING — Now that should bring memories abound ing to your mind.

This year found me at the bedside of my father in the hospital, and then on Saturday, two of my children and three of my grandchildren arrived.

Even in sad times, there is so much to be thankful for.

I send a Thanksgiving greeting card to Kazuaki in Japan. I know Japan does not celebrate Thanksgiving as we do, but he seemed impressed with our "thankfulness" when he was an American Field Service student living in our home in 1970-'71.

Yes, we can always find many things to thank God for every day, but I like the tradition of having a day set aside just for that purpose.

I feel traditions play a big part in making holidays so joyous.

I remember the traditions when we were students at Norton Community High School.

There were the weeks of anticipation and preparing for the "big football game" with Oberlin. We would decorate the school, make and sell little "red devils" for the big bon fire. I know of a few that never made it to the bon fire, at least one is in my "memory items box".

The weather was always cold, but we didn't seem to mind. It was the "tradition" of that game that I miss.

You ate the turkey around the football game, either very early or you gathered with family later after the "big game".

Ah, memories, I love them... they take on a life of their own. I have a friend who said about her husband that he does not lie, nor does he embellish upon the truth, he

Memories Sonya Montgomery



simply embroiders memories to make them more beautiful.

Nothing kept that traditional football game from being played. I think (if my memory serves me right — actually I could look up the facts in a school yearbook, but it will be more fun to hear from readers who will correct me) it was November 1948. We had snow that entire winter that can only be imagined by those who do not remember some of those wonderful snow and fun filled winters.

Well, no matter the weather, football would be played. So snow plows were taken to the airport runway to prepare a

field of sorts, mark off the yard strips and the competition began. Oh, yes, we had a football field, but there was too much snow in Elmwood Park.

I'm not sure about the seating...that has faded from my memory, I do remember the band marching in uniform.

We who played trombones and other valve instruments used a special combination of oil and alcohol for the slides and valves so they would not freeze while we were trying to play.

If you are of that vintage and care to "embellish or embroider" write a note to the editor, sign your name and possibly she will let us continue this conversation in the paper.

All memories are not sweet and happy ones, but the variety is what makes life — life. If we never loved, we would not have pain, if we never had pain, we would not know the joy to love and to be loved.

Sort through your memories and may the joyous ones be the ones you dwell on this holiday season.

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