

Television footage not very appetizing

Do you tire, as do we, seeing the captured Saddam Hussein's mouth wide open as a medical person probes the inside? Or tire of seeing this same medical person check his hair for lice?

That's the most offensive piece of television news footage we've seen in a long time. We join in hailing the capture of this brutal murderer. We don't relish the thought of having to endure his initial medical check over and over and over.

You can't escape it. No matter the news or talk show channel, there it is in all its gory detail. Caution: don't try to eat your evening meal watching TV news; you'll lose it because you'll be subjected to this lice-and-mouth inspection.

Networks will argue that they are running this nearly non-stop because that's the only footage they have of Saddam after his capture. That's not a good enough reason to flaunt it. But television news, lest we forget, is nothing more than *entertainment*. Pure and simple.

Ratman's capture was big news. Make no mistake about that. We've been on his trail since moving our military into his country months ago. It almost looked like he fell through the cracks, that he would live his life out in his own way. Little did we envision finding him holed up in a cave fit for rats. Sorry about that, we are not diminishing the stature of rats.

The icing on the cake would be to find Osama bin Laden in similar quarters. We only hope that if we capture that joker that we aren't subject to the lice-and-mouth inspection. There are just some things better left unpictured.

—Tom A. Dreiling



Kittens find a new home

They were cute as the dickens. They were fuzzy, warm, cuddly and lovey. And, they were driving Molly Monster crazy.

Ever since we brought the kittens home last week, Molly, who thinks of herself as our chief cat, has had her tail out of joint.

She only got somewhat mollified when the kittens left earlier this week for their new home.

Open Season

Cynthia Haynes



She really doesn't like cats to begin with, and she especially dislikes kittens, which have no fear of her or appreciation for her sense of dignity.

Molly still hasn't forgiven us for bringing home April Alice more than a year ago. She considers the well-mannered April as an invader. April's five kittens last year drove Molly nuts. She hated each and every one of them, and couldn't wait for them to leave.

About the only animal that Molly tolerates is Annie, the dog. Molly likes Annie and will get into her pen whenever she can. In fact, I think, Molly thinks she's a dog and that's why she doesn't like other cats.

As for the newcomers, they were just beautiful and I really wished I could have kept both of them.

They were a matched set — twin sisters. It took me almost a week to tell them apart.

I'm sure their various white, black and brown splotches are not totally the same, but they don't stay still long enough to tell. I told them apart by their noses, and that's how I called them.

I wouldn't name them, since I wasn't keeping them, but I had to differentiate. So they were Brown Nose and White Nose. I have no idea what their new, real names are.

Steve claimed there is significant dif-

ferences in the colors on their tails, also, but I didn't bother to check. All I had to do is check noses and, since I count cat noses every morning and evening anyway to make sure everyone is here, that was easy.

It took most of a week for April Alice to warm up to the newcomers. The first couple of nights, she slunk under the ottoman in the reading room to get away from the little nuisances. However, since one of the kittens played patty cake with her for almost an hour the second night, she decided they aren't so bad. I think she would bond with one if the other left.

I was determined to find them a home together, since they'd never been apart.

A classified ad brought at least a dozen calls. Most people just wanted barn cats and these wouldn't do. However, after the folks came and carried off the twins, I got at least three more calls from people who wanted them for house pets.

WRITE:

The Norton Telegram encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of public interest. Letters should be brief, clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

Once you could both travel and relax

Life seems too fast these days. There's no time to relax, too many places to go, too many things to do.

And then the pace doubles for the holidays....

There's no time to stroll the streets and enjoy just living here. We managed that in October and the first half of November, though... six glorious weeks of staying home, walking in the country, lounging around the house, getting some work done.

And then the travel started. Thanksgiving in Lawrence and Concordia. Business meetings in Columbia, Mo., and Kansas City, with a side trip to Salina to send Cynthia home, and an overnight in Emporia with my brother and sister.

When I got home, I was beat, but there was still a meeting in Topeka and dinner in Kansas City the next day.

By the time I got back, my elbows were sore from the arm rests of my truck, and my exercise program was in denial.

The long ride home had me dreaming of the days when fast streamliners crossed the state day and night and a Pullman berth could be your ticket to civilized travel to the city — and beyond.

You can still travel by train, of course. Amtrak streamliners call at McCook and Holdrege in Nebraska, with berths for Lincoln, Omaha and Chicago east, and to Denver and the west. The Chief still stops at Garden City and Dodge, but it's a little far to drive.

Those trains are not much help in northwest Kansas, unless you happen to be going where they go, but once, you could travel the state in style on the Union Pa-

On the Prairie Dog Steve Haynes



cific. Kansas City? Leaving Oakley at 10:42 p.m., the white-jacketed porter would show you to an old-fashioned open section berth. You'd wake up in time for breakfast on the domeliner City of St. Louis, unless you had to get off at Lawrence at 6:04 a.m. Kansas City arrival was 7 a.m. sharp, with the cars continuing on to St. Louis on the Wabash well into the 1960s.

The train didn't go to Columbia, by the way, but the stop in Centralia, at 10:08 a.m., was only 21 miles away, with connecting trains both ways.

Wherever you got off, you'd be refreshed, but you'd need a shower. You could check into a hotel on arrival.

Getting back, the domeliner left Kansas City Union Station at 9:40 p.m., but arrival in Oakley was 3:40 a.m., a little too middle-of-the night for me.

Better to spend the night in the city — you already have the room — and take a coach seat on the 8:30 Portland Rose for the West. That allowed time for breakfast and lunch in the diner and a long, relaxing ride across the state. Have a beer, take a nap, relax a little before hitting Oakley at 2:20 p.m.

The Portland streamliner actually made the trip 10 minutes faster than the City. And instead of sore elbows, you'd have read a book on the way home.

For the hardy, or the late, mail train No. 69 left Union Station at 11 p.m. and continued west of Salina as a mixed train, making all stops. It struggled into Oakley at 9:50 a.m., 10 hours, 50 minutes from Kansas City. The Rose made it in 5:50.

The exceptionally hardy might book passage on the Missouri Pacific train from Downs, which left at 12:45 p.m. and arrived in Kansas City at 11:55 p.m. that night. There was no food or sleeper, but the coach was comfortable and the mail got through.

The Rock Island ran its Rocky Mountain Rocket right through here — Norton, a flag stop at Colby, and Goodland — but the westbound times were for the bats, and the train went to Omaha on the way to Chicago.

Westbound, the connection to Denver was a little better than the Burlington out of McCook, though. If you had a ride, you could go west on the Rocket and come back on the Zephyr. The Rock once had a connection to Kansas City, through Belleville and McFarland, but that was long gone by the 1950s and tenuous at best when it did run.

Those days are gone, and more's the pity. Today we have I-70 to contend with, with its trucks and snow and slush and white-knuckled gloom.

But there was a time when you could sit in a plush chair and watch the state go by while you relaxed your way across Kansas.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

To the Editor:

We moved to Norton eight years ago. We decided, in part, to live here due to the great reputation that Norton had as a safe, old-fashioned, church-going community in which to raise our children. We are a Christian family originally from St. Paul, Minnesota...a major metropolitan city filled with violence, secularism, materialism and godless values as the mainstay. It was a great and pleasing contrast to see the difference in values between the two communities. Why, the Norton paper even had a prayer in the upper left hand corner! Norton has had respect for our Christian heritage in which our country was largely founded upon that the ACLU now spurns and tries to undo.

Or does it?

I, like many people that I've talked to, am appalled that the very religious heritage that our country was founded upon is now being slowly eradicated here in the religious belt of our country...Norton. Since our founding, unmarked graves

have always been commemorated with a cross. It is a national symbol of the recognition of our founding Judeo-Christian religion when one passes from this life to the next.

We have two children that attend Eisenhower. I applaud the hard work and sincerity of all the teachers and students, and especially Mrs. Morel. However, sacred Christian songs were reworded in such a way as to take away their original meaning and intent: "Joy to the world, the Lord is come" became, "Joy to the world, our shopping's done". I did talk to Mr.

Hillman in which he graciously heard my concern. And I thank him for that. That being said, where does that leave us...the city of Norton?

I'm not asking the city of Norton to proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord. I'm only asking that those of us who do adhere to that statement be allowed to continue to elicit the respect for our religious beliefs that our founding fathers fought for.

Perhaps then God will send the rain/snow.

Blessings,
Robin Somers

Genealogy group appreciates microfilm

Dear Editor:

I would like to commend the Haynes for their generosity in making available the micro-film for the Norton County and the Norton Telegram. Genealogy has become a way of life. Second, third and fourth generation Norton countians want to

know about their ancestors. The e-mail to the Genealogy department of the library is mind boggling. The visits to the library will be great. Again thank you for your generosity.

Ron Temple
Vice President, Norton Genealogy

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