

from our viewpoint...

# The jitters have hit Capitol Hill bunch

A few more U.S. Senators said this week they aren't going to seek re-election. They join a list of both Senate and House members who have opted out of asking for another term.

Some of the departing helped lay the corner stone of the capitol building. Well, that may be exaggerating it a bit, but not by much.

Why are some of these veteran office holders dashing for the door? Don't let the "to spend more time with family" convince you. That's just more of the political hot air they ingested during their time *serving* we the people.

We think the reason for the outflow is directly connected to the childish behavior by both sides of the political aisle over health care reform. They looked like a bunch of third graders — no offense to third graders — with their sarcastic attitude. The only thing missing in this battle of words — not coherent words, mind you — in both chambers were bows and arrows.

Health care reform might become a reality soon. Then again, it just might not. And the edge the Democrats hold currently might not hold up after the votes are counted in November of this year. If they don't get it done now, put this effort on the shelf with the other attempts at reforming the way we do things medically in this country.

The Republicans have been tagged the "Party of No." The Democrats, we feel, should be tagged as the "Party of Excess." The GOP is looking for a cheaper way of reforming health care, the Democrats aren't overly bothered with the price tag.

The latest to turn down re-election bids are Democrats Chris Dodd of Connecticut and North Dakota's Byron Dorgan. Their decisions caught many Capitol Hillers by surprise. Dorgan serves a state filled with Republicans and from the outside it looks like North Dakota just might settle on a Republican this time around. Polls showed Dodd's small lead was getting smaller. He probably reasoned it's better to go out a winner than cap a long career with being forced out by the voters. Dorgan? Who knows.

If the voters are as disgusted with the Congress as polling shows, we look for a lot of surprises on election night. All 435 members of the House and one-third of the Senate are up for re-election.

Here in Kansas the race being watched closest is between Republican incumbents Jerry Moran and Todd Tiahrt for the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by Sen. Sam Brownback. Moran is from Hays and Tiahrt from Wichita. Early polling showed Moran with a big lead. However, at this time polls see it as a toss up. The two will face off in the August primary.

This is one race that won't be affected by the health care reform fight. With both being Republicans, both were on the losing side when the Senate passed its version of reform.

It will be interesting to see how many other House and Senate sitters decide they've had enough. And exit. — *Tom Dreiling*

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## The Goodland Star-News

(USPS No. 222-460. ISSN 0893-0562)

Member: Kansas Press Association  
Inland Press Association Colorado Press Association  
National Newspaper Association  
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Published every Tuesday and Friday except the days observed for New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas Day, at 1205 Main Ave., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

Periodicals postage paid at Goodland, Kan. 67735; entered at the Goodland, Kan., Post Office under the Act of Congress of March 8, 1878.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Goodland Star-News, 1205 Main Ave., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

TELEPHONE: (785) 899-2338. Editorial e-mail: [star-news@nwkansas.com](mailto:star-news@nwkansas.com). Advertising questions can be sent to: [goodlandads@nwkansas.com](mailto:goodlandads@nwkansas.com)

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SUBSCRIPTIONS: In Sherman County and adjacent counties: three months, \$29; six months, \$46; 12 months, \$81. Out of area, weekly mailing of two issues: three months, \$39; six months, \$54; 12 months, \$89 (All tax included). Mailed individually each day: (call for a price).

Incorporating:

**The Goodland Daily News**  
1932-2003

**The Sherman  
County Herald**  
Founded by Thomas McCants  
1935-1989

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STAR**  
Founded by Eric and  
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## Death Penalty Repeal Arguments for Kansas' 2010 Legislature...

### ①. THE HIGH COST OF APPEALS...

IF THE SAPS IN KANSAS EVER FIGURE OUT HOW TO LIMIT APPEALS WE *WILL* BE IN TROUBLE.



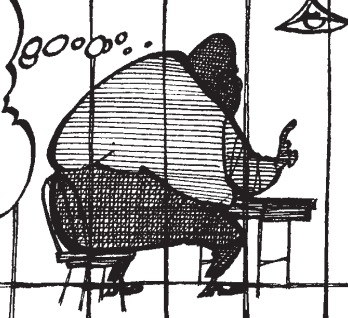
### ②. STATES WITHOUT CAPITAL PUNISHMENT HAVE FEWER MURDERS...

Welcome to NORTH DAKOTA  
POP. 100,000

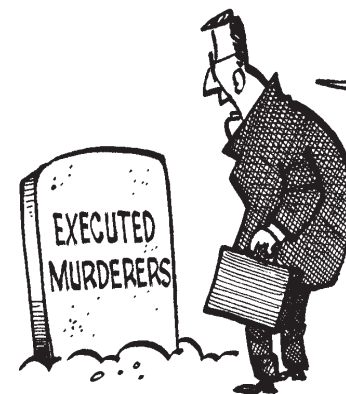
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### ③. IT'S MORE FITTING FOR MURDERERS TO SIT IN PRISON THINKING ABOUT THEIR CRIME...

THE NEXT TIME I GET OUT I'LL COMMIT IT DIFFERENTLY!



### ④. THE DEATH PENALTY DOES NOT DETER CRIME...



WELL, MR. FERNWELL, I SEE YOU'VE BEEN STAYING OUT OF TROUBLE.

## Car and I glad December is over

My car is really, really glad that December is over.

My little white Solara had a bad month, but it had nothing to do with Christmas.

It started after the first big snowfall.

The roads were mostly clear, but it was dark and the temperature stood at 7 degrees as I left my job at the Pamida Pharmacy in Norton at 6:30 p.m.

Inavigated out of the parking lot and headed west towards supper and my evening job of helping put together *The Oberlin Herald*.

About a mile past the last lights of Norton, I knew there was a problem. I suspected a flat front tire, so I pulled as far to the right as the snowy shoulder would allow.

My flashlight didn't have the best battery, but it showed that I was right. The right front tire was not going to take me to Oberlin — or even back to Norton.

I called for help, and two guardian angels arrived to get me back to the co-op service station in Norton and change my flat for the "donut" spare.



**cynthia  
haynes**

• open season

I drove home at 40 mph and was a little late for both supper and work. The car got two new front tires.

Then came more snows, and as Christmas drew near, I decided I needed to empty my trunk of all the recyclables I store in there.

I fill paper grocery bags with glass, plastic, newspapers, magazines and chip board and then store them in the trunk of my car until it is full. Then it's time to go to the recycling center and unload.

Unfortunately, I didn't even get close.

The snow was too much for my little car. We got stuck at an intersection several blocks north of the center. I could back up a little, but I couldn't go very far forward. Using all my snow-driving tricks, I finally got the car

headed back the way we came. We were still stuck and I was about to get out and try to find my shovel under all the trash in my trunk when a city truck stopped and the driver got out and gave me a push. That little oomph got me and my trashy car on our way home.

Then the Monday after Christmas, I was on my way home from Norton again.

I saw them. I jammed on the brakes and moved to the right without jerking the wheel.

It was no use. Bambi ran right in front of me, and I bounced her into the left lane.

The housing around the left headlight was broken but the bulb miraculously was spared. Although the hood was slightly dented, the car was drivable. The deer didn't fare as well.

It's been too cold to worry about much more than getting where I have to go and getting home, so nothing has gotten fixed.

Still, it's not December anymore, and that's got to be good news for my poor little trashy, dented Solara.

## Congressman completes listening tour

To the Editor:

I recently completed my 13th annual Big First Listening Tour, "From Washington to Home," holding town hall meetings in each of the 69 counties in the First Congressional District.

I appreciated meeting with all those who took time out of their day to share their ideas and concerns with me. As a representative for our state, it is essential I understand the issues that concern Kansans. My annual listening tour helps me accomplish this goal.

My efforts in Washington, D.C., remain much the same today, as they were when I was first elected — to see that we have prosperity in the communities we call home.



**jerry  
moran**

• in Congress

This has become more difficult as President Obama pursues a big-government strategy, represented by bailouts, stimulus packages, cap and trade legislation, government intervention in health care, Cash for Clunkers and financial re-regulation.

I have voted against each of these damaging proposals because they threaten our way of life

in Kansas and make it more difficult to leave things better for the next generation. I have heard Kansans' concerns about these issues and will make sure those in our nation's capital understand them as well.

If there were any issues we did not get to discuss or if you were unable to attend, please contact me through my Web site at [www.jerrymoran.house.gov](http://www.jerrymoran.house.gov).

Based upon what I heard from Kansans at each town hall meeting, I will return to Washington, D.C., committed fully to fighting for what I believe is right for America.

Jerry Moran  
Congressman 1st District

## Handing out well deserved 'thumbs up'

**Thumbs Up** to our community's snow removal crews, for your timely attention to our streets, good job; to Crystal (Schiels) Heble, and sponsors, for the recent good deed rendered the residents at the Sherman County Good Samaritan Society; and to those former Cowboy/Cowgirl basketball players for lending a hand during practice sessions during the Christmas break. All of the above are GOOD for GOODland!

-td-

If ever we get a Welcome Center here as Editor Tom Betz talked about in his Tuesday editorial, one thing that must be included in the center's inventory are Goodland bumper stickers. Two kinds: One for our townspeople that simply says GOODLAND in black on a gold background, and another for visitors that proclaim, "I Visited Goodland, Kansas." That second one should spark a lot of curiosity, especially among those living in other states. Worth a try!

-td-

During 2010, I would like to see our U.S. Senate and House members "dress down" when they are debating issues carried by C-SPAN. The gents are always attired as though they are going to a high class social event. They should face the cameras without a coat on, sleeves rolled up and neckties loosened — you know, the "work look." I know rules won't permit it, but who says the rules can't be changed?

td-

A friend once responded to a complaint about too much snow this way, "What's your problem? You don't need to worry about how your yard looks!" Hadn't thought of that.

**tom  
dreiling**

• time out with td



-td-

A computer, I found out....again, is no smarter than the dude operating it. Case in point: In my column on weight loss in Tuesday's paper, I mentioned that the best weight loss result is losing no more than a pound a month. Then — this is where I blew it — I said if you are "185 pounds today, for example, by the time Christmas rolls around you'll be a slimmer 175." How wrong can I be; if you lose one pound a month for 12 months, and you started at 185 pounds, you will be a slimmer 173 pounds by Christmas. And what entered my mind pointing out the error? A 'gotcha' voice, that of longtime employee here at the paper Jim Bowker! He has a way of pointing out errors, making them sound almost like sins. Maybe there is an 11th Commandment: "Thou shalt not publicly exhibit one's inability to pass along information in other than an accurate manner." I'll have to start whispering "Bowker" in my computer's ear.

-td-

Gosh, we are in the eighth day of the new year already and there hasn't been any mud slinging from any of the likely candidates for state and national offices here in Kansas. Could this be the beginning of something good? Don't think so. Just wait until their voices start thawing out from the winter freeze!

-td-

Grandson Grayson, going on 6, was in a Christmas concert at his school before the break. After the class finished singing, the audience applauded and Grayson began bowing, so the audience continued clapping, and he kept bowing. Mind you he was the only child in his class of 10 doing this. The teacher eventually brought it to a halt. After the concert, daddy Todd asked why he did that: "Because Elmo on Sesame Street said when people clap for you, you are supposed to bow." Who says television doesn't have an impact on viewers?

-td-

Denver's done (Broncos). 8-8 after a 6-0 start. Whipping by Kansas City at home. Seems like some kind of 'itis' invaded the team again in the second half of the season, much as it has the past few years. It'll be interesting to see who gets pink slips, or who opts out of the organization. The season has been a good one for the young coach. He experienced the best and the worst. Had he ended up like maybe 13-3 and got into the playoffs, and maybe even beyond, I think the 33-year-old coach would have been hard to live with; too much success too early. He'll be better prepared next season. I think part of the problem with a lot of us is nothing more than living in the past, the years of the great John Elway. Hang in there...I'm still wearing my Broncos cap.

-td-

Have a good evening! Bronco fan or not; Democrat, Republican or Independent; rich or poor; tall or short; plump or skinny; bald or not — it makes no difference, the house of worship of your choice will warmly welcome you this weekend.