

from our viewpoint...

Safety the word as harvest begins

Let’s make safety the word everyone lives by as the wheat harvest rolls across our part of the state. Farming is a dangerous job, even with all the safety equipment on today’s trucks, tractors and combines. Those who work in the fields need to be constantly on their guard and make sure all that safety equipment is in place and used. Shields and guards won’t protect faces or fingers when they are stashed in the barn or shed. Hurrying is another problem. With storm clouds on the horizon, everyone wants to finish one last field, one last task, one last little thing. All too often, it turns into the last thing they do, or the last thing before the trip to the hospital. Slow-moving machinery is a problem on highways. Drivers need to slow down when they come up behind a piece of farm machinery. Look carefully before you pass. Remember folks, if that piece of machinery went any faster, the man or woman driving it would be going faster. They’re doing the best they can, and its a rare farmer who won’t pull his or her piece of equipment as far off the road as possible to allow cars and trucks to go around. But when you’re on a hill, there’s a double yellow line or you’re approaching an intersection, stay cool, stay back and don’t pass. They’ll get your chance soon enough. Farmers need to be sure an have a slow moving equipment triangle on the back of any implement that goes out on the road.

Another major problem during harvest is trucks that have sat for months without being moved or maintained. Sometimes harvest is the only time these trucks are moved. Before putting your wife, daughter, son or second cousin Fred into a truck to take the grain to the elevator, check it out. Make sure the tires are good and the brakes work.

If anything else goes wrong, it’ll stop. You may not like having to figure out how to fix a truck full of grain sitting on the side of the road halfway to the elevator but, at least, your family and helpers will be OK — unless, of course, the temperature reaches 103 degrees and they have a heat stroke waiting for help. So take some time for safety, for yourselves and for those you care about. It only takes a little while to check the truck, put the guards on the combine, buckle a seat belt. It takes only a second more to stop at a main road and look both ways. It also only takes a second for a machine to tip over, a truck to run off the road or a stuck part to start going again. We don’t have enough people out here in northwest Kansas, and we really can’t afford to lose any. Stay safe. We need you. — Cynthia Haynes

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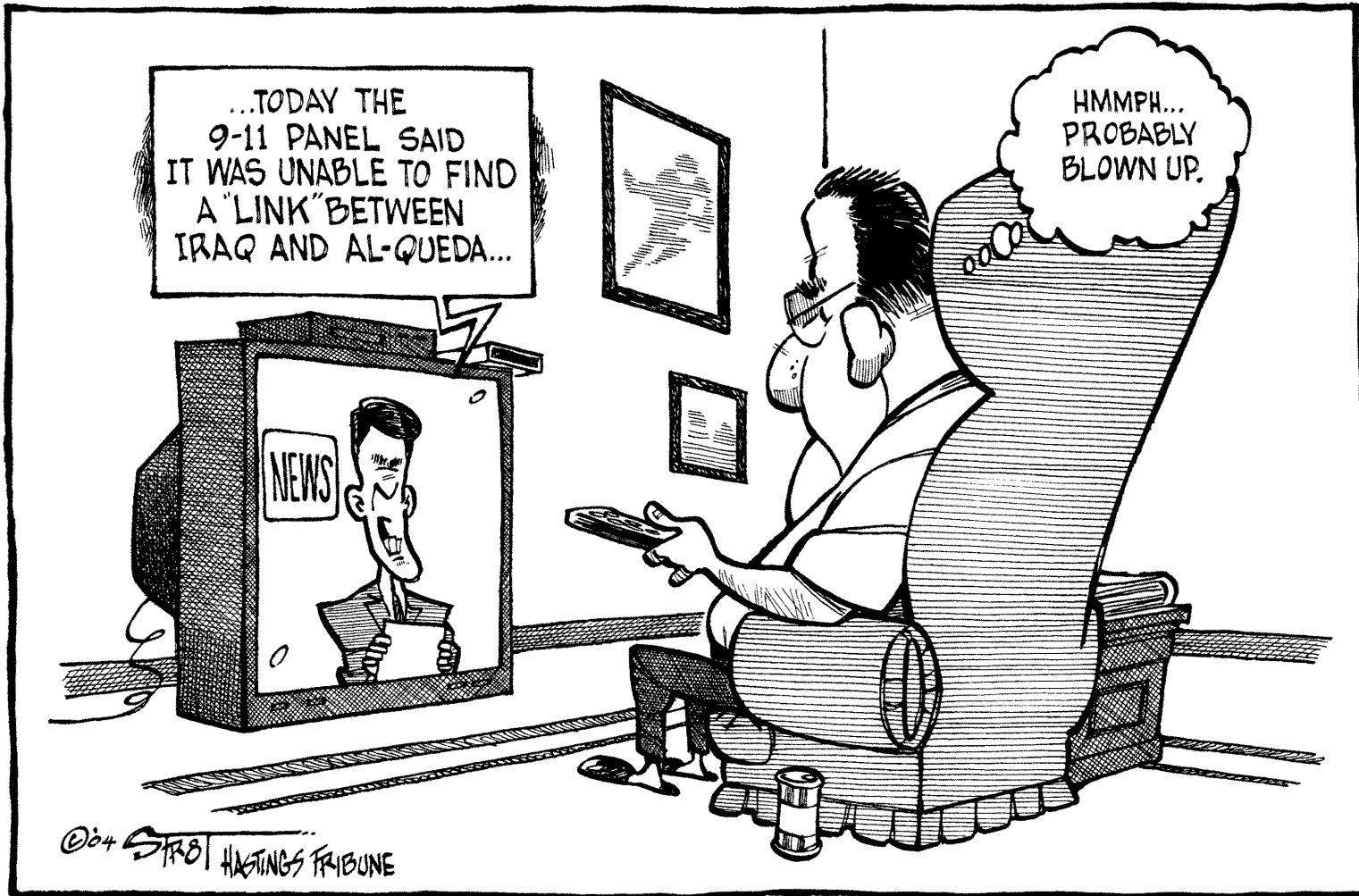
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Past time for memorial to World War II

I don’t know about you, but I’m happy the country has finally put up a memorial for the World War II men and women. It is long overdue - especially with 1,100 of them dying every day. Last week I quoted from the book Ticket Home by James Michael Pratt. Here are some more of his observations: “A few readers have complained that (my) stories include so much war... I feel sorry for any reader who wishes to remain uninformed about those dead and living to whom she or he owes the right to choose what they will do each day with their freedom. “To understand how the character representing our parents and grandparents develops, becomes, changes, one must view his or her life from that character’s point of view, dilemmas, historical perspective, and so on. Find anyone of the ‘greatest generation’ who has not been significantly affected emotionally, spiritually, or physically by the war years and you find someone who lived in a shell or on another planet. “There were more than sixteen million



**lorna
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● commentary

American men and women in uniform during WWII and over one half million dead and missing. There were more than one million wounded, some so severely their lives were altered forever. We talk about Vietnam’s Missing In Action, still in the realm of two thousand, and the Korean War with some eight thousand MIAs and what a tragedy that is. “It is a tragedy for one to be missing in war. In WWII there are still over seventy-three thousand MIAs! Each missing man’s life has a story behind it! “All three of my novels to date honor and remember those courage our men and women who faced the steel of two brutal militaristic empires so that we may enjoy the freedoms we all too often fail to recognize, including what to read, think, do with our lives, and enjoy.

These freedoms cost someone his or her blood. “To the survivors, living and dead, we owe a heartfelt debt of thanks and love for surrendering their youthful lives to brutality and a loss of innocence so others might life. They suffered and died in the belief that democracy, honor, and duty were values as real as the hearth-taught values of home, family, freedom and God. “Peace and love are the antithesis to war and hate.” (Why don’t we work at loving and peacemaking more? - LGT) I sometimes wonder if the sacrifices of WWII — military and civilian — were worth it. I used to think so, but given the images we see on our TVs and the greed exhibited by many major corporation moguls, politicians and even people I know personally, I have to question. (Lorna GT has compiled some of her columns into book form. Please contact this paper at <star-news@nwkanssas.com> if you are interested in purchasing one. It is \$24 for a hardback book. This includes postage & handling.)

Cat has been missing nose count

My cat has been spending more time at the neighbors than at our place lately. Not voluntarily, however. Molly Monster, our gray-and-white alpha cat — at least, she thinks she’s the alpha cat — was missing two weeks ago. She wasn’t at nose count Sunday night, nor was she around when I checked on the feline population Monday morning. By Monday night, we had started to worry and I was ready to make the rounds of the neighborhood. I wrote out the classified for a lost cat, but it was too late to get it in that’s week’s paper. I figured if we didn’t see her for a week, we would never see her again. I was upset. Molly was the fifth cat we had lost in 10 years in living in Oberlin. In the previous 20 years, we had only lost two cats. We had had cats run over, poisoned, and died of injury, infection and old age, but we had only had two that just disappeared. Why was Oberlin the black hole of catdom? The first cat we lost here was Baby, a nice little male Siamese. He was daughter Lindsay’s cat and she figured somebody stole him. Steve



**cynthia
haynes**
● open season

and I, however, remembered that there was a big rain before Baby disappeared and the street out front acts as the storm sewer for this side of town. We think Baby got caught in the current. Next we lost Dixie. She was a very careful cat, always cautious and spooky. We never found a clue of her whereabouts. Then a couple years later, Pomeroy disappeared. This was the first babysat cat we’d lost. Pomeroy belonged to son Lacy, who had to send the cat home when it kept getting arrested up by the animal control officer in Lawrence. Pomeroy may have just wandered off, and since he had lived in five or six homes in his three years of life, he may not have known how to get home. Still, I looked everywhere. No

Pomeroy. Last year, Kubla Khan, another male Siamese, disappeared. Again, there was no clue or guess as to his whereabouts. Now Molly was gone. Or so we thought. Late Wednesday night, Steve and Lindsay heard a cat crying. They traced the sound to the neighbor’s garage. They peeked in through the window, and there was Molly. The garage door had been up several times over the last few days, so we couldn’t figure out how or when she got trapped. We waited until the next day to have someone let her out, since it was after midnight when they found her. I canceled the classified, but two days later she was gone again. This time, I knew where to look. Sure enough, there she was in the garage. My neighbors like cats well enough, but they’d prefer they stay at our place. I agree. Still, I’m glad the black hole didn’t get another one.

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