

from other pens...

Our handwriting may affect reading

In today’s world, there are computers in practically every home and in all schools. Kids can go almost anywhere and do almost anything on a computer — and, most are much better on the computer than their parents.

One of the nice things about computers is being able to read what is being written. Unfortunately, much of the handwriting skills have slipped to the side — some have slipped to the bottom and are completely illegible.

In a recent article, the writer was saying that brain research indicates good old fashioned penmanship could be a contributing factor in the “dumbing down of America” and to rising illiteracy.

Handwriting evidently has a physiological/psychological link in the brain, and the writing process has a powerful impact on the young brain. The repetitive manipulating of the thumb and fingers is supposed to have an impact on the brain. By using the left brain-right hand connection, there is a stimulation that not only taps the left brain where the language capacities are located but it helps the student to focus and learn to read.

The article suggested that handwriting exercises be used with therapeutic music which further stimulated the brain. In a Denver school, students had improved on basic skills tests when the teacher used the writing exercises with music. It was even supposed to help students with attention deficit disabilities.

Today’s teachers are already bogged down with more record keeping and testing along with the teaching duties. The writing exercises are just one more thing to do (and this writer is not saying that writing skills are not practiced daily in the local schools). What is the answer?

Letter writing, especially the handwritten letter, has almost become a lost art. Now, the person sits down to the computer, hooks up to e-mail and writes a short message or a note. The receiver answers back in a short note. Whatever happened to the letter that was kept for weeks and read and re-read?

But, then, what happened to those who read books? Those books took the readers to places they had never been to, experience things they had never done — the imagination had no limits. Today, kids don’t have to read. Many can’t read and, besides, they don’t have to read because they have the television which is in full color and takes them everywhere.

Technology is extremely important, but are our children getting everything they need? It is important to remember all “learning” doesn’t necessarily have to be done in school. Parents can take 10 minutes a day and, with a little music and a pencil and paper, give their children the opportunity to use their “left brain and right hand” and, maybe get a jump start in learning. — *Karen Krien, The Saint Francis Herald*

The Goodland Star-News

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

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Published every Tuesday and Friday except the days observed for New Year’s Day 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@nw-kansas.com. Advertising questions can be sent to: goodlandads@nwkan-sas.com

The Goodland Star-News assumes no liability for mistakes or omissions in advertising or failure to publish beyond the actual cost of the ad. SUBSCRIPTIONS: In Sherman County and adjacent counties: three months, \$20; six months, \$38; 12 months, \$72. Out of area, weekly mailing of two issues: three months, \$30; six months, \$45; 12 months, \$80. Mailed individually each day: 12 months, \$115. (All tax included.)

Incorporating: The Goodland Daily News

1932-2003

The Sherman County Herald

Founded by Thomas McCants
1935-1989

THE SHERMAN COUNTY STAR

Founded by Eric and
Roxie Yonkey
1994-2001

Nor’West Newspapers

Haynes Publishing Company



This time of year I think about school

I don’t know about you, but this is the time of year I think about school.

I remember fondly all the trips to the store to buy new school supplies. I still get a thrill when I walk through a school supply section; I get the urge to buy a Big Chief tablet (I suppose that isn’t politically correct anymore though) and one of those big pencils for little hands (do they still have those?).

Thinking about kids and schools, my heart goes out to dedicated teachers. I often wonder how they face their work day after day after day.

So this column is dedicated to all teachers everywhere, who work long hours under trying circumstances and often hampered by unfair laws.

This is someone else’s composition. I received it (probably by e-mail) several years ago. I hope you enjoy these words, which were written on a teacher’s job application:

“Let me see if I got this right...

“You want me to go into that room with all those kids and fill their every waking moment with love for learning. Not only that, I’m supposed to instill a sense of pride in their ethnicity, behaviorally modify disruptive behavior, and observe them for signs of abuse and T-shirt messages.

“I am to fight the war on drugs and sexually-transmitted diseases, check their backpacks for



**lorna
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• commentary

guns, and raise their self-esteem. I’m to teach them patriotism, good citizenship, sportsmanship and fair play, how and where to register to vote, how to balance a checkbook, and how to apply for a job.

“I am to check their heads occasionally for lice, maintain a safe environment, recognize signs of potential antisocial behavior, offer advice, write letters of recommendation for student employment and scholarships, encourage respect for the cultural diversity of others, and, oh yeah, always make sure that I give the girls in my class 50 percent of my attention.

“I’m required by my contract to be working on my own time summers and evenings at my own expense toward advance certification and a master’s degree, and after school, I am to attend committee and faculty meetings and participate in staff development training to maintain my employment status.

“I am to be a paragon of virtue larger than life, such that my very presence will awe my students into being obedient and respectful of

Churches should oppose beer garden

To the Editor:

It is hard to understand how in a community of this size, with 18 churches, that the city commissioners would pass an open area beer garden, at a family event.

Or am I wrong? It is a family event is it not?

Am I wrong or are there not three bars in the area of the (beer garden) where people can drink in private and not expose our children of the community to open drunkenness?

Maybe when one of our children of the community are molested or injured by an intoxicated individual or maybe when one of our children are run over by a drunk driver during this (family) event maybe then the churches, the 18 churches and the Christians of those churches will wake up and do as God has stated in Ephesians 6: 10-20 (Look it up)

People have the right to drink if they choose. However they do not have the right to expose the children of the community to open public drunkenness.

To the Christians of the community have we not learned yet what compromise brings. Because of compromise millions of babies are killed yearly in this country. I could continue with a long list of sins that we have allowed through compromise. Compromising sin is not in the Bible but stand against evil (sin) is.

Maybe if all the Christians in the community stand and yes thump our Bibles hard and loud enough the commissioners of our community will hear us.

A beer garden is public drunkenness plain and simple. Isn’t it just like Satan and those who follow to try to paint public drunkenness as a garden. It’s not! It’s open public drunkenness



**from our
readers**

• to the editor

and no one has the right to expose my children and all other children to public drunkenness in a public family event.

Our community has already suffered a great loss of family this year due to an alcohol related accident. Call our commissioners, Do something, Stand! Stand! Stand!

Rod Miller
Goodland

To the Editor:

September is National Emergency Preparedness Month, and a perfect time to remind our citizens that disasters happen without warning.

You must be as prepared, as possible to take care of yourself until emergency response teams can reach you.

Each Family should have an emergency communications plan in place, along with having emergency supplies that can take care of your family for up to three days. Your communications plan should include having an out of town contact that each member of your family can call to report in. Long distance service may be the only service available. You should also keep at least three days worth of water on hand for each member of your family; we can live without food for several days, but not without water.

authority. I am to pledge allegiance to supporting family values, a return to the basics, and to my current administration. I am to incorporate technology into the learning and monitor all Web sites while providing a personal, but not too personal, relationship with each student.

“I am to decide who might be potentially dangerous and/or liable to commit crimes in school or who is possibly being abused, and I can be sent to jail for not mentioning these suspicions.

“I am to make sure all students pass the state and federally-mandated testing and all classes, whether or not they attend school on a regular basis or complete any of the work assigned. Plus, I am expected to make sure that all of the students with handicaps are guaranteed a free and equal education, regardless of their mental or physical handicap.

“I am to communicate frequently with each student’s parent by letter, phone, newsletter, and grade card. I’m to do all of this with just a piece of chalk, a computer, a few books, a bulletin board, a 45-minute — more or less — plan time, and a big smile, all on a starting salary that qualifies my family for food stamps in many states.

“Is that all? And you want me to do all of this, and you expect me NOT TO PRAY?”

God bless teachers. (And I’m sure God hears all prayers, silent or spoken.)

Don’t forget your pets, they too count on you during an emergency. If you are required to evacuate your home they should be evacuated with you. Most shelters will not allow pets, except for service animals, so plan ahead to ensure that your family and pets will have a safe place to stay. Make sure that your pets have up to date identification at all times, and it’s a good idea to include a phone number of a friend or family member outside of your immediate area.

Disasters usually happen without warning, being prepared can reduce the physical and emotional impact of a disaster. Are you prepared?

Mary K Messamore, KCEM
Director Sherman County Emergency Management

Letter Policy

The Goodland Star-News encourages and welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be typewritten, and must include a telephone number and a signature. Unsigned letters will not be published. Form letters will be rejected, as will letters deemed to be of no public interest or considered offensive. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and good taste. We encourage letters, with address and phone numbers, by e-mail to: <star-news@nw-kansas.com>.

garfield

