

Editor answers questions about school coverage

This is for Allie Moore, whose letter last month castigated The Oberlin Herald for its coverage of part of high school life.

Welcome to the real world, kid. You've noticed that athletes and rock stars and other media darlings get more attention than the rest of us. And sure, it happens in small towns and in the city. It happens all over the world, in fact.

That said, there's always room for improvement. Let me answer a few of your questions and complaints, and then maybe we can talk.

First of all, it's hard to compare the space *The Herald* or any newspaper devotes to sports as opposed to the rest of life. We're a business, and we have to do what sells. Sports sells, so we do that. I've never thought we did it remarkably well, but we do the best we can with a small staff — just one regular reporter and a part-time society editor. The publisher writes sports in her spare time; no kidding.

For all the other coverage of Decatur Community High, we have a deal made years ago, before the current owners arrived, that the *Decatur Dictator* staff will cover high school activities. When we stray across the line, we get in trouble, so we stay away.

Basically, it's the *Dictator* staff's job to cover the high school, including forensics. It's not that we don't think it's important. Just that it's not supposed to be our job.

We do spend some time with the speech-drama-debate program. The editor judged the Oberlin forensics event this year, and in the past has judged debate. We try to boost school plays and we try not to miss performances by the speech team. We usually catch you at Rotary. Somewhere in his drawer is a



Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes
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double-ruby pin from the National Forensics League earned by many hard hours at meets when the editor was in high school. That was a long time ago, but I've been there.

Coverage of speech and debate is never going to match coverage of sports, because speech and debate have not arrived as spectator events. Most of the "minor" sports suffer the same fate, and those athletes grumble and complain, too.

But we can't all be football stars. Get over it.

If we work together, though, we might be able to get the Dictator more space for forensics, and a few other things, too.

At *The Herald*, by the way, we're awfully proud of the Dictator, which as far as we know is unique as a student-run high school newspaper published weekly in the town newspaper. It gives our high school students experience and it gives the whole town a window into the school which most districts would envy.

About the honor roll.

In the old days, the paper ran the honor roll as a simple list, taking up a few inches at most. We sell sponsorships so we can afford to make it a big deal, taking up a whole page, because we think it's that important.

We can't just throw out the ads to make room for the list, because people have paid for them, and that's

how we make our living. It'd be like a farmer throwing out his wheat rather than selling it.

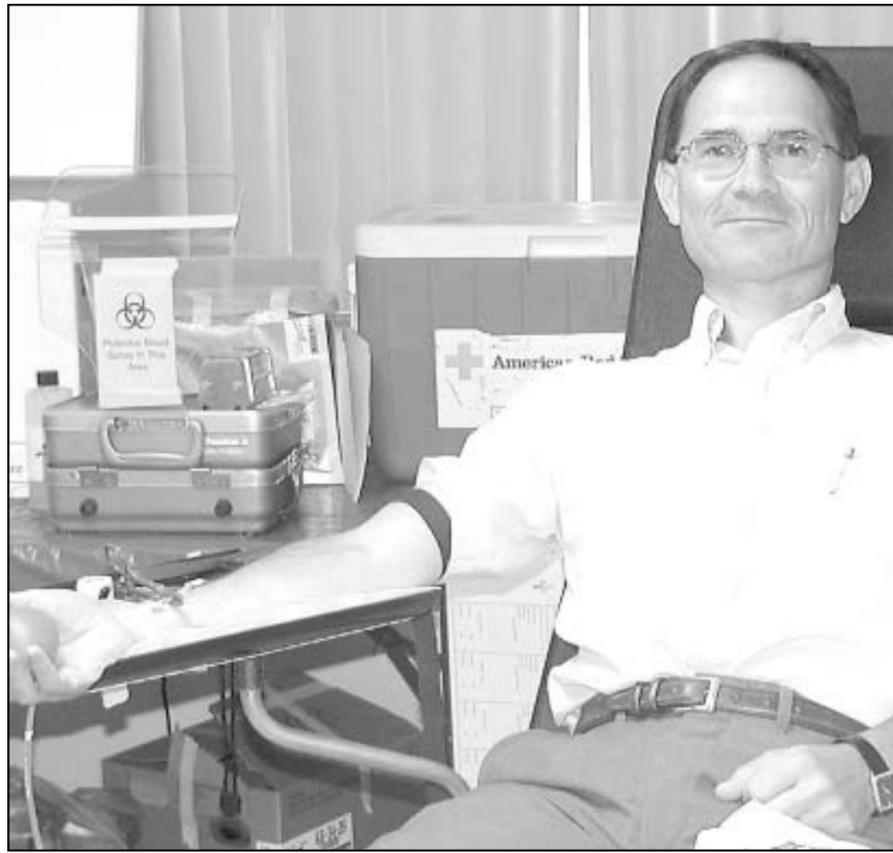
Anyway, we sell sponsorships because we — and the sponsors — care enough to make a big deal out of the honor roll. And we never hold the honor roll. It's run, usually, within a week of the time we get it from the high school office. It may take some time for the staff to compile the list, but we wouldn't want any mistakes with something so important.

It's OK to want a better world, Allie, but don't expect speech to top football for the public's attention any time soon.

Maybe one of the forensics students will have a television show someday, or write a novel, or form a band. There are ways to make it big with brains and talent, not just brawn.

When you push, though, sometimes the immovable object will budge a little. Keep at it.

Giving blood for the Red Cross



GETTING READY, Ken Morris held a ball in his hand before he gave blood in an annual American Red Cross drive here last Wednesday. The drive was held at the Decatur County Hospital last Tuesday and Wednesday. For this blood drive, the Red Cross sent out cards and only took appointments instead of the normal walk-ins.

— Herald staff photo by Kimberly Brandt

Senate president backs Goodland man in race

To the Editor:

People in northwest Kansas are having to choose a new state senator. After the tragic death of your senator, it cannot be easy to focus on the candidates working to gain your confidence as the new senator.

In the past few weeks, I have had the opportunity to get to know Dan Rasure of Goodland.

Dan has impressed me with his grasp of the issues that affect Kansas in general, and northwest Kansas in particular. Dan is committed to finding ways to strengthen the economic base of an area that continues to lose population at a rapid rate.

Dan knows the 40th Senate District will need a strong voice in the upcoming negotiations on how to share the \$2.5 billion in state aid to schools. No one wants to see prop-

erty taxes skyrocket or kids spend hours on the bus. But, those things could happen if northwest Kansas is not well-represented in the school finance debates.

We all know what a fine job Jerry Moran has done representing western Kansas in the U.S. Congress. Dan Rasure had the opportunity to intern for Congressman Moran and learn first-hand how to work with other elected officials to get things done.

In short, I hope the people in the largest senate district in Kansas will go to the polls Aug. 3 and will give strong consideration to electing a bright young man, Dan Rasure, in the Republican Primary for state Senate.

Dave Kerr
Senate President
Hutchinson

Assistant House leader supports the incumbent

To the Editor:

I have had the opportunity to work with Rep. John Faber the last five years and have observed how hard he works for the people of his district.

The first year I was in the Legislature, I had the pleasure of sharing an office with John. He was someone I looked to for guidance on many issues. He was always well informed and kept up with the issues being dealt with. I could always depend on John to give me advice regarding the committees he was on. He is an influential legislator on whom you can depend.

John works very hard at being a conscientious legislator for the 120th District. He is concerned about education and how the dollars are spent. What more can we do to help the small school districts of the state? How can we get more money to the classroom? How does an in-

crease in taxes affect seniors, farmers and residents of the District?

I think there are several things that stick out about John. He has fought tirelessly to help the small rural school districts of the state. He has told me many times how important it is to not lose schools in rural Kansas.

"When you lose the schools," he says, "you lose the towns."

The other thing that stands out is that John is a consensus builder. He works well with both political parties. He doesn't need the credit for what happens as long as something positive happens. The most important thing is to get the job done.

I will look forward to serving with John again next session.

Ray Merrick
assistant majority leader
Kansas House of Representatives
Stillwell

Writer is glad that church will be preserved by Museum

To the Editor:

Hello to the remaining "few" members of the Lutheran Church in Norcatour. I saw the picture and article in the *Norcatour News* and it just about made me cry!

I read on and decided that it would be far better to move the church than just let it stay there and deteriorate. Also, about two or three days later I read an article in our local paper about a church in a small place that had been demolished because there was no minister and no members anymore.

I was baptized in the church in

Norcatour, went through all the classes, and was married in the same little church! My dad, Dr. W.N. Pool, was superintendent of Sunday school for years. So many memories came out of that little church.

Please use the enclosed small donation to help with moving the church to Oberlin. Love to all.

Marie Pool Patterson
Running Springs, Calif.

Re-elect John Faber

Your strongest link
 to Topeka

Republican For
State Representative
120th District

"Experience you can trust"



"John is without a doubt one of the hardest working, dedicated individuals in the Legislature. His home town, western Kansas 'can do' attitude and leadership is essential to passing common sense laws that benefit Western Kansas."

— Doug Mays, House Speaker

It's about Republican...

PRINCIPLES, PRIORITIES, POLICIES,

Are these your values?	John Faber	Doug Sebelius
The definition of marriage is a significant public concern. Of these two statements, which one is closer to your position?	The Kansas Constitution should define marriage as it is traditionally understood, a union between a man and a woman	An amendment to the Kansas Constitution to define marriage is unnecessary to protect traditional marriage.
Do you believe homosexual individuals or couples should be permitted to adopt children?	OPPOSES	SUPPORTS
Do you support recognition of domestic partnerships or civil unions for same sex couples?	OPPOSES	SUPPORTS
Should taxpayer dollars be used to pay for abortions?	OPPOSES	UNSURE
Judges exceeding their historical role and legislating from the bench has become a great public concern. Do you support measures that would hold judges more accountable for their actions?	SUPPORTS	OPPOSES
Should it be easier to remove a judge from office?	SUPPORTS	OPPOSES
Should illegal immigrants be allowed to obtain a Kansas drivers license?	OPPOSES	SUPPORTS
Do you favor legislation that would permit the posting of the Ten Commandments in public places including public schools?	SUPPORTS	OPPOSES
During the debate in the Kansas Senate regarding HCR5033, (Marriage Amendment to the Kansas Constitution), Senator Lana Oleen offered an amendment that would have permitted unmarried couples and same sex partners to receive the same benefits as married couples. Do you support the proposal offered by Senator Oleen?	OPPOSES	UNSURE
The United States Supreme Court just ruled that laws intended to protect children from internet pornography violated the Constitution's free speech provisions. Do you agree with the Supreme Court's ruling?	OPPOSES	SUPPORTS

Kansas Christian Coalition candidate survey

Paid for by the Campaign to Elect John Faber, Ed Carson, Treasurer