

'Book of Daniel' in for a tough ride

"The Book of Daniel," a new NBC-TV series, kicked in Friday night. Early reports are that it enjoyed a large audience, thanks to all the hype that ushered in its debut — hype from a lot of folks who sternly objected to its airing, even before seeing it.

But that's how these things work. If you think something might offend, you climb aboard your soap box and you scream and you yell until you draw the attention of the media. Then it becomes a national matter.

More movies and television shows make it because of the hype rendered. We would suppose if the opposition hadn't warned us that the content might offend — a really nutty family headed by a questionable priest who frequently finds himself conversing with Jesus — we might have bypassed it for what we generally watch on Friday nights.

But we were curious. Just what was this new series, under fire from all sides, all about? We had to find out.

It brought a lot of laughter, a lot of head scratching, situations one wouldn't generally associate with a family headed by a senior pastor. The 2-hour premier gave viewers a laundry list of reasons to continue following it — or not, depending on your taste.

But the big question is: will it continue to attract viewers? Time will tell. But our early suspicion is it probably will end up on the pile of other discards that just didn't have what it took to hang on.

Really, it was kind of trashy.

What do you think? — Tom Dreiling

We're in search of letters, columns

We all have opinions, on just about everything. If you doubt that, just sit in on a morning coffee session. In our own way we are editorialists and columnists.

We have no problem giving our take on any given subject in the presence of people we know. We're comfortable in that setting. But wouldn't it be interesting to let your opinions fall on the ears of a larger audience?

We think so.

That's why today we are issuing you an invitation to share your thoughts on *The Norton Telegram's* Opinion Page with a letter to the editor. You might be pleasantly surprised at the number of people who agree with you. Too, you might be surprised at the number of people who don't. But that's where the fun comes in.

You might even want to think about becoming a column writer. That may take a bit more time and research, but it's just as rewarding as writing a letter.

Here in a nutshell are the ground rules:

- Letters — Write on any topic of public interest. It should be brief, clear and to the point. Letters must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

- We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise.

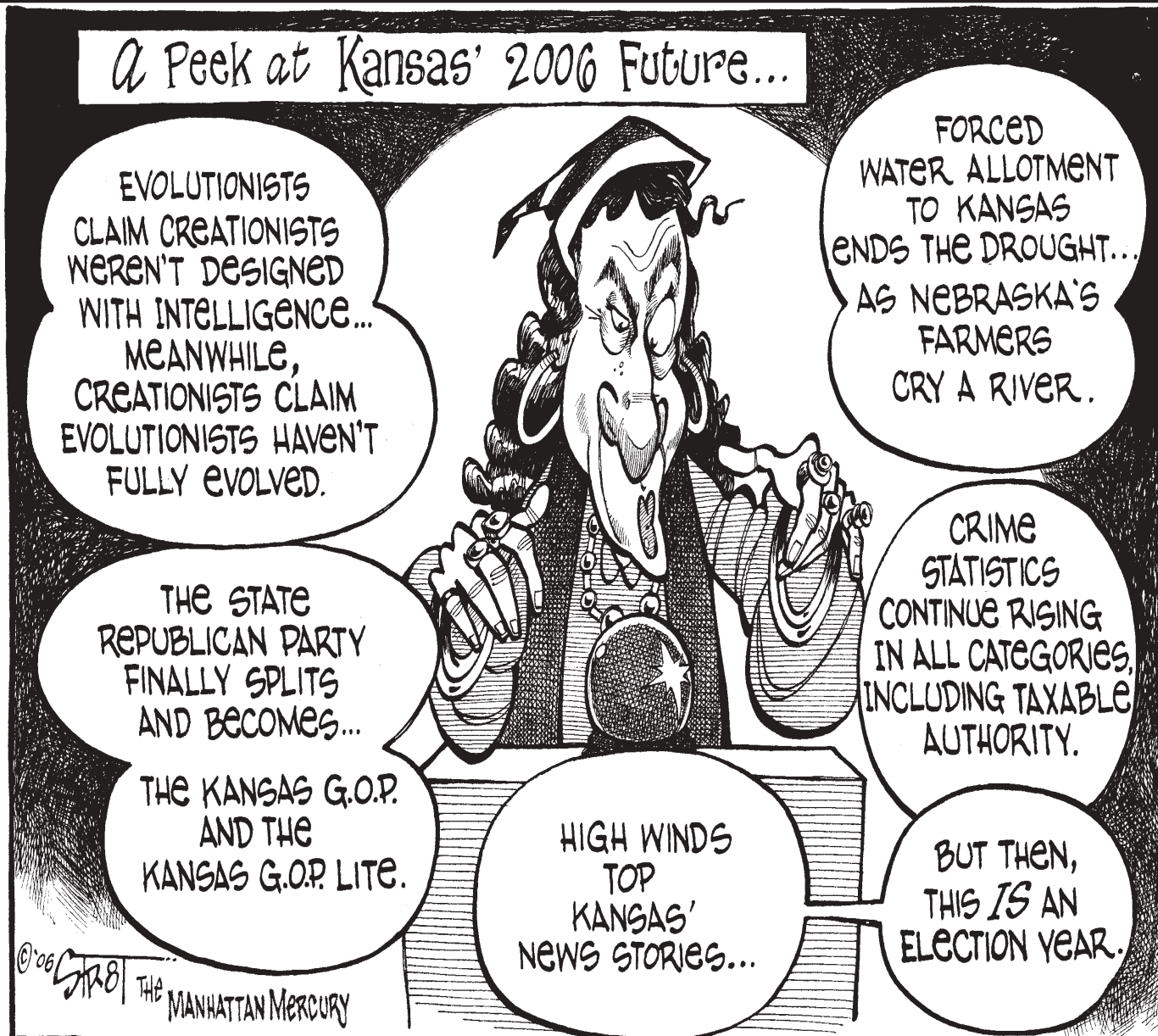
- We do not publish form letters or letters about topics which do not pertain to our area. Thank-yous should be submitted to the Classified Ad desk.

- Letters will not be censored, but will be read and edited for form and style, clarity, length and legality. We will not publish attacks on private individuals or businesses which do not pertain to a public issue.

- Columns — Your opportunity to put your talent to work. Write about things right here at home, around the state, nation or world. Praise. Criticize. It's your choice. It's an expanded way to reach an audience that continually looks for new approaches.

Give us a call at 877-3361. We'll ask you to submit a couple of sample columns.

The Opinion Page is your page. Use it. — Tom Dreiling



Tip: Know the weed before using it

The importance of knowing what kind of growth is contained in a clump of weeds along a creek bank was underscored in a big way for an uncle of mine. We were having a family picnic one hot July afternoon many years ago in the city park at Hays through which Big Creek flows. Among those in attendance was Uncle Bill, a carefree, quick-to-laugh, non-worrying kind of guy who loved to smoke those small stinky cigars.

Well, as the afternoon of eating and playing games progressed, Mother Nature gently tapped Uncle Bill on the shoulder (well, to be truthful with you a little lower than that), indicating that perhaps he might be well advised to seek a place of cover to perform a duty that usually follows a period of stuffing one's mouth with more food than necessary. But what are picnics for, right? Uncle Bill felt the urge, so he looked for the perfect (perfect?) place to drop his outerwear and do... well, you get the picture.

When he was finished he scouted the area looking for something to put closure to the job. He saw a clump of greenery that looked like it would provide the comfort he sought. No, it wouldn't be as nice as that soft, white paper used at home, but under the circumstances it would suffice. All went well. Well, all went well for a while. Then the burning and the itching started.

Poor cigar-smoking Uncle Bill was in pain. Oh, was he hurting! And scratching. Sometimes it looked like he was doing a polka without music! At that time doctors made house calls. I'm not so sure about park calls. But nonetheless, dad sum-

My 2¢ Worth
Tom Dreiling



moned the family's doctor to come look at Uncle Bill.

The good doctor was there in a matter of minutes and diagnosed Uncle Bill's bottom as being the bearer of poison ivy. Yikes! The doctor prescribed medication. It took a while for Uncle Bill's bottom to come around, but eventually it did.

And it was a lesson hard learned on educating oneself about the growth that innocently covers the ground at those places where we romp around.

Uncle Bill, who lived in Wichita, continued to attend the summer family picnics. But he always brought along a roll of the white stuff. I'm not quite sure but he might have taken a roll with him on his way to the hereafter, not knowing what to expect.

And I imagine there are "no smoking" signs up there so he didn't need to take along any of those small, stinky cigars.

Got a light-hearted story about your family you'd like to share? I know you do. Why not get it to me so I can share it with readers of this column.

My e-mail address is tom@nwks.com. Or send it to the office at 215 S. Kansas, Norton 67654. If you're in the area, drop it by the office.

Thanks, in advance!

—td—
So, how do I like it so far? If the question pertains to the community of Norton, I would answer, "Very much!" My new city has a lot going for it. And I can say using first impressions as a gauge, Norton passed with flying colors. Norton isn't that big that it doesn't notice someone new. And that's a warm feeling.

To really appreciate what you've got here, you have to be the new kid in town. Don't sell your community short, folks. What you may take for granted someone new might consider a major plus. Walk tall. Be proud.

—td—
I've been trying to put myself in the shoes of those poor folks in West Virginia. What a roller coaster ride they experienced. One moment they were rejoicing the word that 12 of the 13 trapped miners were found alive, and the next seeing them in a state of shock learning that in fact 12 of them were dead and one was alive. How it all happened is still in question. How do they put their lives back together? It'll be tough and it will be long. Only prayers from people like you and me will perhaps give them the strength they so badly need.

—td—
Vice President Cheney had everyone on the edge overnight Sunday as he was taken by motorcade to the hospital. Shortness of breath. As this was being written (Monday) he was resting at his home. They say cats have nine lives. Looks like Mr. Cheney may surpass that. Hope so.

—td—
Have a good evening!

Christmas notes worth the reread

Merry Christmas "to you and a couple of thousand of our other dearest friends." That is what a mass-produced letter says to some people.

But, now that the decorations are down and stored away for another year, I am rereading these epistles and I realize, as many as I get, there must be lots of people out there who like them.

In my letters, there were some really funny things like my niece and her husband writing about their very poorly behaved dog. "As our work hours have gotten longer, we have less time to play with Toby; so we found a local Dog Day Care where we could take him once a week. When we picked him up the first day we were certain that he was sedated, but as it turns out he just had a very busy day."

She went on to describe his report card, and the Christmas ornament he helped make. My eyes were rolling so far back I could barely read it aloud to Junior when I got to this line: "Now, we know what you are thinking, but we don't care. The activity has improved his temperament."

I don't know what the rest of the readers thought but she sure knows her Aunt Nancy. Or maybe the dog has offended everyone to the extent that each recipient would feel like they were getting a personal letter. I can't wait to visit and see the

Back Home
Nancy Hagman



"new and improved" Toby.

My sister wrote about her home renovation projects. As to the new "Cherry Cobbler" paint on her garage door and front door, she says, "If you want to try a bold new color, use a Pepto-Bismol colored primer and the neighbors will be greatly relieved at anything else. I haven't seen this and can't picture it but, since the daughters have and did not even comment, I guess it can't be too awful.

We had letters from two of Junior's classmates which were basically sales pitches for Juice Plus. "It repairs cell DNA by 66 percent. It also repairs our immune system. In children, it improves ADD, ADHA, Asthma and Eczema. If you would like information I would love to share the gift of health with you." (For a price, I imagine.) Ah, well you have to take the good with the bad.

One of the cousins who went on the "Boston trip" with my daughters and sisters last summer said, "I think I was meant to live on Cape Cod." Daughter Elizabeth read that and said, "Weren't we all." It must be really pretty.

Three people sent me a poem, "The List", about Christmas cards this year. A nice sentiment.

I notice we get fewer pictures with the cards these days. Only one friend of our age sent a senior picture of a kid. A lot of people who I thought were our age (or even younger) write about grandchildren.

I guess I was wrong about how old they are because I am not old enough to be a grandmother. Our friends Deb and Paul have a preschooler, after all.

These letters give me real joy. I keep them and reread them next fall so I can get a sense of where my friends are before I write my letter.

These letters are about joys, good times, trials, sorrows and the everyday mundane things we all live through. They connect us. I treasure the connection. (Except for those Juice Plus people.)

Badly as my cell DNA might need repairing, I am living dangerously and throwing those letters away. I hope I live long enough to write another letter.
Happy New Year.

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