

President Bush in spotlight tonight

Tonight's the night President George W. Bush gives his perspective on "The State of the Union."

What will he or won't he, mention?

Some experts see him giving an endless litany.

Other see the message containing less on social concerns and more on the gains being made in Iraq. And the ever increasing threat from Iran with its nuclear program. And he must also point to an economy that seems much stronger today than it did just a year ago.

We think he'll be all over the map as he looks ahead to the mid-term elections in November. His party is not the shining example of unity as it once was. There are some goings-on that have caused splits. And the president is aware that the change of a few seats in the House of Representatives and a few seats in the United States Senate could find him looking at some old familiar faces in control that will have the letter "D" etched on their foreheads.

He's got to lay out a case that will convince voters that to change control in 2006 would be a blunder of the worst kind. He must spin the state of the union unlike ever before.

His speech writers, we are sure, have peppered his message with catch lines, things that sound bites are made of. And often these catchy little words are what the listener remembers.

President Bush improves on each delivery. Expect tonight's to outshine all those of the past.

And, no, we haven't forgotten, but there is a real possibility that he will be able to report to the nation tonight that Judge Samuel Alito was confirmed by the U. S. Senate to take his seat on the United States Supreme Court.

Polls show that State of the Union addresses aren't as popular now as they once were. Millions watch, but millions don't. Perhaps that may be because they have taken on more of a high school pep rally look, designed to energize the president's party.

Too, perhaps the polls reflect voter interest in elections. We have more people sitting out elections than we have taking part in them. So maybe those who watch State of the Union addresses are the ones most likely to show up at the polls on election day.

Who knows?

Anyway, we'll be sitting in front of our television set.

Hope you will be, too. — Tom Dreiling, publisher

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: Intelligent design not necessary

To the Editor:

The Vatican has recently reaffirmed its support for evolution and stated that "Intelligent design does not belong to science and there is no justification for the demand it be taught as a scientific theory alongside the Darwinian explanation."

For students of theology this rejection of intelligent design should not be much of a surprise. In 1943, Pope Pius XII's Encyclical Divino Afflante Spiritu on biblical studies states:

"For the ancient peoples of the East, in order to express their ideas, did not always employ those forms or kinds of speech which we use today; but rather those used by the men of their time and centuries."

The Bible was not written to be a scientific document.

Unfortunately, the proponents of intelligent design want to introduce their interpretation of the Bible as a scientific fact.

To scientifically test such an expression of faith is not only impossible, it is also

wrong.

The Bible can stand alone. It does not need scientific justification. Feeble attempts such as intelligent design to provide that justification are misguided.

A Holy and most powerful God who can breathe life into dry bones can most certainly use a process we called evolution to do the same thing.

Any vain attempt to scientifically prove statements of Christian faith can only place a barrier between people and Christ. As St. Paul wrote in the epistle to the Romans, "Let us therefore no longer pass judgment on one another, but resolve instead never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of another." (Romans 14.13)

Intelligent design is an unnecessary stumbling block that undermines the spread of Christianity.

We are saved by God's grace and not by human interpretation of His world.

Tim Peterson
Monument

Comments to: tomd@nwkansas.com

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

Office hours:

8 a.m.- 5:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.

Phone: (785) 877-3361

Fax: (785) 877-3732

E-mail: telegram@nwkansas.com

STAFF

Tom Dreiling editor and publisher

Veronica Monier staff reporter

Dick Boyd Blue Jay sports

Carolyn Plotts society editor

Sherry Hickman circulation

Vicki Henderson computer production

Susie Marble computer production

Sonya Montgomery bookkeeping

Hypatia Day advertising

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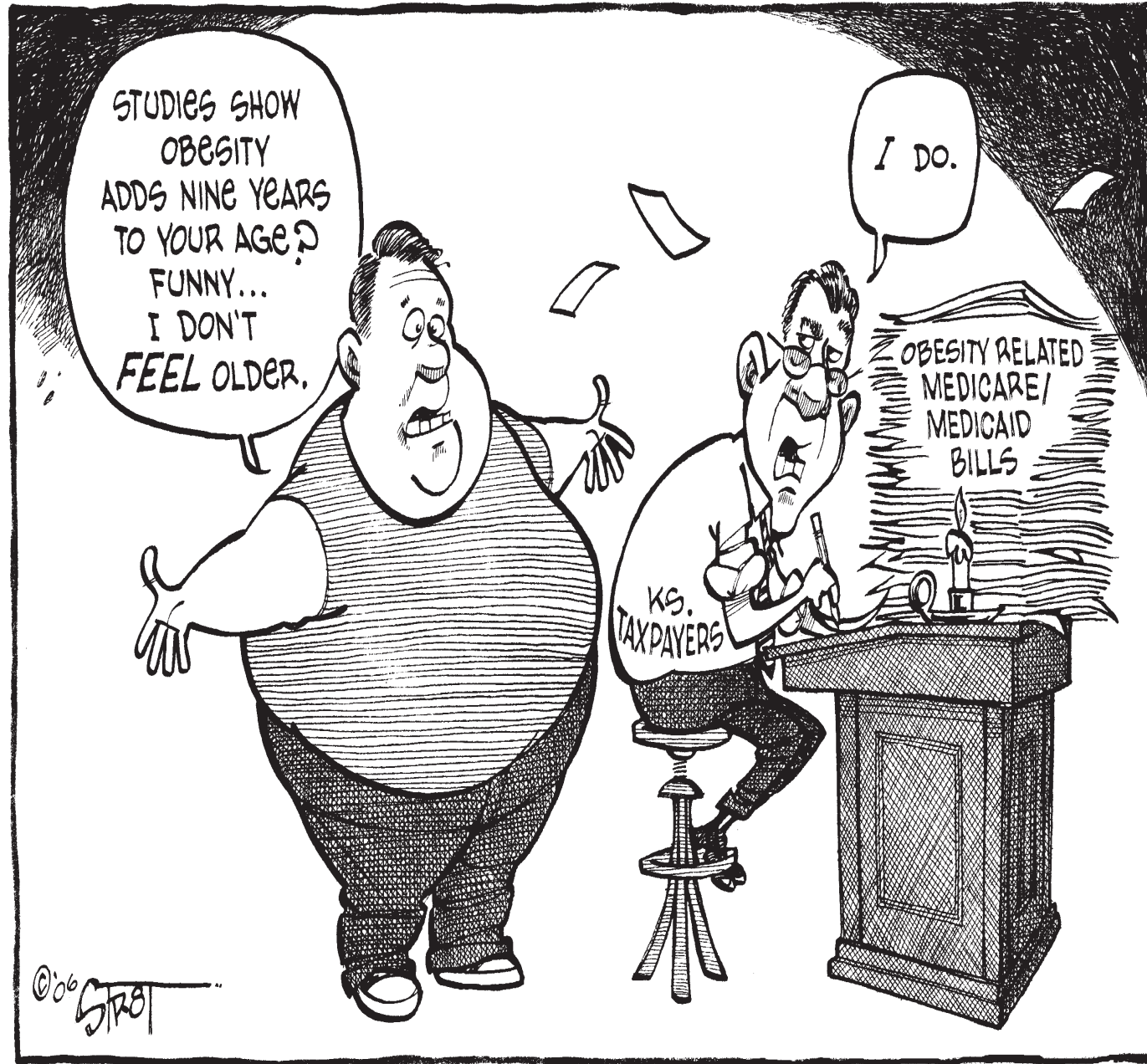
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Marion R. Krehbiel, editor



Small college power just miles away

I don't know how many Fort Hays State University fans there are out here, but allow me to boast for just a few seconds. The Tiger varsity basketball men are now 18-1 on the season and 11-0 in the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference. The varsity women are 15-3 and 10-1 in the conference. And the wrestling Tigers are 3-0 in conference duals and 6-1-1 on the year. Now, inasmuch as the university at Hays is but 90 miles from here, you may want to take in your favorite sport — Tiger style.

Thursday night in Gross Memorial Coliseum, the Tiger women and men will take on Metro State of Denver, 6 and 8 p.m. **Saturday night**, the women and men meet Regis of Denver at Gross Memorial Coliseum at 6 and 8 p.m.

The only wrestling action this week is at Adams (Colo.) State, Alamosa on Thursday.

Of course our local teams take precedence, but if you notice a night when they aren't doing their thing, but the bunch at FHSU is, give it some consideration.

-td-

How beautiful! I had occasion to be climbing into my pickup Sunday evening in the parking lot at the Dairy Queen just as the sun was setting. Gosh, how beautiful that was! I stood there and watched until a hill between my point of observation and the sunset cut the show short. We just naturally take those things for granted. But we shouldn't. It's God's gift to us, just as is the rising sun.

Be glad you live out here where these things are just a part of our way of life, unobstructed by the elements that many times deny others to see nature's beauty

Good Evening Norton Tom Dreiling



as it is intended to be seen.

-td-

I see where the "K" boys — Kerry, as in Sen. John and Kennedy, as in Sen. Ted — were still trying over the weekend to get a filibuster initiated to stall the certain confirmation of Judge Samuel Alito. You'd think they'd give up. Of course Kennedy's behavior during the nomination hearings was nothing short of an embarrassment.

But Kerry and Kennedy are good examples of why the Democratic Party has been suffering so badly for so many years. That northeastern liberal zoo is, in large part, to blame. And who heads the Democratic National Committee? None other than the northeast's #1 screamer — Howard Dean! The national party badly needs new faces and new direction. And it's the grass roots bunch who can get it done. And it has to start now!

-td-

This could have made the old "Believe It Or Not" show. Hays recently voted not to allow Sunday liquor sales. This from a city that has been tagged one of the state's top party towns. And then a subsequent election to settle the same issue out in the

county, which also ended up in the "no" category. I would bet my cup of tea that if an election was held today Ellis County would vote to become a dry county. "Believe It Or Not!"

-td-

One of our state senators, a guy by the name of Phil Journey, ought to take a journey to the end of the world — and fall off! His comment of a week or so ago was so stupid, so inaccurate that one wonders how he ever got elected. He said, in response to punishing sex offenders by issuing pink license plates, they could send them out to Atwood where there isn't even a school. I think Sen. Journey would have a pleasant surprise awaiting if he ever ventured out to northwest Kansas. For now, however, he should be reprimanded to the dunce's seat in the back of the senate chamber.

-td-

I am going to go with the Seattle Seahawks to win the super bowl.

-td-

A friend of mine who served many years as a meteorologist told me that you could place two thermometers a foot or two apart and they would not show the same temperature. The temperature is, he would say, what it shows in the spot the thermometer is located. I guess that explains why the temperatures on the signs at the First State Bank and Almena State Bank are about 6 degrees different each morning, with the warmer reading at First State. I like the First State reading at this time of year, but will favor Almena State's when the heat of summer arrives.

-td-

Have a good evening!

It's like high school all over again

Flashback to high school. The Span fish class Jim and I are enrolled in had its first test last week. It was an oral test. The teacher sat in the hallway outside the classroom and, one-by-one, we went out to meet our fate.

Actually, I was anxious to get it over with, so I went first. I didn't want to have time to forget what I had rehearsed so carefully in the car on the way to the school where our class meets.

I took two years of Spanish in high school. But, I am really learning things, now, I know I missed 40 years ago. It is starting to make sense.

Back in 1961, our high school had a state-of-the-art language lab. Each student had their own cubicle with headphones and taped lessons.

We also had a dictator for a teacher. He had a little "Hitler-like" mustache and a wooden pointer about two feet long, that he would slam down on your desk if you fluffed a word. And, he yelled. A lot.

I was fresh off the farm, living away from home for the first time, ga-ga over the boy that sat in front of me and totally terrified.

Out Back Carolyn Plotts



Fast-forward to 2006. We are in a class of ten where, Jim and I, no doubt, are the oldest ones. The teacher is young enough to be our daughter and has asked us to call her by her first name. She is very fluent herself, but is able to simplify her instructions to make them understandable. She is professional, but not the least bit scary.

Of course, it helps our mental attitude to know we are taking the course for fun, instead of a grade-point average toward graduation.

-ob-

This is the week for hospital reports.

My brother, Dick, is recuperating quite nicely from hip replacement surgery. He said he picks up his walker when he walks,

but keeps it close, just in case. The pain is mostly gone.

Our youngest daughter, Kara, had the Lasix eye surgery done Friday to correct her vision. She said everything went fine and her vision is much improved. No need for glasses or contacts.

And, finally, Jim's dad, also Jim, is in the hospital with pneumonia. Initially, he didn't want to go.

He thought he just had a bad cold. Later, though, he said he was sure glad Gene (his other son) insisted he go to the doctor.

We visited him last night and he is almost enjoying his hospitalization. He thinks the nurses take good care of him. He even brags on the food.

-ob-

Every columnist in northwest Kansas is probably commenting about the weather. So, I'll fall into lock-step with them. Only, what do you say?

There really is no weather. The days are mild, the nights crisp. It's bland, bland, bland. What we need is two feet of wet, wet snow.

Then it can go back to bland, bland, bland.