

# Hair washing day became a ritual

Here I am again viewing a beautiful Saturday morning upside down through the kitchen window above the sink. Am I practicing acrobatics? Have I been hung up by my toes to dry? No, it is shampoo day and I am lying flat on my back on our big old wooden ironing board with my waist-length hair in the kitchen sink.

Although there is perfectly good water in the kitchen tap, my first task this morning had been fetching two buckets of rainwater. Our wooden rain barrel sat beneath the southwest eave of the house and caught what little rain western Kansas got. Enticing though it was, I was forbidden to muddle around in it. The sediment had to settle to the bottom and remain there, so dipping water out was a ticklish job. Better be completely clear to suit Mama.

First Mama unbraided my locks and brushed them good and hard to dislodge dust. Since I often played in the hayloft of the barn, this could cause quite a cloud. Brushing felt really good and was the most bearable part of shampoo morning. Next, I held my breath and dipped my head in the biggest bucket and crawled, dripping, onto the ironing board. Mama grabbed a good handful of softsoap from the jar by the sink and massaged it all over my scalp to make a good lather. I grabbed a washcloth and held it over my eyes and nose. One thing you don't want in your eyes is grated lye soap softened in lemon water. During this stage Mama usually sang a few verses of "Silver Threads Among the Gold" to keep me amused.

After ten minutes or so of lathering, dippersful of rainwater were poured on to rinse out all the suds. Now the real fun began as two cups of vinegar were worked into my wet hair clear down to the roots and out to the very ends to clear away soap scum. I clutched the washcloth tighter and tried not to breathe. "Away Down Upon the Swanee River" was Mama's vocal selection during this application. Another dipper or two of rinse water, which, incidentally, was always cold.

Beside me came the whirr of the eggbeater as Mama whipped two large eggs into a nice froth. I

## Child of the 40s Liza Deines



grabbed the washcloth again just in time as the gooey mess was worked into my hair to the tune of Stephen Foster's melody about Jeannie with the light brown hair. Mama said it was to make my hair shine but Dad teased me that it might scramble if I didn't wear my sunbonnet outdoors. The final bucket of rainwater was poured very slowly over my hair to rinse everything away before I was mercifully swaddled in a towel and allowed to sit up while Mama squeezed moisture out.

Now could I go play? No, of course not. Detangling was on the agenda next. It could be a tough haul, depending on Mama's mood by then and that depended on whether I was patient or wiggly. This was the only time we ever used Mama's ivory comb with the wide teeth. It was carefully drawn through the hair until it hit a tangle. Then it was tugged until the tangle was out, despite my whining and begging. After that came brushing for half an hour to help the thick, heavy waves dry. Even after the rebraiding I could only go sit on the porch and play dolls. After all, we don't want to get nice clean hair dusty before Sunday School, do we? Well, one of us sure did!

By the time I was in fifth grade I could sit on my hair. It was worn in thick, shiny braids that were the only reason I ever passed arithmetic. Each morning during braiding Mama drilled me through homemade addition, subtraction and multiplication flash cards. Finally, when I was the only angel in the Christmas pageant with braids, Dad reluctantly consented to having it bobbed. To the day he died he carried a little picture of me in his wallet that was taken one Saturday morning with my hair down.

As I pop one of my wigs on these days, how I long for some of that glorious hair with which I was once blessed. Perhaps I am slated to once again be an angel with braids? If so, I won't complain, honest.

# OBITUARIES

## Keith A. Archer

Aug. 29, 1951 - Jan. 27, 2006

Keith Allen Archer, 54, La Crosse, brother of Roger Archer, Almena and Lyle Archer, Norton, died Friday in La Crosse.

Mr. Archer was born Aug. 29, 1951, in Norton, the son of LeRoy Andrew and Elnora May (Jackson) Archer.

He graduated from Almena High School and joined the United States Army. He spent most of his enlistment in Germany with standing orders for Viet Nam.

In 1974, after completing his military obligation, he and Linda Lane Nichol were married. She died Dec. 9, 2002.

On May 6, 2004, he married Angela Marie (Depperschmidt) Bittel. They lived in La Crosse.

Mr. Archer had been a police officer. He had also built steel buildings, but spent most of his working career as a maintenance hand on an oil well pumping unit around Logan and Hill City.

He loved the outdoors and enjoyed hunting and fishing. He was an avid NASCAR fan with a large collection of scale model race cars.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his first wife, Linda; a brother, Arthur; a sister, Dorothy; and a sister-in-law, Sandra Archer.

Survivors include: his wife, Angela of the home; two sons, Jason Lee and Brandi Archer,

Densmore and Andrew Archer and his companion, Amber, Lincoln, Kan.; two daughters, Tanya Lynn and Steve Russell, Lincoln; Pamela Ann and Douglas Spargo, Beloit; a step-son, Joey and Monica Bittel, Clinton, Okla.; two brothers, Roger Lee Archer, Almena and Lyle Andrew Archer, Norton; and five grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Monday at the Logan Funeral Home with Father Allen Scheer officiating.

Casketbearers were Lee Nichol, Carroll Bittel, Mark Leggett, Roger Grammon, Doug Koester, Rodney White and Warren Bruning. Honorary bearers were Devin Spargo, Danielle Spargo, Kaleb Russell, Hayley Spargo and Tristen Russell.

Burial was in Pleasant View Cemetery with military honors provided by Fort Riley.

### Card of Thanks

We would like to thank everyone for their kind expressions of sympathy shown to us at the time of our father's death. The cards, flowers, memorial contributions, food brought in and other thoughtful gestures were truly a comfort to us. A special thank you to the ladies of the St. John Catholic Church for serving us lunch the day of the service.

The family of Keith A. Archer

## Richard P. Koerperich

May 19, 1940 - Jan. 26, 2006

Richard P. Koerperich, 65, Selden, died Thursday at his home.

Mr. Koerperich was born May 19, 1940, in Hays, the son of Bernard and Helen (Jaster) Koerperich.

He graduated from Selden Rural High School in 1958.

On April 19, 1960, he married Sandy Brantley.

He was the owner of Koerperich Bookbinders in Selden.

He was a member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church and the Knights of Columbus in Selden.

He was preceded in death by an infant son, Bryon Lee Koerperich; and two brothers-in-law, Don Sloan and Dale Swank.

Survivors include: five sons, Bernard and Bobbie Koerperich, Selden, Dallas Koerperich, Selden, Chris and Dana Koerperich, Oberlin, John and Jennifer Koerperich, Lenora and

Don and Katie Koerperich, Selden; three brothers, Eddie Koerperich, Denver, Jim and Maurita Koerperich, Garden City and Ron and Cheryl Koerperich, Topeka; four sisters, Agnes Swank, Garden City, Leona and Gerald Rogers, Newton, Bernadette and Neil Austin, Garden City, and Judy Sloan, Pawhuska, Okla.; his fiancé, Renee Ochsner, Selden; 15 grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Monday at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Selden with the Rev. George Kochuvellkkam officiating. Burial was in the Selden Cemetery.

A memorial fund has been established in his name. Contributions may be sent to the Richard Koerperich Memorial Fund in care of Pauls Funeral Home, Selden, Kan. 67757.

# DEATH NOTICE

## R.J. 'Jack' Metcalf

Funeral services will be held at 10:30 a.m. Thursday at the Oberlin United Methodist Church for Robert Jackson "Jack" Metcalf, 70, who died Monday morning at the Decatur County Hospital. The Rev. Doug Hasty



Jack Metcalf

will officiate. A time of remembrance is scheduled at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday at Pauls Funeral Home in Oberlin. A complete obituary will be carried in Friday's Norton Telegram.

The Norton Telegram...  
News you need!

## Diane K. Gewecke

June 25, 1958 - Jan. 26, 2006

Diane K. Gewecke, 47, Kearney, formerly of Norton, died Thursday at the Good Samaritan Hospital, Kearney.

Mrs. Gewecke was born June 25, 1958, in Norton, the daughter of Leo J. and Jerry Lou (Spratling) Stalder.

She graduated from Beaver City High School in 1976, and then attended Nebraska Christian College in Norfolk, Neb.

She moved to Kearney in 1977. On May 3, 1980, she married Dennis R. Gewecke.

She worked at Baldwin Filters; as a seamstress for Liberty Cleaners and Karla's Creations; as a bookkeeper and a cashier for Wal-Mart.

She was a member of the First United Methodist Church. Her hobbies included sewing and crocheting.

She was preceded in death by one sister, Donna Lou; one brother, Gary; her mother-in-law, Margaret Gewecke; her grandparents, Ernest and Edith Stalder and

Bill and Hazel Spratling.

Survivors include: her husband, Dennis of Kearney; her parents, Leo and Jerry Lou Stalder, Stamford, Neb.; three sons, Travis Gewecke, Heartwell, Neb., and Steven Gewecke and Derek Gewecke, both of Kearney; a sister, Gloria and Lynn Ridgway, Fairfield, Neb.; two brothers, Randy and Penny Stalder, Beaver City, Neb., and Rodney Stalder, Wellington, Utah; and her father-in-law, Vern Gewecke, Kearney.

Visitation will be from 4 to 8:30 p.m. tonight at the Horner-Lieske-Horner Mortuary, 2421 Ave. A, Kearney.

Funeral services will be at 10 a.m. Tuesday at the First United Methodist Church with the Rev. Dr. Marvin Koelling and the Rev. Matt Fowler officiating. Burial will be in the Riverdale Cemetery.

Messages of condolence or tributes may be left at the funeral home's website [www.hllmortuary.com](http://www.hllmortuary.com).

# READERS

— **Steak and seafood night, Thursday and Saturday 6-9 p.m. American Legion. Members and guests 1/31**

William Burns, a 2001 graduate of Norton Community High School and a senior at Fort Hays State University has accepted a \$1,500 anonymous education scholarship. Mr. Burns is involved

in Phi Theta Kappa, Omicrons Delta Kappa Leadership Honor Society and Kansas National Education Association Student Program. He is the son of Jim and Bev Burns, Norton.

— **PITCH TOURNAMENT 7 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 5, Norton American Legion. 1/31**

## Young artists invited to enter pictures in wildlife contest

If you love to sketch, draw or paint, join other students in creating ducks, geese and swans in this year's Junior Duck Stamp program. The deadline to submit entries for the contest is March 15.

The program is open to all students.

Young artists can get rules, regu-

lations and entry forms from Lorrie Beck at the Great Plains Nature Center in Wichita by calling (316) 683-5499 ext. 108, or going to <http://duckstamps.fws.gov>.

Ribbons, certificates and prizes are award to winners in each of the four age groups.

## MARKETS

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Corn .....	\$1.90
Soybeans .....	\$5.26

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You are invited to a Reception for **Doyle & Arlene Foss** for their **60th Anniversary**

2:30-4:30 p.m.  
Saturday, February 4  
at the Fellowship Hall  
First United Methodist Church  
805 West Wilberforce, Norton

Cards may be sent to the Foss' at  
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