

Another secret rattles Capitol Hill

At this point in time, we aren't overly concerned with the port security issue that seems to have clogged up a number of arteries in the House and Senate chambers in Washington.

In question is the administration's decision to allow an Arab company to operate U.S. ports. The company in question is Dubai Ports World, a state-owned business in the United Arab Emirates.

This was one of those secret deals that even surprised President Bush. His brain trust — his Cabinet — however, assured him there was nothing to worry about and that it wouldn't compromise security at any of the American ports involved. That assurance put Mr. President in front of the media this week strongly supporting the deal.

Republicans and Democrats alike are coming apart at the seams. Apparently an uneducated public — and that pretty much means all of us — has taken to e-mail, telephone, fax and all other means to instruct senators and congressmen to put their foot down — on the president and tell him that this deal is not in the best interests of the country.

The problem seems to be that again this was something handled in secret, in fact so secret that even the man in the White House wasn't aware. But it just seems that our guys and gals in the United States Senate and House of Representatives have few clues as to what is really going on under their noses. And that is what's disturbing. We send them back there to look after our interests and then find out that they know about as much as the "folks back home" know. Nothing. And this latest ball of fire as it affects security at American ports is a prime example.

The "v" talk (as in veto) is also beginning to emerge. If the Capitol Hill leadership manages to get legislation through the Congress to curb the deal, the president said he would invoke his veto privilege. If he does that would be a first for his presidency.

You can bet the farm that the White House will call in those defiant Republicans, one at a time — kind of like a woodshed experience — and in the end they will understand what's in the best interests of their political careers and the deal will become reality. Keep in mind that 2006 is a mid-term election year when all members of the House and 33 members of the Senate are up for re-election.

President Bush would be well advised to go before the nation and try to extinguish this fire. He might be able to change a lot of minds. Right now, however, there is just too much talk based on too little information being tossed at the public.

So, where do we stand on this latest uproar?

That's a secret. —Tom Dreiling

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Let's pull together to help them out

To the Editor,
For many years, Jack and I have donated to Habitat for Humanity. We even volunteered for the Jimmy Carter Blitz Build at Eagle Butte, S.D. several years ago. It was a wonderful experience.

If you have been watching Oprah the last two days you are well aware of the devastation in the Gulf Shore area. Since it seems that no one seems to know who is in charge, it is time for people to band together and get something accomplished!

I have set up a web site at HFH.com "Kansas Christians for Katrina" where you can donate any amount. I've set the goal at \$5,000.00. But if we could go over that amount, what joy it would bring to our Lord! And the people who will be helped!

Please, if you can't donate, please keep these people in your prayers. They have lost everything, yes, just "things" but all they have.

Please help them some way to regain their self-esteem after this terrible disaster. Sincerely,

Jane Kersenbrock
Norton

Letter Policy

The Norton Telegram encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of public interest. Letters should be brief, clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

We do not publish form letters or letters about topics which do not pertain to our area. Letters will not be censored. We will not publish attacks on private individuals or businesses which do not pertain to a public issue.

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

ISSN 1063-701X

215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, KS 67654

Published each Tuesday and Friday by Haynes Publishing Co., 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, Kan. 67654. Periodicals mail postage paid at Norton, Kan. 67654.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Norton Telegram, 215 S. Kansas, Norton, Kan. 67654
Official newspaper of Norton and Norton County. Member of the Kansas Press Association, National Newspaper Association, and the Nebraska Press Association

Nor'West Newspapers

Dick and Mary Beth Boyd
Publishers, 1970-2002
Incorporating the Norton County Champion
Marion R. Krehbiel, editor

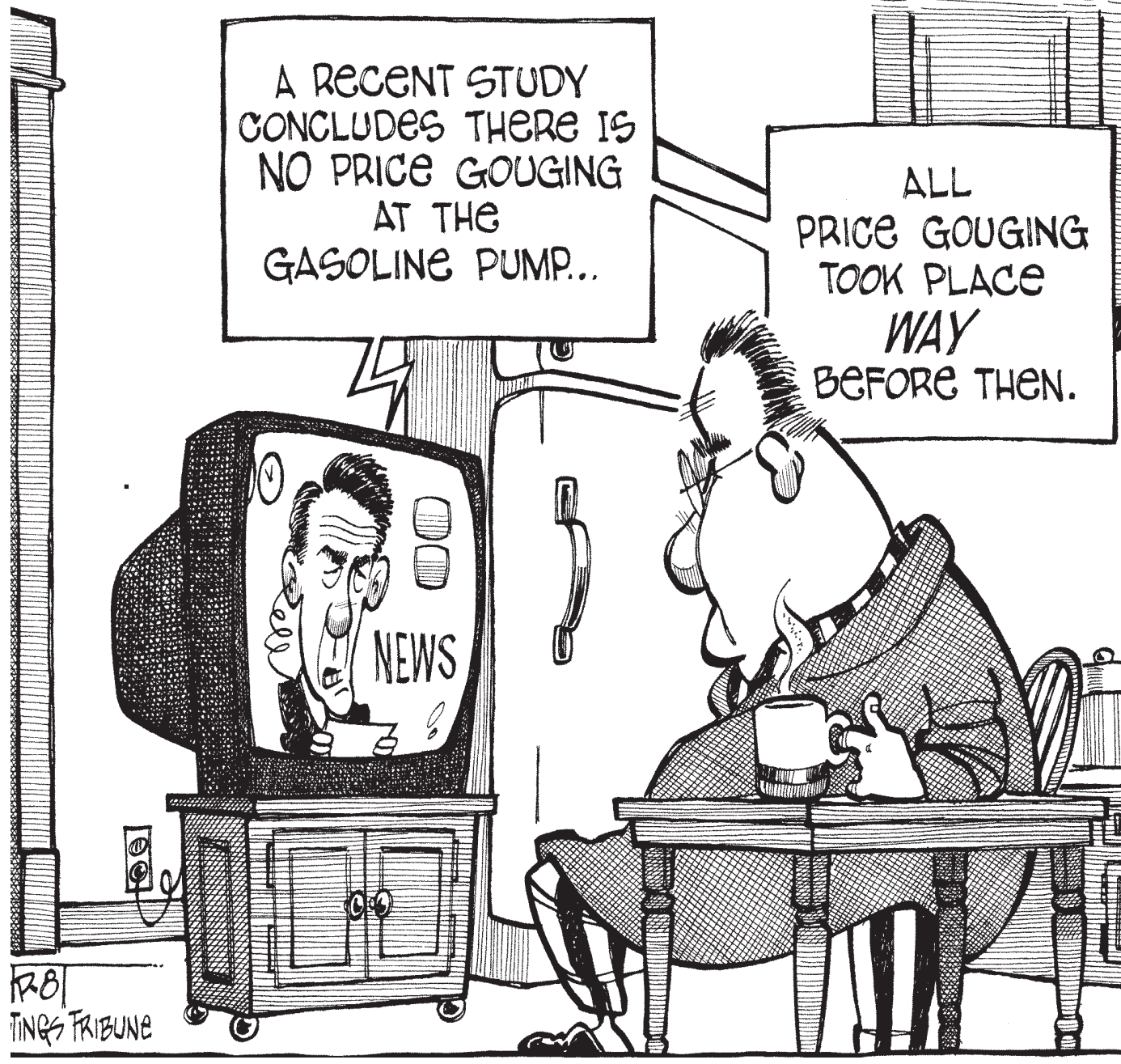


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Remember, thief doesn't always win

The thief selected his victim with cunning and greed. So complete was his stealth he had taken a great deal before anyone was even aware of him.

There were moments when the woman looked around and thought, "Something is wrong." But she was so afraid she could not ask anyone else if they had noticed.

The thief was content to wait. He knew even once his prey discovered the crime he was perpetrating, there was nothing that could be done. He would take everything. The woman, her family and friends would watch helplessly.

As time passed there was no denying his presence. The woman bought things for her grandchildren from the shopping channels. They were not thankful for the gifts. Her children began asking how much she was spending. Her credit cards disappeared.

She bought new furniture. Her daughter called the store asked them to take it back. It was a small town and for some reason after that the stores would not deliver to her anymore.

The thief laughed at her confusion. He branched out his attack to her children. He planted a seed in each head. "Remember your grandmother? I got her. Now I have your mother. I can get you too," he taunted.

One child lived far away. The woman had an almost new car, yet her children always thought of a reason she could not go visit. She still drove around town, when she could find her keys. She thought someone was hiding them, but then she would find them. Once she found them in the freezer.

Back Home Nancy Hagman



No one would come to her house for a meal anymore. Sometime she forgot about birthdays and holidays. Sometimes she remembered. She would ask if the family wanted to come to her house this time. The answer was always no, someone else had already made all the plans.

She noticed that even if she did remember and attempted to make a dish to take no one really ate it. She remembered all the meals she had cooked. All the birthday cakes she had made, the pies for harvest hands, things she used to make to tempt her husband when he was dying of cancer.

She could remember the smiles of those she had cooked for and the happy times. They were clearer to her than what she had for lunch. Some days she could not remember if she had even had lunch. She gained weight. She lost her car keys and never found them. Nurses came.

The thief was relentless and he was cruel. A grandson died an untimely death. But she would forget. So she would ask about him. Why didn't he come to Easter dinner? She saw the pain in the faces of her family.

She cried and asked her children not to put her in a home. Her house was too big though. She was afraid. Someone tried to break in. She called the police. Again.

And again. She realized they did not believe her. She patrolled the house herself. She would check the basement. She knew someone was there. She checked again and again.

One day her daughter suggested she let a young teacher, new to the community, live in her basement. The idea made her happy. "Yes," she said, "I'd like to help her out."

The young woman gave her pills at night; sometimes she would come and do things like reset the thermostat. But she was a good tenant. She was quiet.

She visited the doctor. She had tests done. They did the same test the next week. She realized she must have cancer. She begged her children to tell her. They insisted it had been a year in between the tests. How could it be a year? Everyone lied to her.

She did bizarre things. Sometimes her friends and family were even able to laugh, uneasily, at her antics. They heard stories of other people who had fallen victim to the thief. They took solace in them. At least it's not that bad they thought.

"Not yet," the thief sneered.

At last, despite all their efforts, a nursing home was the only choice left. The woman and her family were people of faith and they prayed. The woman went willingly. She realized where she was and recognized people she had known.

The thief was stunned. He had taken almost everything yet he had not won. "It will get worse," he promised.

"Yes, it will," they were at last able to acknowledge, "but we will still have this day." — FOR DORRINE

Our job is somewhat like farming

Economic development is somewhat like farming. For example, a farmer may have several fields of wheat, corn, milo and sunflowers. The more seeds he plants the greater the odds that he will have a good harvest.

Some of the seeds won't take root and others will fall by the wayside and be eaten by the birds. Yet, many will grow into amber waves of grain and produce a bountiful harvest.

We've been planting some economic development seeds, working on several projects in various stages of development. Some have taken root and we are seeing some good outcomes. However, this all takes time.

A couple of dozen homeowners responded to our Housing Rehabilitation Loan/Grant program that is funded through the United States Department of Agriculture. Representatives of that agency and I met several times during the past three months assisting applicants in completing forms and income verifications, etc. During the past few weeks, rep-

Moving Ahead Marlene Henderson



representatives from USDA have come out to Norton County and inspected homes to be repaired within the next thirty days.

We were approached by residents of Almena to assist in finding a buyer to purchase the Almena Market (only grocery store) and Oak Shop. Although the properties had been up for sale awhile, no one had come forward intending to purchase either property. Almena was in danger of losing two businesses this year.

I encouraged the Almena City Council to apply for a Business Enterprise grant for the purpose of assisting new business owners, and/or expanding existing busi-

nesses that are hiring additional employees. After several trips to Almena, Phase 1 of the grant application has been completed. Now the word was out that financial help may be on the way.

Several potential buyers came forward and within a couple of months we had buyers for both the Almena Market and the Oak Shop. The Oak Shop will continue to stay open for a few months until it is replaced by the new owner's coffee shop/bakery, after remodeling is completed.

I am currently working on a dozen economic development projects, continuing to sow seeds. Unfortunately, due to the nature of economic development, I can't reveal the details of many of these projects until they have blossomed, to prevent jeopardizing them. I hope to have some more great news to report in the next few months.

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