

## Senator's resolution best left alone

We aren't quite so sure that censure of President Bush is necessary. It would do nothing more than give the enemy a little more ammo to toss on the fire.

And because nearly all of the Democratic senators won't go anywhere near fellow Democrat Sen. Russell Feingold's censure resolution, speaks volumes. It is no secret that Sen. Feingold has an eye on the 2008 presidential derby.

The senator thinks President Bush broke the law with his domestic spying program, a top secret project designed to stay a step ahead of the terrorists whose only goal, don't forget, is the ultimate destruction of the United States of America.

Yes, President Bush may be pushing the envelope, but as of now there seems to be little evidence that he has broken the law. And most Americans, if you believe in polls, are behind the president on this one. "Do what you have to do, Mr. President, to keep them at arm's length" seems to be the prevailing opinion.

In a time of war, and make no mistake about the fact we are at war, the president needs to be given some slack. If you are not of this thinking, then explain the bloodshed in Iraq. Those young American men and women are standing up to an enemy unlike any enemy we have confronted in the past. They believe in their mission, we must believe in them.

Not censuring the president, according to the Sen. Feingold, is akin to giving him a pass. It puts him above the law. The senator said it just like a politician — like a politician with an eye on something greater than the United States Senate. And this is troublesome. It does little to strengthen Sen. Feingold's stock, but it does a lot to dilute President's Bush's standing as leader of the free world.

The senator needs to suck it up. Get over it. If in fact the president clearly broke the law, the cry for his head would be deafening. Apparently, it's not that big a deal with most Americans. We would invite his snoops to listen in to us any day or night they want. We have nothing to hide. If anything they'd haul us in for creating boredom, a real problem for those who need to be kept alert.

The Feingolds of this country would have made a better case had they questioned why we weren't snooping prior to 9/11.

—Tom Dreiling

## Disappointment surfaces

I was disappointed that a school funding plan was not approved. I supported the Barnett \$400 million plan over a four year period. It increased the base each year and didn't need any tax increase or gambling to support it. In the closing hours a gambling bill was introduced at the rail.

### Budget

The Senate adopted the conference committee report for SB 480 by a 30-10 vote. The bill now contains appropriations for fiscal year 2007, supplemental appropriations for fiscal years 2006 and 2007, appropriations for capital improvements, and special claims against the state.

It now authorizes expenditures in the amount of \$16.5 million less from all funds than the governor's recommendation for fiscal year 2007.

### Cruelty to Animals

The Senate adopted the conference committee report for SB 408 by a vote of 40-0. Better known as Scruffy's Law or Magnum's Law, the bill makes intentional and malicious animal cruelty a felony with a minimum sentence of 30 days in jail.

### Deregulation Bills

The Senate adopted the conference committee reports for SB 350 and SB 449. SB 350 deregulates prices for telecommu-

## Senate Doings Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer



nications services. SB 449 is known as the video competition act, and makes it easier for phone companies to compete with cable companies.

### Still In The Works...

#### Eminent Domain

Sub SB 323 remains in a conference committee, and negotiations will continue until an agreement is reached. The bill prohibits the use of eminent domain for economic development purposes, and contains an exemption for redevelopment districts already established.

#### Jessica's Law

HB 2576, better known as Jessica's Law, also remains in a conference committee.

#### School Finance

Three school finance plans were defeated on the Senate floor, but SB 584 was reconsidered and then re-referred to the Education committee. It will likely be used as a vehicle for a new school finance plan during the veto session.

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## Saturday was just one of those days

We had Saturday evening dinner plans that included joining 15 other couples for a party. It was to be a wonderful celebration and I was responsible for baking the crescent rolls.

Jim had to work that day in a neighboring town and my last words to him before he left the house were, "Remember the party tonight. We are to be there at 6:30."

All day as I worked around the house, I had one eye on the clock. By back-timing, I knew when I had to have the bread ready for the oven, when I had to be in the shower, and when Jim had to be home.

About noon he called. "Sweetheart, I'm sorry. But, I don't think I'm going to get done with this job in time to go to the party." He went on to say how it turned out to be more complicated than he expected, but all I was hearing was, "Blah, blah, blah."

I started to get wound up. "What do you mean you aren't going to make it for the party? Do you realize I have the rolls for

## Out Back Carolyn Plotts



this? Don't you understand this-or-that? How dare you do whatever?"

I was just about at full-blast level when he interrupted me with three little words that completely diffused the situation.

"Hey. April Fool's."

Oh, my. My emotions came in for a crash landing and I began to laugh.

Perhaps it was relief. Perhaps I was still a little "shocky." Don't know, but he assured me it was all a joke and he would be home in plenty of time to get ready.

Wait. That's not the end of the story. There's more. About 4 p.m. Jim called again. "Hey, this isn't a joke. It's for real.

My van won't start and I can't find anyone to help. You might have to bring the jumper cables and come get me."

Of course, he had no way of knowing I had four dozen crescent rolls, raised to perfection, waiting their turn in the oven. In fact, one dozen had just begun to bake. I was ready to take my shower and now my plans were ruined.

Any way I figured it, if I left to go get him we would both only have about two minutes to get ready and that didn't count baking the remaining rolls.

I have to admit, I did not handle the situation very well. Said some things I shouldn't have. Really behaved badly. But, I have since apologized to my husband and he forgave me.

What was so important about this dinner party? It was the culmination of a six-week course on marriage, relationships and how I can be a better wife.

Hm-m-m-m. Maybe I need to sign up for a refresher course.

## Not practicing what he preaches

OK. Guess who forgot to turn his clock up one hour before going to bed Saturday night? You're right.

-td-

Is it just me or does it seem that the tornado season is off to one of its meanest and deadliest starts ever? We could be in for some really frightening times if what we've seen this early becomes the pattern. Death, destruction. It just isn't in this part of the country, but it seems like the weather has gotten really cranky all over the place. I watch the weather channel quite a bit and have become a little less confident in their explanations of why things are happening like they are. I'd almost bet that off camera the experts are also scratching their heads like the rest of us. Monday morning early as I switched on the television the first report was of tornadoes busting their way through Kentucky, Tennessee, Illinois and that part of the country and in the process killing nearly 30 people (that was Monday's figure). Seems like there are fatality counts each time one of those things touches down anymore. I guess the only thing we can do, when warned, is take shelter, and most importantly have a plan mapped out before that situation unfolds.

-td-

Norton's Phil Lesh received quite an honor at Saturday evening's barbershop concert at McCook. I won't go into detail, but Dick Boyd is working up a story and photo for Friday's *Telegram*. The

## Good Evening Norton Tom Dreiling



McCook Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society hosted the annual spring show.

-td-

I got a big chuckle out of CNN during my lunch hour Monday, as they patiently awaited President Bush to toss out the traditional first ball ushering in the 2006 baseball season (although the season officially started Sunday). The president walked out to the mound and, without fanfare, gave it his best shot. All the while, the network assumed, I assume, that he would take a practice pitch. He didn't, that was it. And their camera crews weren't positioned to get the long shot of the throw.

The commentary by the network's news anchor at that time left no doubt in my mind that he was troubled over the incident. Oh well...play ball!

-td-

Now we add baseball to what seems to be the never ending hockey and NBA seasons.

-td-

I think I heard where, after this week, Congress would be taking another break — I guess it would be the Easter break. Before you get all bummed out over that thought, the flip side of the coin is that they won't be foolishly spending your money and mine.

I don't think.

-td-

The word "power" as it relates to those in high places in the United States Senate and the House of Representatives, always rubs me the wrong way. "He is the most powerful person in Washington." How often do you hear those words proclaimed? Even in our state legislatures that declaration often surfaces. Lest those powerful people forget, we the people yield the power. Whenever I hear that and see the person or persons tagged with that title, I see people too big for their breeches. There is a political graveyard filled with those powerful people. And their breeches.

-td-

And while on the topic of those who serve us in Washington I must say that the issue with lobbyists should be simple: no gifts, period. Matter of fact our senators and congressmen do get hundreds of thousands, maybe millions, of gifts every few years. They are called **votes**. That's all they need.

-td-

Time to wrap this column up, so...

-td-

Have a good evening!

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# 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

