

Corporate America won't change its ways

The people back in Washington who legislate the very air we breathe, saw a need to put in writing that English is our national language. We've got news for them: to make something like that stick they are going to have to persuade corporate America to change its ways.

And that's not likely to happen. Why?

Call any large company and the first thing you hear when the recorded voice comes on the line is this: press 1 for English, 2 for Spanish. Can you imagine corporate America eliminating that part of our population that pours big bucks in their coffers? We can't.

It all sounds good. English will be the national language of the United States of America. For some odd reason, we have been under the impression that has been the case all along. Bets are good that those legislators who don't buy into this, as well as the general population, will be tagged as unpatriotic.

We thought it was interesting how our two senators voted on this latest controversial effort. Take note:

English as the national language — Amendment to the Comprehensive Immigration Reform bill (S. 2611) designating English as the national language and requiring those applying for citizenship to demonstrate an understanding of U.S. history and culture: both Senators Pat Roberts and Sam Brownback voted **yes**.

English as the unifying language — Amendment to the Comprehensive Immigration Reform bill (S. 2611) that says English is the common and unifying language of the United States: Sen. Roberts voted **no** and Sen. Brownback **yes**.

Citizenship for illegal aliens — Amendment to the Comprehensive Immigration Reform bill (S. 2611) that would have eliminated provisions of the bill that allows illegal immigrants who have worked in the United States for five years or more to apply for legal status after paying a fine and back taxes and learning English: Sen. Roberts voted **yes** and Sen. Brownback **no**.

So, even our two senate gents are split on two of the three amendments.

President Bush said in his nationally televised talk to the nation last week that he expects a bill dealing with the immigration problem on his desk in two weeks. That may not happen.

This issue has divided the country to a degree not anticipated by even the smartest brains in the tank. And it's not a party line issue. It has Democrats and Republicans sharing the same bed.

Whether the presence of the National Guard at the border will impact the situation is yet to be assessed. I wish there had been an amendment stuffing that issue in the mix to see how the two senators would have voted.

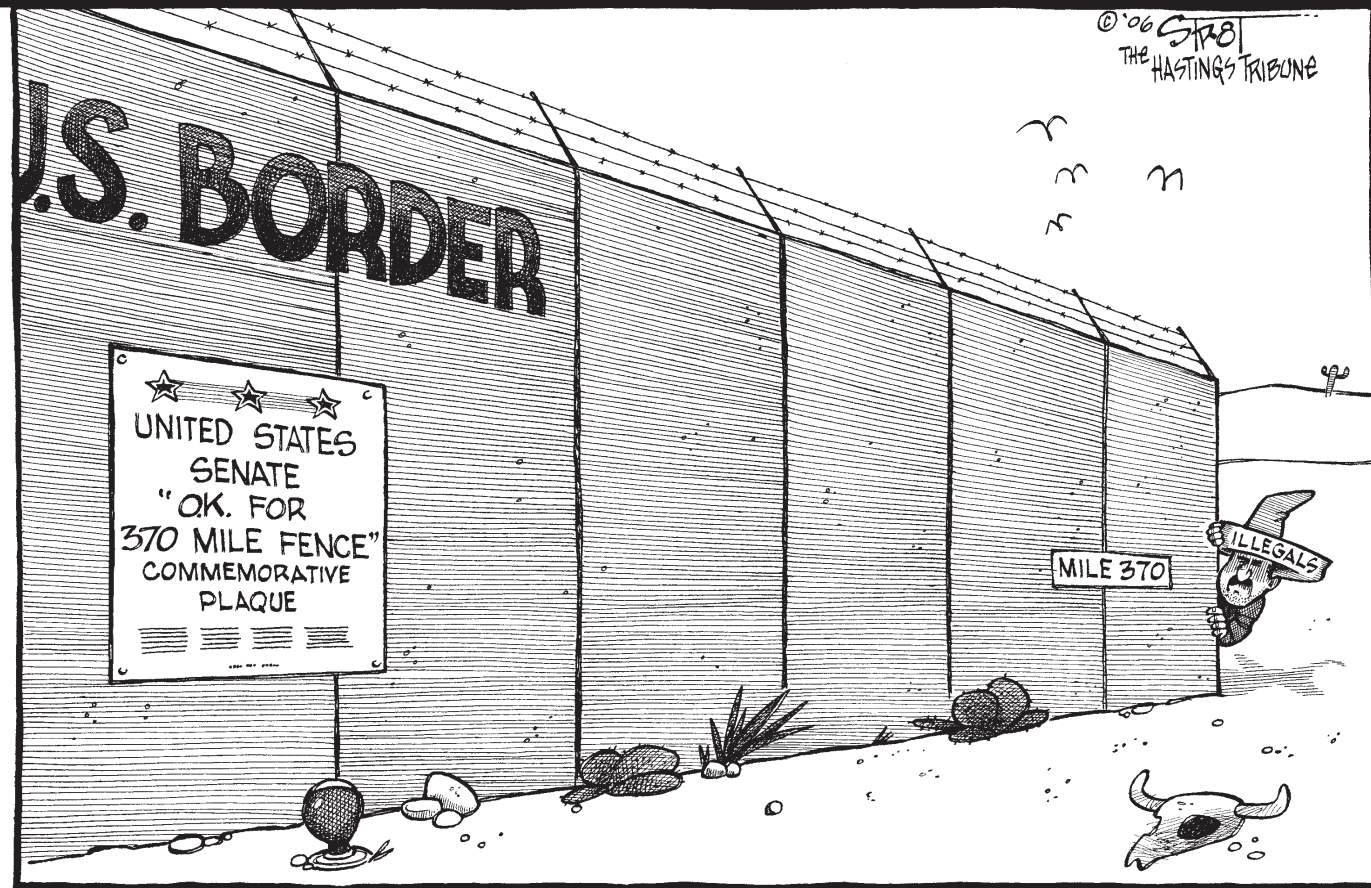
What to do, what to do. What say you?

—Tom Dreiling

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

- **Governor Kathleen Sebelius**, 300 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-3232
- **U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran**, 2443 Rayburn HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715; fax (202) 225-5124
- **U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts**, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774; fax (202) 224-3514
- **U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback**, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521
- **State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer**, State Capitol Building, Room 262-E, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-7399
- **State Rep. John Faber**, 181 W. Capitol Building, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-7500

Next 'Thumbs Up...' is Friday.
Email tomd@nwkansas.com, call 877-3361 or 877-6908.



Maybe this will be our tomato year

This weekend we managed to get all our flowers in the ground or in pots. All that is left to plant are six tomato plants. Every year we try to grow tomatoes. And, every year we fail. This year, however, I have some inside information that guarantees a bountiful crop.

Friday night I met a woman who has the reputation of growing excellent tomatoes. The secret, she said, is to make sure each plant is pollinated. When the plants are in full bloom, I am to take my finger and lightly touch each blossom, thereby pollinating the tomato. It sounds a little personal, but I am willing to do anything to get some good tasting, home-grown tomatoes.

No offense to the local grocers, but "store-bought" tomatoes taste like wet cardboard with a hint of tomato flavoring.

Every town around, and every resident in every town, is sprucing up for the approaching weekend. School reunions plus Memorial Day activities will add up to a jam-packed few days. Some of the "sprucing up" has to do with houses and yards.

Out Back Carolyn Plotts



Some has to do with graying hair, new clothes, and old wrinkles. Lots of us are asking if it's possible to lose 50 pounds in five days.

This is the Class of '61's 45th reunion year and Jim has been involved with the planning of his class's activities. That's one thing I appreciate about Jim. He didn't say he would help and then expect me to do his job. I need to take a lesson from him. I am always making promises that he has to help me keep.

No, he wrote every one of his classmates himself; included the self-addressed envelopes; and has recorded the replies. He has gone to the planning meetings and is really looking forward to see-

ing his old friends.

-ob-

I just watched Katie Couric do a segment on The Today Show about men who capture alligators in Florida cities. She said if you are being chased by a 'gator to run in a zig-zag pattern. She said that alligators don't have peripheral vision.

Seems to me that if that's true, the 'gator would see you every other zig or zag. If I'm ever chased by an alligator, I think I'll take Matt Lauer's advice and climb a tree.

Jim is reading as I type this and he just said, "That's what I want to watch: you climbing a tree." I said, "Fine. You can stay on the ground with the alligator."

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Jim had the honor of uniting a couple in marriage Friday night. It was a simple, but beautiful ceremony. The bride's children were the couple's witnesses and provided the most poignant part of the wedding. The entire new family lit a unity candle to signify their oneness. It was a beautiful moment.

Congratulations, Rex and Trendy.

Your friend needs your assistance

Hospices Services, Inc. Sandy Kuhlman

Friends are one of the greatest gifts we receive. One of life's more difficult moments is when you are talking with a friend who shares with you that he or she is seriously ill. It is common to be overwhelmed. You don't know what to say or how to respond. The fear of "not knowing" what to do can prevent you from giving the love and support your friend needs most.

Jack D. Gordon served as Chairman and CEO of the Hospice Foundation of America until his death in 2005. In an article in December 2005 for the Hospice Foundation of America Newsletter, Mr. Gordon shared these suggestions that may help when your friend needs help. Many of the suggestions were taken from the experience of hospice patients.

- **BE HONEST WITH ME.** I can tell when your feelings or actions are insincere.
- **LAUGH WITH ME, CRY WITH ME.** Allow me to express intense emo-

tions.

- **DON'T FEEL SORRY FOR ME.** Your understanding helps preserve my dignity and pride.
- **TOUCH ME.** I want to be accepted despite the way I may look. Inside I'm still the same person you always knew.
- **LET ME TALK ABOUT MY ILLNESS IF I WANT TO.** Talking helps me work through my feelings.
- **LET ME BE SILENT IF I WANT TO.** Sometimes I don't have much energy and I just want your silent companionship. Your presence alone can be comforting.
- **SPACE YOUR VISITS AND**

CALLS. Consistent support is very helpful. Sometimes I don't have the energy for very long visits but they are important to me.

- **OFFER TO BABYSIT.** The children need a break from my illness, and private times with my spouse are treasured.
- **SUPPORT MY FAMILY.** I may be very sick, but they too are suffering. Let them express their grief.
- **OFFER TO HELP ME WITH THE SIMPLE CHORES.** Routine jobs are often difficult to accomplish.
- **CONTINUE TO BE MY FRIEND.** Don't let my illness overshadow all the good times we've shared together. I know this is hard for you too.

We hope this can be of help to you in dealing with illness, loss and grief. Much of what is in this article is learned from the ill themselves, a source of wisdom and inspiration. If you're not sure if what you want to do is appropriate, call 785-543-2900 or 800-315-5122.

FROM THE MAILBOX:

Political correctness invades the soccer field

To the Editor,
Our foster children participated in soccer this year for the first time in Norton. It was an enjoyable experience for us. The kids had a good time and we got to know the community better. I thank all the coaches and staff for their dedication to our children's recreational enjoyment and learning.

However, I was very upset that the league Norton is a part of does not officially keep score, nor are trophies recognizing winning teams given out. Our foster children had played soccer last year on the East Coast where score was kept and achievements recognized. Not so here.

Why not? Several times during the early games I would ask what the score was. I was told by nearly everybody that 'we don't keep score.' Why not? What is wrong with keeping score? I was also told that they were here to learn the fundamentals of the game. Yeah, so? How is keeping score subtracting from learning the fundamentals of the game? What is a sport

without winning and losing? I began to realize that inherent within this practice is the belief that *competition is bad or hurtful to our children. The losers might get their feelings hurt?* Is that it?

As the months passed of the soccer season, I became more incensed about this. Why? Because it insults my intelligence and it is dishonest. We should not have goalies or goals if we are not going to keep score. The idea is to score. And to purposely not recognize our efforts for fear of hurting someone's feelings is nonsense. Learning how to compete (losing and winning) with good attitudes towards others leads to emotional maturity.

Healthy competition has within it the principle of sowing and reaping. But taking away the reaping of reward, we have castrated the original purpose of the game. Even the Apostle Paul had common sense, "Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. *Everyone who competes in the*

games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever."

In case you think my foster children feel ill rewarded for their efforts, be it known, that 'unofficially' they both lost all of their games. I teach my children to learn from losing, not to feel sorry for themselves. They learn to reckon reality as it is, deal with it, and make it better next time.

By placating to the feelings of losers we encourage emotional immaturity. Life is filled with negatives, pain, suffering and well, yes, dare I say it...losing. The sooner we get over it and teach our children grace and dignity in the face of loss, the better. *Healthy competition is an opportunity for parents to help their children grow up.* Let's stop listening to nonsensical psychobabble and get back to common sense and logic.

Concerned for commonsense,

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