

Much to ponder on 9-11 anniversary

Americans paused briefly Monday to reflect. Then they went to their jobs. To school. To shop. To visit. To do what they've been doing every day since the horror of Sept. 11, 2001.

We paused in different ways. A personal moment of silence. A visit to a church. A thought. Dwell not for those who died, but for those left behind. And for those who, in their heroic efforts after the twin towers came down in New York City, are suffering the consequences of inhaling polluted air at what has become known as "Ground Zero."

The effects of that fatal attack continue these five years later as many hundreds, perhaps thousands, who hurried to the scene to help out are today ill. Seriously ill.

It was appropriate that we remembered those who died in New York City's Twin Towers, in the Pentagon, and in a field in rural western Pennsylvania. They were the direct result of the attack. But our thoughts and our prayers rightfully need to also include those who battled the unknown environmental hazards in search for survivors at Ground Zero.

It was indeed disturbing to hear some Americans take to the airwaves and begin the finger-pointing process as to whom to blame for the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. Some said it was our own government acting against its own people. Some blamed former President Bill Clinton. Some pointed to President George W. Bush. The only people not blamed for anything was Adam and Eve, and that was surprising considering the vastness of the umbrella under which the finger-pointers herded in their troops of guilt.

It happened. And we have been dealing with it ever since. And yes, we are somewhat safer today than we were before 9-11. Critics aside, we are making headway in that department. We are being vigilant. We are giving up some of what we'd rather not as a trade-off for our security. 9-11 ushered in a change none of us could have ever imagined.

Five years have passed. Uneasy years, yes. But we have become stronger with each passing day. The lessons learned on Sept. 11, 2001 were tough, but served as a wake up call. Nothing is a given. And we must be prepared, all of us, to make sure that nothing is taken away, either.

— Tom Dreiling

Many ways to cope with change

Change is a constant part of life, from the death of a loved one, to job and career moves, to financial setbacks, to divorce or remarriage. Sometimes life changes are a choice, but many times change is unexpected and uncontrollable. The six major kinds of change are:

- Loss of anything that is important such as a loved one, job, even loss of hope.
- Separation and being physically or emotionally apart from anyone or anything that is important such as your loved ones, home, job, friends.
- Relocation from a house, job, city, or your office down the hall.
- Change in a relationship that is important such as family members, close friends, or people at work.
- Change in direction, goals or focus such as a new career, marriage, returning to school, or retirement.
- Change in health due to illness, or a change toward improved health.

People who deal effectively with change know they have little or no control over the situation, but recognize they do have control over how they react to change. When dealing with change, a person needs to recognize and understand as much as possible. What is the worst thing that can happen? Can the negative effects be minimized? What result is desired? It

Health Perspectives 'Plain Sense' Karen Schueler

is necessary to review the possibilities and determine what the next step should be. As progress is gained, review the strategies that are working and those that are not, and try something different if needed.

A major change that results in loss or disappointment can bring about feelings of helplessness, confusion and anger. These emotions don't feel good, but are a normal reaction and necessary to work through in order to heal and move on.

If left unresolved, such feelings can undermine personal and professional relationships, leave one vulnerable to physical illness and can trigger long-term depression.

Mail questions to the High Plains Mental Health Center, Plain Sense, Consultation and Education Department, 208 East 7th, Hays, Kan. 67601. This column was written by Karen Schueler, LCPC, manager of the department.

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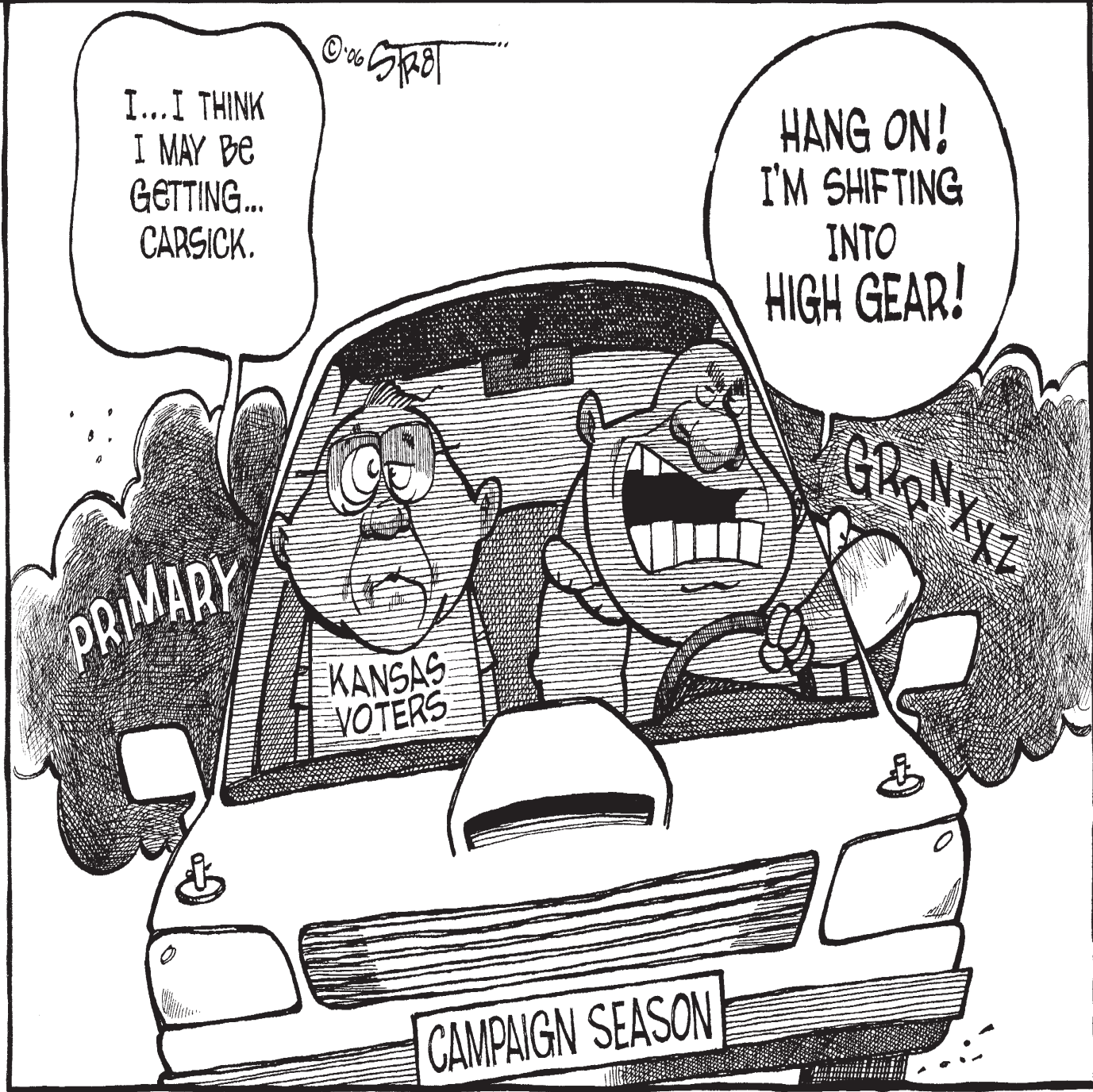
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Events that bring tears to our eyes

Just like Dec. 7, 1941 and Nov. 22, 1963, Sept. 11, 2001 will be one of those days etched in your life's story. I wasn't alive in 1941, but those who were, remember exactly where they were when they heard the news of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. But, I was alive in 1963. I was a junior in high school sitting in a bookkeeping class on the second floor of my school building.

The principal came over the public address system, "President Kennedy has been shot. Our president is dead. School is dismissed." We filed out of the building in stunned silence.

Now, five years after the attack on America, our memories of that infamous day are still raw. Tears well up when we watch film clips of the events. America's innocence was lost.

This morning it was hard to tear away from the televised coverage at ground zero. A friend said she watched as Donald Rumsfeld got choked up during his speech. We recorded President Bush's

Out Back Carolyn Plotts



address. Painful to remember — but we dare not forget.

We dare not forget that these Muslim extremists want to kill us. "Us" is every non-Muslim on the face of the earth. It is a religion that has been spread at the end of a sword. Convert or die. Pretty simple. Those who say it is a peaceful religion don't understand that it is peaceful only for obedient Muslims.

Ask what happens to a Muslim who wants to leave the faith or convert to Christianity.

Oh, goodness, I didn't mean to get so heavy-handed. I just don't want us to get complacent. Thinking it can't happen

here, or that if we're tolerant "they" won't bother us.

-ob-

I, for one, am ready for cool weather. But, summer isn't quite over and we'll probably have one more heat wave before the shorts and flip flops can be retired.

Of course, anymore, kids wear flip flops year 'round. So that's no judge of when summer is over.

This summer has been so oppressively hot for so long we need some relief. Not that I want snow and ice just yet. But, cool days and nights sound really good to me.

-ob-

Jim is beginning to feel like a rock star. I am his private paparazzi. Everytime he finishes a cabinet door, installs a light or hooks up a water line, I am in his face with the camera. I am documenting every phase of the remodel job on our house. What a scrapbook we will have.

Fair warning — if you don't want to see pictures, don't ask, "How's the house coming?"

Best advice comes from old poem

Back Home Nancy Hagman



The shop was a success also. My Dad used to say the way to recognize a good Dutchman is he always finishes the barn before he finishes the house. This has been borne out in my marriage more times than I care to admit!

One feature of the shop is a balcony over the work bench for storage. It is supported by some poles.

The guys began planning a "barn warming". It started out innocently enough until they got an idea; something about dancing girls and those poles. The hubby blames it on the Wendell, Wendell blames it on him. There is really no point in trying to get to the bottom of it! The idea kind of morphed into a combination bachelor/shop-warming party.

This did not go over too well with the blushing bride.

"No Dancing Girls," she proclaimed. Preacher Dave promised to be on standby for counseling.

He probably is doing some pre-marital counseling anyway. It is standard these days. I recall having some of that before I was married. It must have worked, though personally my thoughts on why our marriage has been a success (thus far) is because I am so laid back and let the hubby do whatever he wants, with nary a word of protest.

OKAY, back to reality — we never got around to having the barn warming or the bachelor party, but the wedding is upon us.

I do not mean to discount Preacher Dave's work, but between the hubby and Wendell there is about 75 years experience with marriage. So I think all those long winter days and all the wisdom they imparted to David may be of at least equal importance.

My favorite advice to newlyweds is the old poem:

To keep the love brimming
Full from the loving cup,
When you're wrong: admit it
And when you're right: SHUT UP!
Best wishes David and Daylah. The big day was September 9, 2006!

Three easy ways to get involved:

1. A Letter to the Editor, share your opinion
2. Thumbs Up, salute a friend, a volunteer, a family member
3. At Week's End, the lighter side of life