

Bringing back draft not a good idea

Talk about the bad old days. Congressman Charles Rangel, the New York Democrat poised to take over the House Ways and Means Committee, can't wait to start a draft.

He claims it will keep the country from jumping into foreign misadventures on shaky pretense cooked up by politicians.

Sure, Chuck.

That's what kept us from spending billions to send millions of men to Vietnam in the 1960s to lose a war and hundreds of thousands of lives.

It worked then.

Oh, wait.

We had a draft then, something about the Cold War threat.

That was a draftee army we sent to Vietnam to lose and die while an earlier version of Donald Rumsfeld tried to micro manage the war.

It was a lousy Army then, Chuck, and it got worse as the draft filled its ranks with people who neither knew how to be soldiers nor much cared. Drugs, violence, poor leadership, no direction at the top. It was a mess.

The burden fell not on the rich, who finagled to keep their sons out of combat, as always, but on the poor, the middle class, the minorities, the same people it always falls on. The draft didn't help then.

The draft didn't keep Congress from passing the bogus Gulf of Tonkin Resolution or from appropriating all those millions to fight that war.

Sure, there were good people in combat then. Also a lot of losers who had no business at the front lines.

A conscript Army seems like a good idea some days, egalitarian and democratic. As a fighting force, though, it's a difficult proposition. The Romans found that out. The Russian Army was, many days, a paper tiger, a hollow machine run by conscripts who cared little and knew less.

Even in World War II, it took years of effort and training for the U.S. (or the Russians) to mold a draftee force into a fighting machine. And then, people cared about the war.

Today's Army is different, prouder, better trained, more sophisticated, peopled by men and women — active duty and reserve — who know their job, think it's important and don't mind doing it. Talk to some of them.

Many say it's the finest army in the world. We won't argue.

A year or two of mandatory public service may sound like a fine and noble idea, but to many, it's involuntary servitude, something Americans rebel at.

There's plenty wrong in Washington: Congress is a scandal, no matter who runs it. The administration is out of touch. Regulations and pork-barrel spending multiply while our rights are trampled.

The Republicans failed to lead us anywhere but to Abramoff's for dinner. Now it's the Democrats' turn.

But a draft?

Not a good idea.

Unless they will take Congressman Rangel.

— Steve Haynes

YOUR CONNECTION

★ **Governor Kathleen Sebelius**, 300 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-3232

★ **U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback**, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521

★ **U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts**, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774; fax (202) 224-3514

★ **U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran**, 2443 Rayburn HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715; fax (202) 225-5124

Remember: Friday is 'Thumbs Up' day on this page

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

Office hours:
8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.
Phone: (785) 877-3361
Fax: (785) 877-3732
E-mail: telegram@nwkansas.com

STAFF

Tom Dreiling editor and publisher
Veronica Monier staff reporter
Dick Boyd Blue Jay sports
Carolyn Plotts society editor
Sherry Hickman bookkeeping/circulation
Vicki Henderson computer production

Nor'West Newspapers

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THE HASTINGS TRIBUNE



Thanksgiving in Texas a good time

Our family had a wonderful Thanksgiving. How about you? Did you eat too much? We did. Did you stay up too late? We did. Did you spoil the grandkids? We did. I almost feel bad that our daughter, Jennifer, had to go back to her home in San Antonio with the baby.

After spending three days with a grandmother, a grandfather, two aunts and an uncle dotting on the baby during her every waking moment, it might be hard to keep her entertained. Little Annie was the best baby. Almost four months old, she is responsive to all our antics. She smiles and coos on cue which elicits more clowning and goo-goo talk. I discovered she especially likes to have you blow on her belly.

For the eighth year, in a row, we all met in Dallas at the home of our daughter, Kara, her husband, Adam and their daughter, Taylor. Our oldest daughter, Halley, is also living in Dallas, trying to

Out Back Carolyn Plotts



start a real estate career. The first day there, Jim, Halley, Jennifer and Kara went shopping. Adam had to go to work. I stayed home with the kids to get a head start on some of the holiday cooking.

Annie's big sister, Alexandria, and Taylor were busy doing their own thing, so it was just Annie and me. I put her in her car seat and moved her around the kitchen floor while I cooked. Every now and then I would rock her seat with my foot and say something dumb like, "Are you helping G'ma cook?"

She would coo and gurgle appropriately. We were a great team.

-ob-

On our return home Saturday night, we discovered how the "children" we left behind had entertained themselves. The two kittens, Pete and Sammy, had somehow knocked a roll of paper towels into the bathtub. Next, they managed to unroll it, then shred it.

They had a mountain of paper towels in the tub. Like kids who say, "Watch me! Watch me!" they perched on the edge of the tub, then launched themselves into the pile. They would bury themselves only to emerge in a leap to surprise the other.

They want to be held and petted constantly since our return. I think they missed us.

-ob-

When we left Dallas it was 64 degrees. Last night it got down to 20 degrees here. That's just wrong. I don't enjoy Texas in the summer time, but, I do like their winters. With snow predicted for mid-week, I am sure our winter is here.

Relay for Life Summit adopts 'Superheroes' theme

To the Editor,

I've just returned from a fun filled/fact filled Relay for Life Summit in Dallas, Texas. Let me tell you, you get a huge dining facility filled with enthusiastic people, young and old alike, whose main goal is to bring out resources for funding of research for cancer, and the walls couldn't hold the quake.

I think I could do the moves to the YMCA song in my sleep, we rocked the place. So now it's my opportunity to bring this enthusiasm to Norton County and let's show our fellow district members what Norton County can do to help keep this enthusiasm going for years to come. I'm writing you to let you know that it's that time of year for getting teams together as our annual Relay for Life which will be in June, 2007.

There is so much to get done and before you know it, June will be here.

As you know, every one of us has been affected by cancer — it may be a loved one, it may be you, or co-workers and friends. Cancer attacks different parts of

the body — skin, colon, oral, lung, ovarian, stomach, breast, brain, testicular, and some rare incidents that I may not be aware of. Norton County is home to many survivors. This is our chance to increase the awareness of cancer that exists amongst our neighbors in our county, as well as raise funds to increase research for cures.

Now, some of you may think, I'm a small business, I don't have enough employees to form a team, and this may be true, but there are other ways to get involved and make this really a great campaign for cures. But please remember that no team is too small and certainly no donation is ever too small.

The theme for this year will be superheroes. Each survivor is a superhero and

this is the best way to let each superhero shine. My hopes are to have a superhero wall and a superhero spokesperson that you may invite to your business to give an inspirational testimonial about the road they traveled from learning they had cancer to the day they learned the cancer was in remission.

The way to fight this deadly disease is to fund research, speak on Capitol Hill about the need for keeping research alive, and keep a spark of enthusiasm going in Norton County that says we are fighters and will do what it takes to promote healthy lives where we live.

The next scheduled meeting is Thursday, Dec. 7 at 5:30 p.m. at the Town and Country Kitchen. Join me in making this relay campaign the best ever. I look forward to seeing you at our meetings. If you need to reach me, please feel free to call me at 785 202-0777.

Thank you,

Sarah Durham
Team Chairperson 2007
Norton

Here's a great way to keep your tax dollars at work

To the Editor,

Keep your Kansas tax dollars in your local region. The Kansas Legislature has provided 75 percent Kansas Tax Credits to seven regions in Kansas for a total of \$2,500,000. Each region received \$357,142. The Rural Business Development Tax Credit Program provides a funding mechanism to help spur job creation and economic development in Kansas.

Pioneer Country Development Inc., located in Hill City, is the recipient for the funds for the 18 counties in northwest Kansas. We are a 501(c)3, non-profit organization, therefore, if you itemize your federal tax return, you can deduct your contribution as a normal expense and then take a 75 percent tax credit on your state return. Every individual or business should consult their tax advisor for their personal situation. Tax credits cannot be carried forward, if you overpay you will receive a refund.

Northwest Kansas has \$300,000 in tax credits available for individuals and businesses, requiring a total of \$400,000 in contributions. Donations must be \$250.00 or greater. An example: you donate \$1,000 to the program, you will automatically get \$750 back on your state income tax return.

If you itemize your federal income tax return, you can deduct the donation amount as an expense and save federal income tax in the amount of your tax bracket percentage. (If you are in the 15 percent tax bracket, you will save another \$150 in federal income tax.) Pioneer Country Development Inc., will use a minimum of 60 percent of the

funds for a revolving loan fund to assist in the financing of businesses in northwest Kansas. Additional funds will be used for business support services, leadership development, tourism and technology enhancements.

A simple application form needs to be completed and returned to us, along with your check by Dec. 24, 2006. Checks and application forms should be mailed to: Pioneer Country Development Inc., P.O. Box 248, Hill City, KS 67642.

If you have questions regarding the tax credits, contact Randall Hrabec, Pioneer Country Development Inc., (785) 421-2151, fax (785) 421-3496, e-mail nwkpcdc@ruraltel.net, or stop by our office at 319 N. Pomeroy, Hill City.

Keep your tax dollars working within the northwest Kansas region; participate in the tax credit program.

Randall J. Hrabec
Executive Director
Hill City