

Here's another reason why Norton's the place

It's simply a matter of being in the right place. Like Norton. And subscribing to the right company.

Local Kansas State University fans will be able to watch the K-State Wildcats and the Rutgers Scarlet Knights do battle in the inaugural Texas Bowl in Houston's Reliant Stadium on Dec. 28. Nex-Tech carries the NFL Network and, if you are a subscriber in Norton it's on Ch. 55.

Apparently that isn't the case across the state. In fact, our own Sen. Pat Roberts talked with National Football League Commissioner Roger Goodell, urging him to permit Kansans to watch the televised coverage of what could be one whale of a bowl game.

A news release from the senator leads one to believe Kansans won't be able to watch the game. We don't know what area or areas of the state the senator is referring to, but out here we are already popping the corn, chilling the refreshments, cleaning off the grill and getting ready for the showdown.

If you have friends in areas of the state that won't be able to watch the game, invite them out, much like you would pheasant hunters to experience some of the advantages of small, rural town life. It's not often we can brag about having something they don't.

In a news release from Sen. Roberts, he says:

"Every Kansan should be able to cheer on their team, be it the Wildcats, the Jayhawks or the Shockers. This issue is symptomatic of a long-running dispute between the NFL Network and certain cable providers.

"While I hope the parties can come to a long-term mutually acceptable resolution, I do not believe K-State fans should be kept from seeing the Texas Bowl simply because they subscribe to a particular cable company."

Maybe the NFL Network might find it in their heart to give Wildcats fans, without Nex-Tech service, a Christmas gift in the form of relaxing whatever hold it has on that exclusive, so they can watch the game, too.

We were in hopes as the Kansas Jayhawks' season rolled on that they, also, would end up in a bowl game. But that hope didn't materialize. It would have been nice and would have been a feather in the state's cap if both of its major universities were to appear in bowl games in closing weeks of 2006.

Oh, yes, we would be remiss if we did not point out that Sen. Roberts is a graduate of Kansas State University. But we would bet that most Kansans, regardless of university allegiance, would like to see the game.

And, jokingly, if Sen. Roberts' clout isn't enough, maybe a call to another powerful K-State grad, who also now teaches a course at the university, would be in order. That's Gen. Richard Myers (Ret.), former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He could park the military at the doorstep of the NFL Network.

Strange, but we had never given any thought to the possibility that many Kansans, apparently, won't be able to watch this particular bowl game.

Not many people gave the Wildcats' new head coach, Ron Prince, any chance of getting his team to a bowl game in this, his first season. But he did!

And we'll be watching it.

Thanks, Nex-Tech.

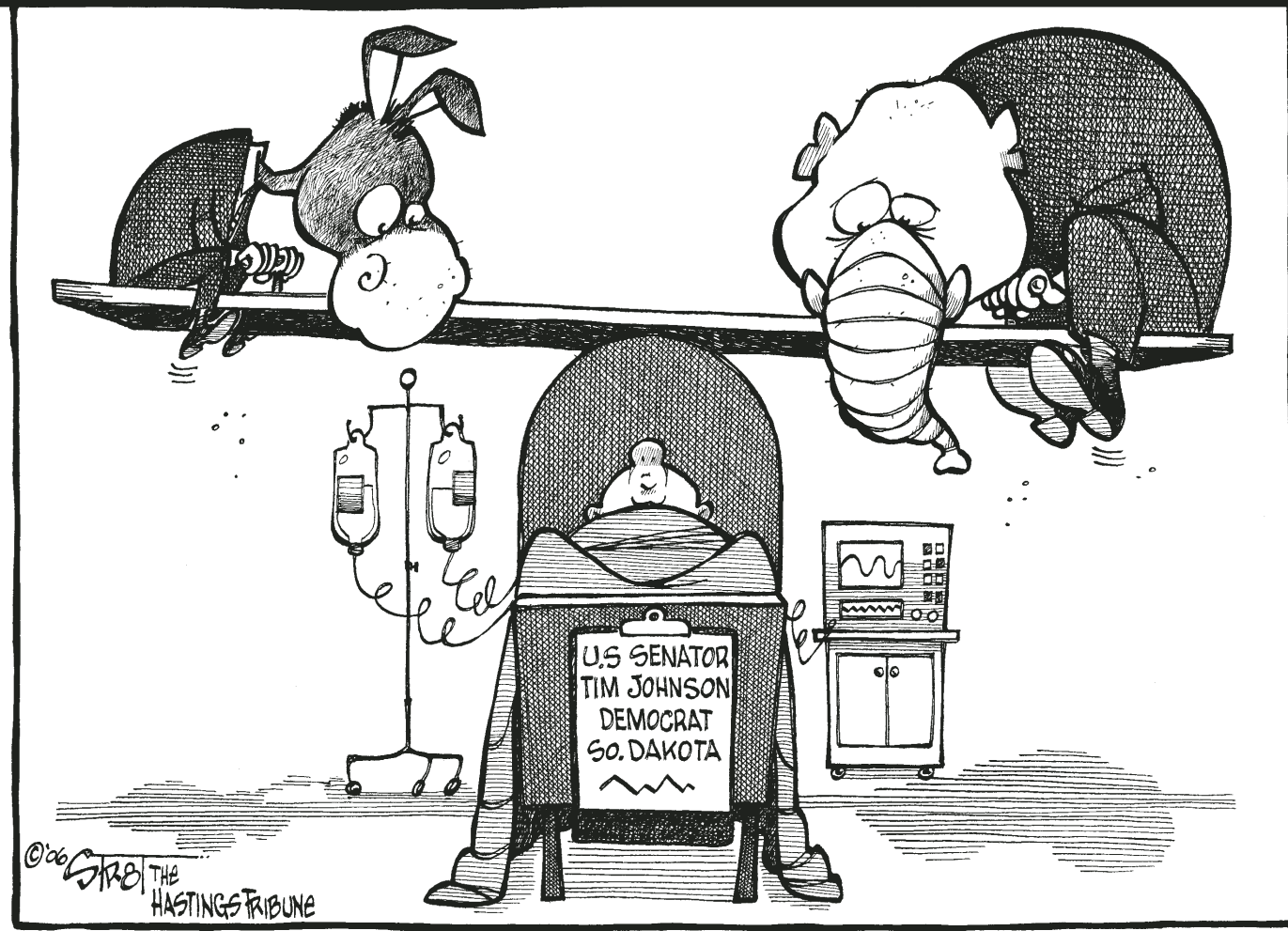
While on the topic of sports, how long are we going to put up with the behavior of NBA teams that literally battle it out on the court with fists and kicks and knockdowns, and NFL players who choose to spit in another player's face in response to happenings on the field? The spitter was badboy Terrell Owens, and the wild brawl involved the Knicks and the Nuggets.

Fines are nearing \$1 million for the NBA brawl, along with suspensions of up to 15-20 games. That's still not stiff enough, but it's a start.

Stuff like this is what gives professional sports a bad name.

These are not — repeat NOT — role models. They are multimillionaire brats.

— Tom Dreiling



Put the kids on the stage, then hold on

There is nothing more "Christmasy" than a Sunday School Christmas program. Our church held its annual soup supper Sunday night. It was followed by a program presented by the children's Sunday School classes, including the 2 and 3 year old's class. Parents held their breath, hoping their little darling wouldn't "act up." Some were rewarded with perfect little angels and other parents lived their worst nightmare.

Wisely, the program directors had the youngest perform first. Then asked their parents to stand so their children could find them and be able to watch the rest of the program from the security of their mom or dad's lap.

They were so cute. The little girls in rustling taffeta dresses with their tresses tumbling down in long curls. The lone little boy had on a very grown up shirt and tie. I think he is destined for stardom. He felt totally at ease, stepped up to the microphone and belted out his own rendition of "Away In A Manger".

The little ones were followed by the traditional pageant. With one minor change. Right before showtime, the directors opted not to have Mary be pregnant. It was a real disappointment for the actress selected to portray the mother of Christ. Probably a disappointment for the mother

Out Back Carolyn Plotts



of the actress, too. They had worked hard to get the pillow suspended (without falling) in just the right place. But, staging did not allow for any out-of-view time for Mary to "deliver" so, consequently, Baby Jesus appeared in his manger, and was moved center-stage by two shepherds.

Jim and I love to help with these productions and, ever since we made the costumes for an Easter cantata, we are called on to outfit the church's productions. Most of the costumes are adult size, so we do a lot of belting and pinning, but it works.

This year's pageant included a talking donkey. Since Jim is the creative side of our team, I turned that one over to him. He sacrificed a pair of sweat pants to make a hood with long, floppy ears. Picked up some "hair" at a craft store for the mane and tail; a gray sweatshirt; another pair of sweat pants for the body and our donkey was complete.

My sister-in-law, Mary, is a hairdresser. She contributed an old hairpiece for the inn keeper's beard.

The 4-year olds through fourth graders made up the chorus, arranged on risers behind the actors. Some of their antics were as entertaining as the pageant. One little boy on the front row (why are they always on the front row?) kept fidgeting and waving at his parents; his cousin, standing next to him, managed to pull his arms out of the sleeves of his sweater and stood there "armless" and more than one child decided, mid-performance, that they needed to go to the bathroom.

In the children's defense, they all stepped up to the directors and asked permission. It was an epidemic. One started and several more followed. There was nothing for the directors to say except, "Hurry back."

All the songs were new. We had rapping shepherds and "O Little Town Of Bethlehem" was belted out with a "bop-sha-bop" chorus.

I hope you saw at least one Sunday School pageant during this Christmas season.

The sheer joy of children acting out Christ's birth ought to remind us what this is all about.

Have a Merry Christmas.

Some hospice patients gain reprieve

Hospices Services, Inc. By Sandy Kuhlman

Each year, a handful of "dying" patients beat the odds, experts say. Leave it to Art Buchwald to bring humor to hospice. Last February, the famed satirist was diagnosed with terminal kidney failure, given three weeks to live, and transferred to a hospice for a quiet goodbye. During the five months he spent as a Washington, D.C. hospice humorist Art Buchwald said he was asked one question a lot. "What is it like to die?"

His answer, "I don't know, because I haven't died. I thought I was going to, but then something changed. Instead of going straight upstairs, I am going to Martha's Vineyard," Buchwald wrote in his syndicated column in July.

Buchwald is once again writing his column and dividing his time between Martha's Vineyard and his Washington, D.C. home. His kidneys had failed last winter, and Buchwald decided he'd rather let nature take its course than undergo dialysis. This decision came after his right leg was amputated in February. Then, as

he sat in the hospice salon day after day holding court for a variety of visitors, Buchwald's kidneys started working again. It was time to leave the hospice.

Instead of dying, he's written a book about his near-death experience, "Too Soon to Say Goodbye," available to the public. Art Buchwald's case is not unique, however.

Hospice is generally defined as palliative care for individuals whose expected lifespan is less than six months. But, according to experts, about eight percent of people admitted to end-of-life hospice care actually live beyond one year. Hospice Services serves about five percent more than one year.

There has been study after study that demonstrates our inability to project life expectancy. Research shows that individuals want their physicians to be honest about their illness but predicting how long any one person might live is tough!

Hospice programs are also caring for more individuals with a non-cancer illness. While cancer can have a fairly definite trajectory, illnesses such as kidney disease, chronic lung disease, Alzheimer's or ALS often progress more slowly. So, hospice programs are caring for some way beyond six months. However, hospices serve most people less than one month. Hospice Services' median length of stay is presently 17 days.

And what started out as a deathwatch for Art Buchwald turned into "months of living, eating, and laughing with my friends." Perhaps as important, Buchwald is now teaching all of us how to live — and to die. Yet he's quick to add, "I have had such a good time with hospice. I am going to miss it."

Reader opposed to Sebelius Post Office, offers suggestion

LETTER

To the Editor:
The office of Congressman Jerry Moran telephoned Mayor Corns and others in Norton to ask if there would be any objection to changing the name of the Norton Post Office to the Sebelius Post Office.

Yes, I do object.
There are already a lake, building and grave monument honoring Keith Sebelius. I believe that three honorariums are enough and a fourth would be one too many.

I would remind each of you that the land where the post office is built and the land where the city office and fire station are built, were donated to the city by the Browne family. (The Browne family are Democrats.)

Mr. Sebelius was a very good average congressman, but no one ever claimed he was above average. A post office should be named for one who was.

I had never thought of a different name for the post office until Jerry Moran raised the issue. Since he has, I wish to put forth a candidate.

While a resident of Norton, Phillip B. Finley was the high school assistant principal, vocational agriculture instructor, FFA sponsor. He also served as a captain in the Kansas Army National Guard. He

would always willingly accept a leadership role in church, school and community activities. He was always highly respected and well thought of.

Later, Mr. Finley became the Senior Professor of Agriculture Science and Dean of Agriculture at Kansas State University. As such, he received honors that would require several pages to list.

Simultaneously, Mr. Finley rose to the rank of four-star general and the General Commander of the Kansas Army National Guard. His medals and commendations are too numerous to be listed.

Clearly, it would be just as appropriate to name the Norton Post Office in honor of Phillip B. Finley.

Arthur Loyd Shelton Oberlin

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