

'I won! I won!' Well, not really

Boy, am I in trouble now. The eldest daughter thinks she sounded obsessive in the last column. The youngest took issue with the order in which I remember things. 9-11 before the birth of my children? Or, more specifically, anything before her birth! The middle child just laughed. That pretty much sums up the family dynamics!

Back Home
Nancy Hagman



hope you win!" I told my niece to check on my house when she went skiing in February. She informed me she was going to win the house. It began to occur to me that maybe I wasn't the only one entering. But I remained optimistic.

I assumed they would have to let someone close to the winner know so they would be able to locate him or her for the live on-camera surprise. I was very optimistic. All my family was home. Elizabeth was getting ready to leave, but she hadn't left yet. She turned on the porch light for Joan Steffand so she wouldn't stumble on the way to the door.

I asked Kate (her hair was wet from the shower), "Is that how you want to be seen on national television?"

She looked at me like I had lost my mind. Elizabeth said, "I'm leaving!"

And she did! But the porch light was still on. Maybe she was going to meet the HGTV van up the road and come back with them.

I didn't change clothes or put on

lipstick or anything. But, I did look outside when they announced they were right outside the winner's location. Kate said, "Thousands of people are looking out their windows right now."

Oh, shoot. No one was outside my window! The place Joan was at looked like it was painted tan, not green. Maybe the niece's place is tan, all was not lost because I know she would invite us over if she won. Then they revealed it was a restaurant in Tennessee.

The winner seemed like a very nice guy. He said they had been looking for a new house for over a year. His son, whose help HGTV had enlisted, had arranged for a big gathering of his family and friends. I was happy for him, but really, does he want a house in Winter Park? All his family and friends are in Tennessee.

The hubby says he'd like to win the lottery just to prove that it wouldn't ruin his life. You know how you always see those shows about how ordinary people just can't handle it! Now, to my knowledge, the exact number of lottery tickets he has purchased is ZERO! So there is not much of a chance he will ever get to be the exception.

But what a memory that would be! The day we won the HGTV dream house! The day we won the lottery! Since it probably will never happen I am making do with what I've got! The birth of my children, especially the youngest, my wedding, 9-11; in that order!

Bill would aid vets in rural areas

I introduced legislation to provide more health care options for veterans living in rural areas. Though we have been successful at opening several Veterans Affairs (VA) outpatient clinics in Kansas, not every community has a facility or is close to a VA hospital. The Rural Veterans Access to Care Act would enable the most underserved veterans enrolled in the VA health system to take advantage of existing rural health providers, such as local hospitals, community health centers and rural health clinics rather than traveling long distances to VA facilities. Additionally, the VA would be required to fill prescriptions written by non-VA doctors for these veterans.

Lack of access to VA care remains a real challenge for veterans living in rural areas and too often means these veterans are forgoing the care and treatment they need. The result is that rural veterans are in poorer health than their urban counterparts. It is time to provide these veterans the access to health care they have earned.

The Army notified me that it has decided to move forward with most military construction projects at Fort Riley despite limited funding. I recently joined other members of the Kansas delegation in asking the Secretary of the Army to prioritize projects at Fort Riley and Fort Leavenworth following the passage of the federal spending bill for 2007 that under funded Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) commitments. I voted against this spending bill because it put at risk nearly \$375 million in Kansas projects.

It is imperative that projects at our Kansas military posts remain on schedule, so the announcement by the Army is a step in the right direction.

Most of the projects at Fort Riley will be able to proceed, but

Capitol Views
Rep. Jerry Moran



a major project at Fort Leavenworth is on hold. We still have much work to do and I am committed to seeing that full funding is restored so the remaining projects at our Kansas military installations can move forward and the needs of our soldiers and their mission can be met.

I recently spoke to the U.S. House of Representatives about the challenges and pressures many educators are experiencing in the classroom due to the No Child Left Behind law. It is important that my colleagues in Washington, D.C., understand the realities that so many dedicated professionals are experiencing as they educate our children.

I joined Senator Pat Roberts in introducing the Military Access to Housing Act to remove barriers for Kansas military families to access affordable housing. Current rules require the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to account for the housing allowances of military men and women when determining if a family qualifies for low-income housing. This is inconsistent with guidelines for civilian recipients of government assistance and often eliminates military families from qualifying for this type of housing.

This legislation will fix this by removing the basic housing allowance from the formula for determining eligibility for low-income housing.

There is no reason that our soldiers should be discriminated against, especially when it comes to basic needs like housing.

I was in Collyer to attend one of the community's famous Lenten Fish Fry events and to present residents with a Building Better Communities award for continuing efforts to sustain and revitalize their community.

Formed in September 2004, the Collyer Community Alliance has driven revitalization efforts in this town of 133 people. The Alliance has more than 200 paid members and conducts fundraising activities to obtain financing for community initiatives.

Last year, the Collyer Café opened in the refurbished Saint Michael's Convent. The alliance purchased the convent and the community donated well over 1,000 volunteer hours to the project.

The Alliance further promotes Collyer by maintaining a website www.collyerks.com that includes ongoing development projects, fundraising activities and community events.

Members of the University of Kansas Student Senate were in to discuss the need to lower student loan interest rates and the need to support study abroad opportunities for college students.

Kansas State University **Student Body President, Lucas Maddy of Manhattan (Norton is his hometown)**, also came by.

To send me an email, www.jerrymoran.house.gov/.

Or you can also contact him at the office below:
Hays District Office
1200 Main Street, Suite 402
P.O. Box 249
Hays, KS 67601-0249
P: (785) 628-6401
F: (785) 628-3791

All-day kindergarten is a 'go'

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In other business, the board:
• Gave Mr. Mann the authority, along with the architect, to determine which concrete jobs should be bid this year and to send out the bid specifications. Mr. Mann said they were going to focus on the area in front of Stull Gym, but then realized how bad the concrete on the north side of the junior high had gotten after this year's ice storm.

• Joined K.A.R.E. (Kansas Association of Rural Educators). Mr. Mann said the group is a new one and focuses on the needs of small rural schools. The board chose to pay the \$300 membership fee and

become a charter member of the association.

• Heard that the first annual staff appreciation dinner has been set for Tuesday, May 22 at the American Legion. Board members Elaine Lofgreen, Scott Ellis and Jeff Nielsen volunteered to be the party planning committee.

• Heard curriculum presentations from the science and math departments.

• Continued participation in the Parents as Teachers program.

• Kept fees for the summer driver's education program the same as last year.

• Rejected all bids received for the tractor and attachments and

sent out new bid specifications to avoid an unnecessary confusion with the original bid specifications, and gave Mr. Mann and Board Clerk Janice Russell permission to open and act on the bids received on March 28.

• Approved the recommendation to replace the 2000 Dodge Stratus and the bid specifications presented for a 2006 or 2007 vehicle.

• Declared bus No. 3, the Hustler mowing machine and the seeder as surplus to be sold to the highest bidder when determined by the superintendent as appropriate.

School back for another summer

(Continued from Page 1)

unworkable at this time. The board thanked him for the time and effort that was put into checking into the matter.

Superintendent Greg Mann said he sent out surveys to other school districts to see if the district's salary and benefit package were competitive. He said there were a few areas that could be improved upon, such as implementing a sick leave bank for the classified staff, continuing to increase salaries when and where possible, paying the nine-month employees for the time they miss because of snow days, and adding a third personal day on the 10-year working anni-

versary of the staff. These options will be discussed more at the April meeting.

He said the analysis of the food service department showed that it was being efficient and cost effective. The staff, he said, is doing a good job of controlling costs and should be given a "pat on the back" for a job well done. However, surveys show that Norton is charging a lot less for meals than other schools of the same size and the board may need to look at raising meal prices.

• Agreed to split the cost of repairing the tennis courts with the city, if the city is interested, at a cost not to exceed \$20,000. Right

now, Mr. Mann said, having them temporarily fixed might be the most cost effective measure.

• Held a 20-minute closed session to discuss non-elected personnel.

• Accepted the resignations of Lida Sharp as the junior high KAY sponsor, Phil Morel as the fifth and sixth grade social studies teacher for the purpose of retirement after 29 years, and Jenda Jones as the high school cheerleader sponsor.

• Hired Christine Corbin as an assistant junior/senior high cook.

• Held a 15-minute closed session to discuss matters relating to employer/employee negotiations.

Development focuses on housing

(Continued from Page 1)

getting some kind of home restoration program started will increase the quality of life and bring new people into the community, which are two of the board's main focuses.

Board member Brad Hopkins said bringing in more people will keep the schools alive.

The board agreed and passed a

motion to focus Mr. Carter's attention on housing.

In other business, the board:

• Heard an update on the county's website.

• Discussed the need to promote Norton County in different ways.

• Approved the purchase of a microwave for \$60.

• Approved Mr. Carter's attendance at a community economic

development conference next month in Lindsborg. Registration fees are \$85.

• Bought four tickets to the Norton Area Chamber of Commerce Banquet. Mr. Eveleigh and Board member Donna Henderson voted against. Mr. Eveleigh felt that the board members should buy their own tickets, rather than taking the money out of the budget.

4-H'ers show off their talents at county club day

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Trumpet, Regional Blue

• Talent Skit — Cedar Ridge 4-H Club, Regional Blue

• Model Meetings — Busy Jayhawkers 4-H Club, Regional Blue

• Other Dance — Katrina, Carissa, Megan and Rebecca Wentz, David and Jade Cressler, Regional Blue

• Junior Reading — Dalton

Vanover, Regional Blue

• Senior Reading — Michael Callaway, Regional Blue

Judges for the events were Karol Hickel, WaKeeney; Marilyn Noone, Jennings; Irene Kressler, Hoxie; Jennifer Unger, Goodland; Patty Wolters, Atwood.

Committee members that helped with Club Day were: Mary, Carissa and Katrina Wentz; Diedre Kramer; Mary Vanover;

Luke and Jacob VanSkiel; LeeAnn Shearer; Caleb Vanover; Phillip and Melinda Becker; Kyrá Fulton; David Cressler; Michael and Jeanette Callaway; Caleb, Calen and Monica Bach; and Beverly Kindler.

The 4-H'ers who received a Regional Blue ranking will be competing at the Regional 4-H Club Day event in WaKeeney on Friday, March 30.

Affordable housing for soldiers is intent of law

JUNCTION CITY — Congressman Jerry Moran joined Senator Pat Roberts in introducing legislation to remove barriers for Kansas military families to access affordable housing.

"There is no reason that our soldiers should be discriminated against, especially when it comes to basic needs like housing," the congressman said. "At a time when thousands of soldiers and

their families are moving into Kansas, there is no reason that quality, affordable housing should be off limits. We have a responsibility to our military men and women to provide all the resources we can to accommodate them during their service to our country."

Current rules require the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to account for housing allowances to military men and women when determining if a family qualifies for low-income housing. This is inconsistent with guidelines for other recipients of government assistance and often eliminates military families from

qualifying for low income housing, the First District representative said. The Military Access to Housing Act will remove the basic housing allowance from the formula for determining eligibility for low income housing.

"The Junction City area and Junction City-Geary County Military Affairs Council support this bill," Mayor of Junction City Terry Heldstab said. "Anything we can do to make it more equitable and give our soldiers more options for clean and affordable housing is needed and is a good thing for military families living in and relocating to this area."

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- 3 Bedroom, 2 full baths, modular home with 2 car garage. Fenced yard and addition with basement. Long Island - \$29,000
- 4 Bedroom, 2 bath, full basement, 2 car garage, Long Island - \$29,000
- Prairie View — 4 bedroom, 2 bath, full finished basement, CA/CH, 2 car garage on large corner lot. \$50,000.00
- Prairie View — 4 bedroom, 1 bath, full finished basement, CA/CH, 2 single car garages, storm cellar, all on 3 lots. \$38,000.00
- 3 Bedroom, 2 bath, manufactured home along the South Solomon River, on 5 acres, 2 car garage, barn and storage building. West of Hill City - \$79,000

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1-785-689-4845
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