

Don't forget what this weekend is all about

Well, the Memorial Day weekend is upon us. Collectively, many of us will be traveling. Others will be visiting family and friends closer to home. Still others will be out at the lake, taking full advantage of the first official holiday weekend of the summer. Then there are the backyard cookouts for friends, for neighbors, for co-workers. Many youngsters will be taking their first dip in the city's swimming pool. There are just a lot of things going on this weekend.

But what is the focal point of this holiday weekend? Memorial Day! That's right — Memorial Day, Monday, May 26! Do your holiday weekend plans place you at the cemetery for the annual observance of Memorial Day? Do your children know what the holiday is all about?

There was a time when Memorial Day was observed on May 30. But as the years moved on and a need was seen for another 3-day holiday break, the date was moved to the last Monday of May, which this year is the 26th. Cemeteries throughout the country will be remembering those who wore the military uniforms of our branches of service and gave the ultimate sacrifice.

Too, families use this occasion to decorate the graves of other loved ones with flowers and other ornaments. Cemeteries, on this special day each year, are often described as the "most beautiful places in the world."

Nationally, Memorial Day is observed at Arlington National Cemetery with a ceremony in which a small flag of the United States of America is placed on each grave. It is customary for the president or the vice-president to deliver remarks honoring the contributions of the dead and lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Let each of us, at some time during this busy weekend, take a moment or two to give a prayerful thanks to those who have gone before us.

OK, gentlemen, take it off! If you are one of those who wears a tie to work each day, take it off and toss it in the corner for a few months. Many years ago, I started crusading in the middle of May for all those who wear ties to the workplace to take them off on Memorial Day weekend and keep them off until Labor Day weekend ends. There is little reason to wear those things during the hottest months of the year. Give your neck a break, give it some breathing room.

I keep watching this Obama-Hillary race unfold. I think when the smoke clears we will have a race between Sen. John McCain, the Republican, and Sen. Barack Obama, the Democrat. Why do I feel this way? Because Sen. Hillary Clinton is now injecting her brand of new math into the campaign by claiming the results of the Florida and Michigan elections. Those two states violated the rules set forth by the Democratic National Committee — moving their primary dates forward — so they have been ignored.

Hillary deceptively includes those figures when she rants about having more popular votes than Obama. If the tables were turned, you can bet she'd be using a megaphone to denounce Barack's attempted theft of the Michigan/Florida primaries.

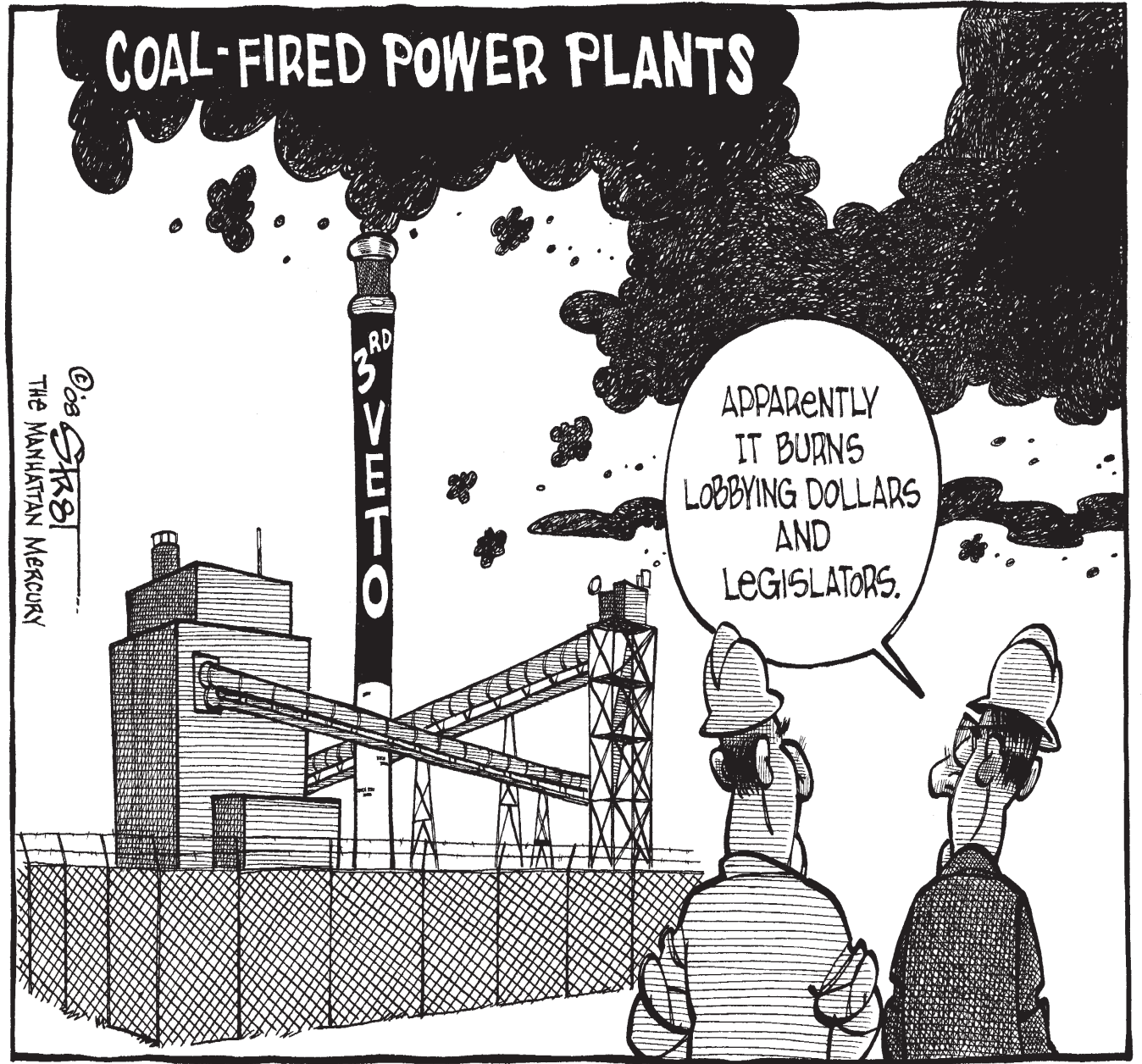
Remember how, at the outset last year, most everyone was as certain as the sun rises and sets each day that the showdown for the White House in November 2008 would be between two New Yorkers — Rudy and Hillary? Well, Rudy's already in Rejecksville, and Hillary will soon join him.

I do hope Sen. McCain picks someone younger to be his running mate. They keep talking about the governor of Florida, but frankly he's as gray headed as McCain and the ticket would certainly look old. I would hope Mitt Romney gets the nod. He's younger, very energetic, has a lot of knowledge about a lot of things. Of course I'm biased, I wanted him to be the eventual presidential nominee.

Back to Hillary.... I wish she would sometime put on a dress and look like a woman. These pantsuits, I figure, are her way of *silently* suggesting she's as capable as a man to hold down the office of president. You know, just one of the guys.

Have a good evening. And when you go to the church of your choice this weekend, remember: God doesn't care what you wear, He only cares that you're there.

Good Evening Norton
Tom Dreiling



Now's not the time to change the rules

It seems to me there is a critical element being overlooked in the democratic race for the presidential nomination. Several months ago, amidst the objections of the Democratic National Committee, Florida and Michigan chose to move their primary elections to an earlier date. The major candidates agreed to uphold the sanctions imposed on the states by the Democratic National Committee, many took their names off the ballots and little, if any campaigning took place.

Now comes the lamenting from those states claiming 'unfair' because their many votes won't count. I think this is what is meant by cause and effect. And then we have the nerve to wonder why kids can't grasp the concept.

In addition to the states cries of unfair, we have a democratic candidate who

Phase II
Mary Kay Woodyard



agreed to the conditions and now wants the rules changed. She didn't take her name off the Florida ballot, received votes and now she says she should be able to count those votes.

Does anyone for one minute believe if the situation were reversed she would want Obama to keep those votes? I don't think so!

It is an unfortunate situation, but one that could have been avoided had the

democratic leadership in those states not wanted to be the first and settled for the Democratic National Committee's ruling. Their greed has cost the many residents of their states a voice in this nomination. Is it fair? Well, probably not, but rules were put in place and these two states felt they were above those rules.

One democratic candidate's desire to have every person's vote count is admirable, but the lack of respect for the party rules is not.

The other candidates agreed to the conditions, did not campaign there and took their names off the ballot.

Counting those votes does not show support for her, it shows a lack of respect for the leadership of the Democratic National Committee and her fellow candidates.

'Get Connected' theme for observance

May is Mental Health Month. It was designated more than 50 years ago to raise awareness about mental health conditions and the importance of mental wellness for everyone. Mental health is an essential part of each person's overall health and wellness. Life challenges and problems can put both physical health and mental well-being at risk. For example, too much stress can take a toll on the body, and can result in a person feeling tired, sad, nervous, angry or irritable. In addition, stress can result in physical conditions such as headaches, muscle tension, upset stomach, nausea, and can contribute to heart disease.

"Get Connected" is the theme of Mental Health Month this year (from Mental Health America) which emphasizes the importance of being connected to others as a factor in good mental health. When a person is experiencing problems, family and friends can provide social support that helps with the difficult times.

Staying in contact with those who are

Plain Sense
Karen Schueler

supportive and positive can be as simple as a phone call, e-mail, or short visit. When a person is experiencing tough times, it helps to be able talk about personal concerns to someone who is a good listener, who can provide a fresh perspective, and help find solutions.

Another great way to feel emotionally strong and resilient is to be connected to a broader community of people. Connecting through social opportunities and fun events can boost your spirit and help you feel energized and more productive. There are community organizations such as parenting groups, or walking groups, that bring people together who share a common interest. Volunteering with a community organization that provides

services for those in need can also help a person feel valuable and revitalized.

So, for your own good mental health, make a commitment to contact friends and family on a regular basis. Maybe there is someone that you have not heard from in a while, and your reaching out to them can result in a good experience for everyone.

In addition, expanding contacts to the larger community provides another source of comfort, encouragement and involvement. All of which contribute to improved mental health!

(Contributed by Karen Schueler, MS, LCPC, Manager, PEO-Prevention, Education and Outreach Department. The views expressed here are those of the individual writer and should not be considered a replacement for seeking professional help. High Plains Mental Health Center, PEO Department, 208 East 7th, Hays, Kan. 67601. Internet site: www.highplainsmentalhealth.com)

Thumbs Up

- To... **Justin Bainter**, for completing your hours for your high school diploma. (called in)
- To... **Sgt. Jason Brannan**, thanks for talking to the Eisenhower Elementary kids. (called in)
- To... **Vicki Enfield**, for your many years as our school district's caring nurse. (e-mail)
- To... **M/Sgt. Michael Baker**, on your surprise television greeting. (called in)

(Top submit a name or names. please e-mail tom.d@nwkansas.com, call 877-3361 or 877-6908, fax 877-3732, mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave. 67654 or drop by the office. Thanks for your continuing input. - td)

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Career opportunities are available in Norton County

To the Editor,

I've wanted to write this letter for many years, but Steve Haynes' column of May 20 finally got me to do it.

For the past 24 years, I've been dismayed with our local school administration's attitude toward our local students' career choices. As far as I can tell, the attitude is: If you don't have a four-year degree and a white-collar job, you are a failure. This attitude needs to change! A four-year college degree doesn't guarantee happiness, financial security or anything else.

Our local superintendent boasts that 80 percent of our high school graduates go on to either two-year or four-year colleges. He mentions nothing of the 20 percent

Your turn

who don't go on to college, or the fact that 70 percent of those college-bound students won't obtain four-year degrees.

The big question is: Why aren't local students made aware of the career opportunities available right here in Norton County? For two years, several local employers have requested the local and area schools have a job fair during school hours. The majority of our high school seniors have no idea what career opportunities are available in our local area. Our school superintendent has met us with what I would best describe as either

indifference or outright hostility.

One year ago, we were assured an in-school job fair would be conducted last fall. It never happened and the superintendent put the blame on Wade Carter. That's BS! Since then we have been told by Mr. Perez and Mr. Miller that local employers will be invited to the next career day scheduled at the high school. The fear is our superintendent will find a way to sabotage this!

If local citizens agree with this letter, then I ask them to let our school administrators and school board know how they feel on this subject.

Sincerely yours,

Gail Boller, President
Natoma Corporation