

New park taking hit from the kids

Guest
Commentary
Denise A. Schmitz
Norton

Planned editorial for this space today will be put on the back burner. Instead, I will turn this space over to a resident who witnessed something in our town that should be upsetting to us all, and shared the experience with the newspaper. The message is clear. - td)

To the Junior High and High School aged young men and women and their parents:

On Friday, Aug. 29, 2008 I was driving around town and was disgusted with the behavior of the children and/or young adults at the new park located on State Street across from White Fields Coffee House. On Friday evenings that is where the over 12 and under 18 age group of folks hang out which is a good place to get together with their friends. However on this evening, the group had moved to the new park.

Coming by the place I saw soap forthcoming out of the new fountain, kids throwing sand and small rocks not only at each other but into the fountain, boxing gloves on young men — taking turns boxing each other — not just random punches, but until one was down and another took his place, sitting in the chairs and leaning back until they fall over.

How sad the park is not even completed and there is destruction happening already. How sad that vehicles and semis are driving by and kids are running back and forth with brakes rapidly applied to prevent an accident. The kids think this is funny. What is it going to take — an accident and someone getting seriously hurt or possibly killed because of these fun and games?

I contemplated calling the police

and saying hey, there is some bad behavior going on over at this area. I thought about stopping and taking pictures and turning those over to the police but decided not to do that either. I have regretted those decisions.

I hope that as a parent (s) whose child(ren) are at White Fields Coffee House/new park hanging with their friends, that you take the time to remind your child about reckless behavior/destruction of property, running back and forth across a highway is dangerous and that there are consequences and accountability for such behavior.

Next time I see this behavior or destruction of city property, or for that matter any property, I will call for law enforcement, I will take pictures and those that are responsible will need to be held accountable for their behavior, and that includes their parents.

This new park is taking shape and one that will be a plus to the Norton Community. White Fields Coffee House is a wonderful place, a positive place for all to get together with friends and they need to be commended for staying open on Friday evenings so there is a place for this age group to hang.

I hope that down the road, there will not have to be a time when no one can use the park after 7 p.m. at night due to the destruction.

That would make me sad, very sad.

Who do you want?
McCain?
Obama?

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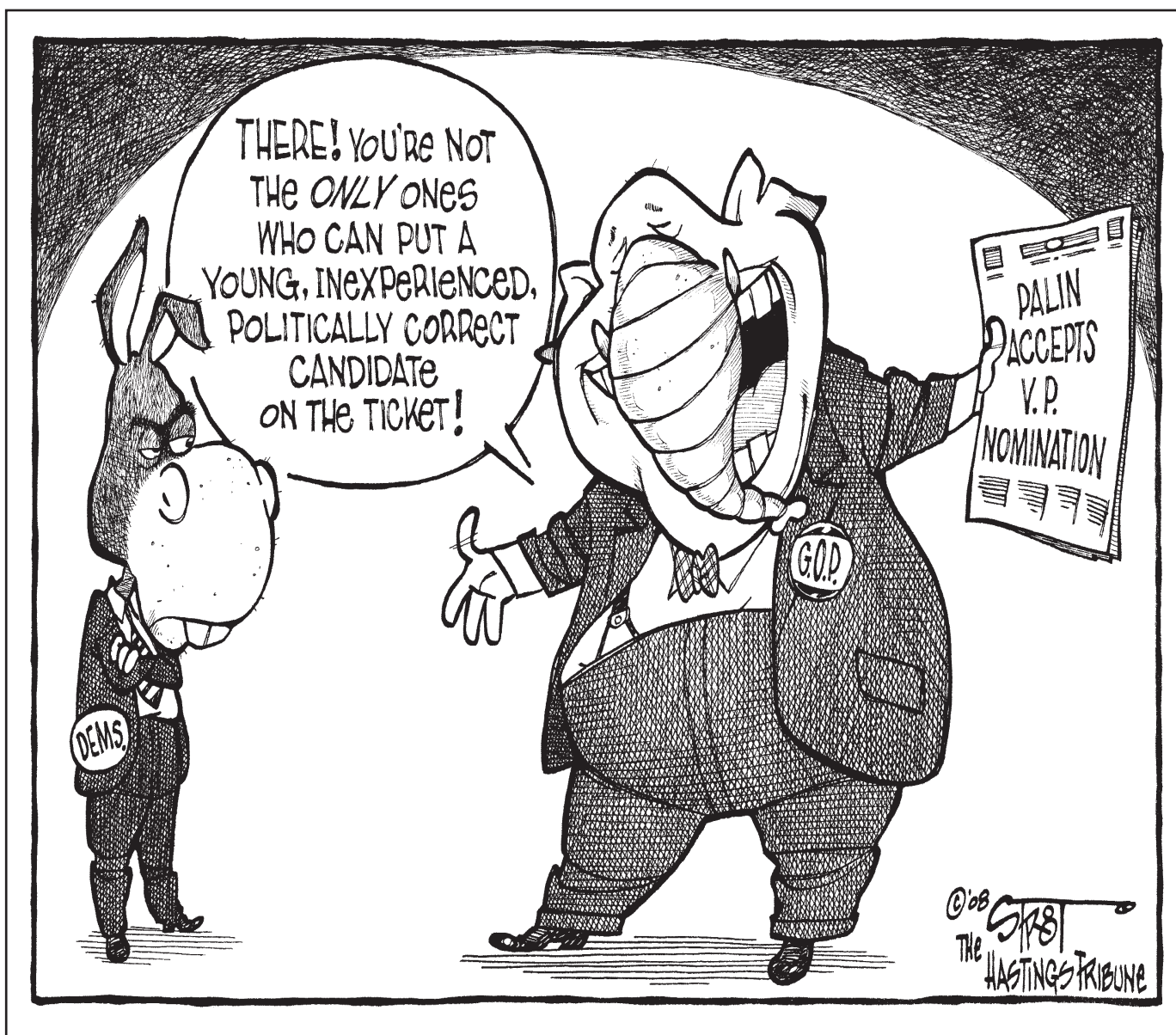
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We have a winner in Governor Palin!

I have purposely avoided watching the political conventions. To me, they were just so much rhetoric. More of the blah, blah, blah of campaigns. But, that was before Gov. Sarah Palin was picked as the running mate for Sen. John McCain.

I caught a glimpse of her when the announcement was first made. That little taste was enough to make me commit to watch her acceptance speech. And, boy, was I glad I did. She blew me away. No faltering, no stammering, no hesitation. It's an overused word, but she was awesome.

Not everyone shares my opinion. My oldest daughter, Halley, is a staunch (dare I say "militant") Democrat. We try not to talk "politics" and just leave it as an area where we agree to disagree. She had called me during the Democratic Convention so I returned the favor. I said, "Well, did you watch the speech last night? What did you think?"

"Yes, I watched it," she said. "It was a good speech, no doubt about that."

"Good?" I said. "That wasn't just good — it was great!"

Halley replied, "I wouldn't say it was

Out Back
Carolyn Plotts



great. She didn't talk about health care. She didn't talk about the war. She didn't talk about education."

"Well, I don't care," I said. "She brought tears to my eyes."

"Mine, too," Halley said in her dry way. "But, for totally different reasons."

Everyone else I've talked to, though, shares my opinion. And, I'm sure I must have some Democrats for friends.

I have never felt this way before, but Sara Palin has inspired me. And, not because she's a woman, either. If a man had given that speech, I would still feel the same. Although, the pitbull and lipstick joke wouldn't have made much sense. I want to do what I can to "get out the vote." I want to help the campaign; I'll put up posters; put signs in the front yard; make telephone calls; drive people

to the polls. My first call today will be to my county's Republican party chairman to volunteer.

-ob-

Tomatoes, peaches and apples are coming on strong. And, canning flats, rings and jars are in short supply. I tried to pick up some flats at a major store over the weekend and the shelves were absolutely empty save for a few boxes of freezer containers. Trouble is, my freezer is already full.

What a country we live in. Where someone can actually complain because we don't have enough space to store all of our food.

In case of famine, you want to be at my house.

-ob-

School has been back in session almost a month. Our granddaughters all report they are doing well. Except perhaps, Taylor. During our last phone conversation she told me she didn't like school.

"Why not?" I asked her.

"It's boring," she said. "I do my work, then I have to wait for everyone else to get done." Oh, boy. Somebody better find some work to challenge that girl.

Meanwhile, down on the farm . . .

In the spring, Elizabeth convinced me I really ought to make her some new clothes. First I heard, "The dresses I made in high school and you made me in college are old, don't fit, yadda, yadda, yadda!" Then she realized she "needed" a couple of dresses for spring concerts.

The assault continued with flattery as she pointed out how when I sew for her, the clothes fit and when she buys them they don't. Then we went shopping and I had to agree, the clothes did not fit, plus they were ugly.

So we bought fabric and I went to work.

We moved her in the middle of summer. As we packed and unpacked her wardrobe I realized I had been taken in by that thing about needing clothes! Ah, well.

In this little fit of "sewing for Elizabeth" activity, the other girls were home and wondered why she was scoring so big on the new clothes front.

I allowed as how I might not have been so helpful if she hadn't laid it on so thick about my abilities as a seamstress. Plus she lent me her sewing machine.

You may recall my problems with my sewing machine. I decided I just could not deal with it any longer. I was supposed to get a new machine for Christmas. Somehow it has never happened.

I suppose at the very least I should at least get the old one repaired.

Back Home
Nancy Hagman



In the meantime I have treated myself to new pots and pans (but that was for health reasons). The non stick coating on the old pans is now sticking to our innards. They say that stuff is bad for you! A lid got dented. The heat proof handle of the fry pan broke. So is that a gift or a necessity? Everyone eats, why is cookware a gift for me?

Now the dishwasher has broken. It came with the house and was purchased on a garage sale, so we have no idea how old it really is. We have repaired it twice. It doesn't owe us a thing. I NEED a dishwasher, right?

Although as I think about it; I'm not sure why. The new pots and pans say to hand wash! I'm washing dishes at least once a day, and there is usually just Junior and I.

I shared my dilemma with a lady at the Wellness Center. I prefaced my story with the line, "My dishwasher is really old."

To which Florence replied, "So is mine, he's 94!" referring to her husband.

God bless them both. That's pretty hard to top!

Nevertheless, the hubby took me to town and we picked out a new dishwasher. After I related the Florence story to him I think he might have been afraid I was expecting him to wash our dishes. I am getting stainless steel. It's all the rage right now though I imagine it will be passé by the time it wears out!

Remember Kate's friends who lost their house in the Manhattan tornado in June? One of the few things remaining where their house used to be was the avocado green washing machine they received as a wedding present some time in the 1970's! I can just imagine the poor woman thinking: at least I can get a new washer!!!

It must have been a heck of a washer. I'm on my third. My first was copper tone! It's probably coming back!

Since I'm through with Elizabeth's wardrobe, she has been really pressuring me to return her machine.

I was thinking maybe I'd get the State Fair special sewing machine but I don't know. I've spent my money on cookware, a dishwasher and there is a wedding to pay for.

Elizabeth needs the machine back because she has some Christmas presents to make; maybe even something for me. I wish there was a Santa Claus! We'd both be set!

Are you, too, wondering about YOU!?