

A word about Gov. Sarah Palin

Alaska's Governor Sarah Palin did a smart thing — she took cover! While the approach used might be debated, her reason or reasons were valid. Anybody put under the scope like she was can only take so much. No matter who you are, when they set their sights on you — much like sights are set on our Kansas prairie dogs — you eventually take cover. Exiting the governor's office was her cover. Sarah Palin was *used* by Sen. John McCain's campaign. When Democrat Sen. Hillary Clinton faded in the closing weeks of the presidential primary in 2008, and it became apparent she would not be selected as presidential primary victor Sen. Barack Obama's running mate, the McCain camp saw an opening — for a woman! And since Gov. Palin, known in Republican inner circles as a tell it like it is speaker, who also possesses a degree of *charm* rarely seen on the political stage, they had their gal.

She did a tremendous job waking up the sleepy Republican Party. And in the process she also brought some Democrats to her side. But the biggest problem with having Sarah Palin on the ticket with Sen. McCain was...Sarah Palin. The senator became dangerously close to being insignificant at one point late in the campaign, and it was then his advisors took her aside for a chat. From that point on there was no more of what the public took a liking to — Palin's plain-talking, down-home approach to the issues; prepared scrip was the order of the day.

With her resignation as governor effective July 26, Sarah Palin can breathe easier. Distractions won't be as frequent, or severe...or family involved. She'll be Sarah Palin, former governor, resident of Wasilla.

Had she not been tossed to the thugs in the 2008 presidential primary, we would not have even known there was a Governor Sarah Palin. But because she opted to go onto the national stage, she was then fair play for those who thrive on digging up dirt. And boy did they dig! She could not have even imagined the degree of peeping she was about to experience.

So, what's she got up her sleeve? A close Republican friend reasons she just might have her eye on the party's chairmanship. The current party leader — hmm, Michael Steele or Rush Limbaugh, take your pick — isn't getting anything done. And the state of the Republican body in both Houses of the Congress is one big question mark. Maybe someone of Sarah Palin's ilk is just what is needed.

Yes, her resignation came as a surprise. But she did what most of us would also do — put family first. After all the political spotlight eventually dims, but family is forever.

Carry on Sarah. And just tell the dirt diggers to butt out.

- Tom Dreiling

Don't put it off another day

A friend of mine died recently. It was not a death reported on national television, even though she was a wonderful, caring, servant person. Maybe more of those kind of people should receive more coverage in the news. I believe she touched many lives that will touch many lives. We all know people like this and it is hard to say goodbye. We sometimes note the date of a person's birthday and the date they die. There is a lot of living in between those dates.

I spent time with this friend and enjoyed being around her; however, my one regret is that I did not spend more time with her.

I was "busy" and when I wasn't busy, I was just happy to spend some time at home. I thought of her often and "thought" about spending more time with her as I "think" about spending time with other friends, neighbors and acquaintances. How many of you can

Memories Sonya Montgomery



relate to that; am I the only one that has good intentions, but let the days, months and years go by without spending a little more time, or sharing a meal, a cup of coffee or tea, getting to know our friends better and showing I (we) care.

I have friends that I visit and spend time with, but I could do more. If you have the same intentions, let each of you "set aside" some time to visit someone today, so that when another friend dies we will have great memories of the times we shared with them. (Sonyam@ruraltel.net)

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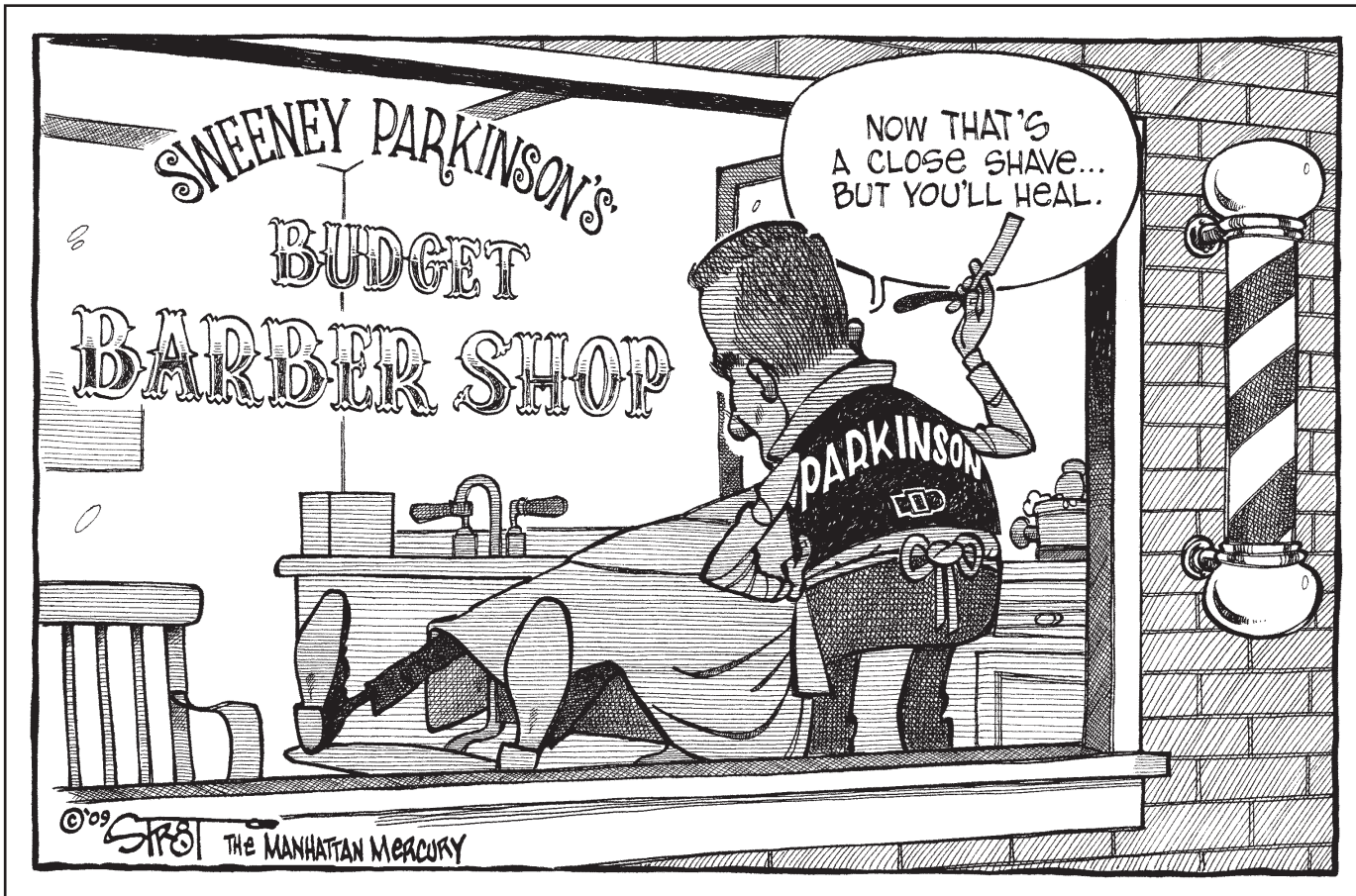
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Let's talk about The Star-Spangled Banner

Nothing upsets me more than to listen to people literally butcher our national anthem. Again this past Fourth of July weekend I was angered. The performer on one of the televised holiday programs, this one in Washington, D.C., took liberties with The Star-Spangled Banner to the max! Had I not been tuned in when the performer began her version of this most cherished song, I would never have guessed what she was singing. As the television cameras panned the crowd, you could see disappointment on the faces of many.

Sadly, as the anthem nears its conclusion, performers are often nudged on by the crowd to reach for notes few are able to adequately achieve. And the particular performer last Saturday night went beyond even that and this untrained ear heard notes that sounded just a bit off key. Word repetition was common throughout. Granted, her much acclaimed style allows for these 'freedoms' but I would only hope when something as beautiful and as graciously written as our national anthem is sung, she and others of that talent would consider tossing aside the 'freedoms' and stick to the song as it was intended to be performed.

If you want to hear the real *The Star-Spangled Banner*, listen to a military band and chorus — it'll send chills up your spine.

The words to the national anthem were written by Francis Scott Key in 1814 as a poem, and the tune adopted later came from a well known British song, the work of composer John Stafford.

The Star-Spangled Banner didn't become our national anthem until Congress acted to do so in 1931.

We all know the words to the first stanza. But many people probably don't know there are three others. So, as you keep the tune in your head, here are the words to the four stanzas of our national anthem:

O! say can you see by the dawn's early light

What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?

Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,

Let's Chat Tom Dreiling



O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?

And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,

Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.

O! say does that star-spangled banner yet wave

O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore, dimly seen through the mists of the deep,

Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,

What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,

As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?

Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,

In full glory reflected now shines in the stream:

'Tis the star-spangled banner! Oh long may it wave

O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore

That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion,

A home and a country should leave us no more!

Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution.

No refuge could save the hireling and slave

From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave:

And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave

O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

O! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand

Between their loved home and the

war's desolation!

Blest with victory and peace, may the heav'n rescued land

Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation.

Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,

And this be our motto: 'In God is our trust.'

And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave

O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

Before I forget it, the revenue department of our great state informed me Wednesday that my refund is in the mail — 82 days after I mailed it in! I'll be interested in seeing if there's some interest attached. Will let you know.

Very briefly, Michael Jackson was nothing more than a well paid entertainer, not a hero. The young men and women who died and continue to die in battle to assure the Michael Jacksons of our country the right to entertain as they so desire, and to make as much money as they can, are the heroes. I would like for someone with a little bit of common sense linked to the major television networks to explain to me why this guy got the 24/7 royal treatment in death? Polls show most Americans see this glorification as an assault on our intelligence. Because through an evolving life in which Michael Jackson himself didn't know who he was, the television networks tried to excuse it away with their obnoxious coverage of a so-called news event. How dare them!

On the lighter side, the new 3rd grade math teacher saw that little Todd wasn't paying attention in class. He was looking out the window most of the time. So she called on him and said, "Todd, what's 2 + 4 + 28 + 44?" Little Todd thought for a moment or two, then replied, "Oh, that's NBC, FOX, ESPN and the Cartoon Network!"

Have a good evening! And as you attend the church of your choice this weekend, pray that those who 'write' their own versions of the national anthem, come back to the fold.

It'll be interesting to follow Gov. Palin

To say everyone was shocked would be a gross understatement.

To say the action is risky or gutsy depends on why Alaska's Governor Sarah Palin is resigning with 18 months left in her first term. The governor's short tenure in the national spotlight was the result of candidate John McCain's equally gutsy move in naming her as his vice presidential choice.

Her latest action came supposedly from her desire to save the state of Alaska from the cost of continuing ethics investigations, to work for the good of the country, and to protect her family from the harsh media attention plus a myriad of other reasons. The run for the White House in 2012 was not mentioned in her news conference.

Whatever her reason and it is just that, her reason, it would not be ex-

Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



pected this rogue governor from this unconventional state would do anything too common. One thing is for sure, if she does in fact intend to run for the presidency she may have to swallow a bit of that wilderness spirit and listen to some of the political strategists who could help her reach her goal. She also may have to develop what most Alaska natives, the wild ones at least, already have...a thick skin. Her constant lament about unfair treatment from the media

has portrayed her more as a whining child than a concerned parent/spouse.

No matter one's political bent everyone would agree Governor Sarah Palin's latest move is risky. Whether this action will accomplish for the governor her desired effect remains to be seen. I do believe Sarah Palin was drawn in or perhaps thrown into a political ring for which she was unprepared.

Few of us are comfortable with the blows our media can launch, but when our families are on the receiving end of this action I'm sure it becomes almost unbearable.

One thing can't be disputed — she never ceases to surprise us and in the atmosphere of budgetary woes and celebrity deaths, that's not necessarily a bad thing.

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