

Electronics will never replace books

On a television program I watched the other evening, a woman said books are passé, that the electronic readers are taking over. I take exception to that remark. I like books and bookstores. I find new authors and new books by familiar authors when I browse in bookstores. I enjoy reading books. Primarily I read fiction, but a non-fiction book I highly recommend is sitting beside my side of the bed; it is entitled The Emperor of all Maladies: A Biography of Cancer by Siddhartha Mukherjee.

I admit to being a "binge reader." I read voraciously for days or weeks or even months, and then books begun will lie untouched while I am involved in quilting or scrapbooking or some other project. I read any time of the day during my binges and go through many books. I want to share with you some of my favorites.

Our middle daughter Allison is a teacher, although she is not currently teaching. She first introduced me to author Jon Scieszka, who wrote The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales, Math Curse and Squids Will be Squids and The Time Travel Trio series, among others. These books, in case you haven't encountered them, are children's books. They are funny, and they would be valuable if that were their only offering. But they teach adults to look at things from a different perspective. I read some of these books to students when I was a nursing instructor.

After expressing my interest in children's books to the teachers with whom I work, I was given books by Patricia Polacco to read. I was first shown The Keeping Quilt because I am a quilter. Thank You, Mr. Falker and The Lemonade Club are a couple of her books that brought tears to my eyes. She has written many books and speaks at workshops. One of the first books I bought for my now two year old granddaughter was her book Mommies Say Shhh!

One other book with which you may be familiar is Margery Williams' The Velveteen Rabbit. Do any of you remember reading that when you were a child? You might want to read it again and think about what it means to be "real." I also read that to my students.

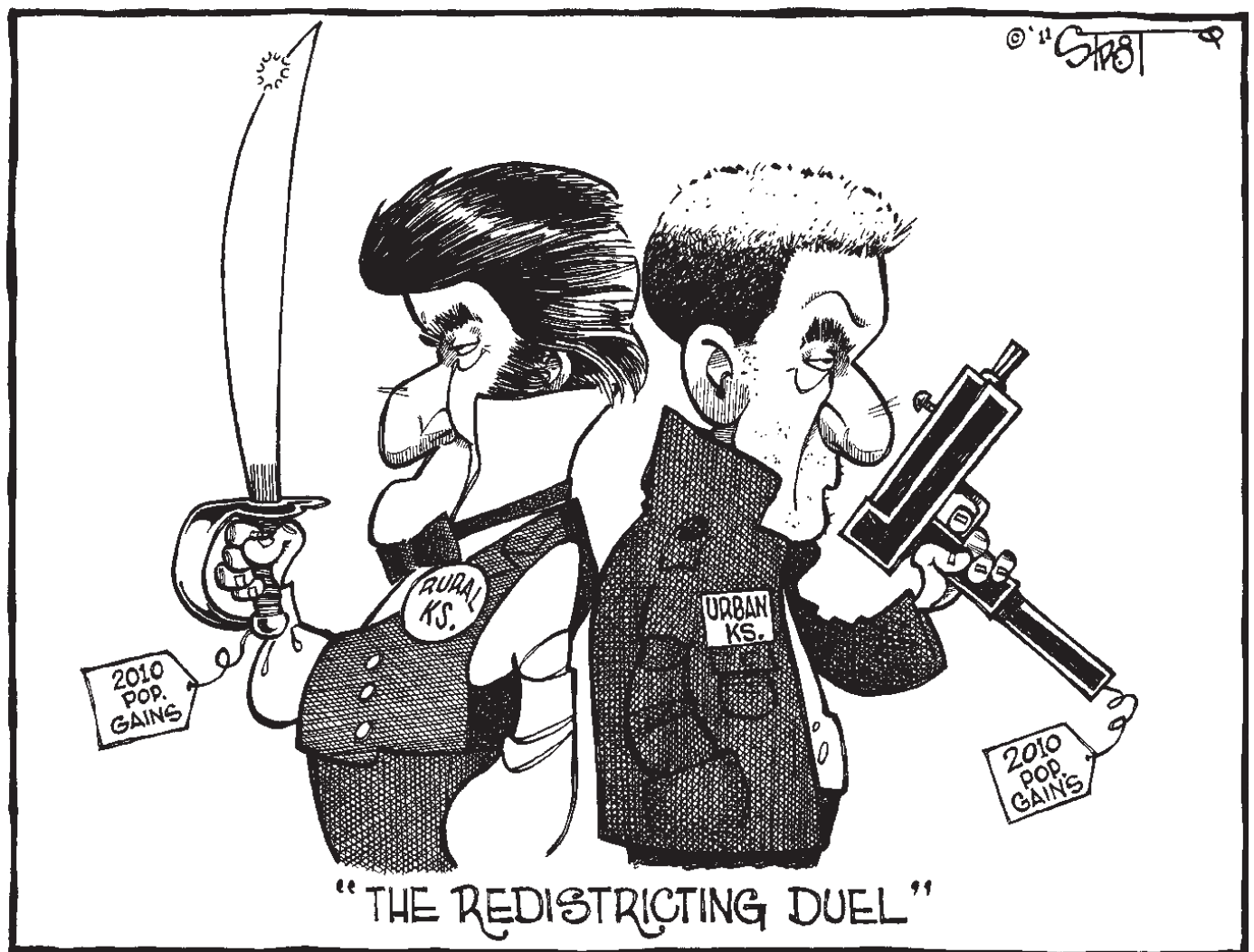
The final author/illustrator I want to mention is Eric Carle. His books have few words but are visually stimulating. It isn't hard to imagine some of his pages done in 3-D. His books have a message, too, and that's what makes them so appealing to me.

Of course I read books for adults. Right now my favorite genre is "whodunits." Recently I have been reading some books on prayer and spirituality. My tastes are definitely eclectic.

I believe these books I've mentioned are really cool, and I encourage you to read them.

Life is Good

Rita Speer



Building healthy habits

Sometimes I want to improve myself. "Only sometimes?" you ask. Well, maybe the rest of the time I am content, that's allowed isn't it?

My desire to improve accounts for part of the reason I work out every weekday morning. The other is because it's my job to go to the Wellness Center.

I've heard if you repeat an action 21 times it becomes a habit. Or is that days? All I know is all it takes is about one day for me to unlearn a "habit".

When I get to the Wellness Center, I work out before I do anything else or my mind will start asking: "Do you really want to do this?"

The winter has been tough. I took a couple of days off to visit one of the kids. Then there was a funeral, I got sick, and it snowed.

I had about one good week in there somewhere. So maybe once you have, then lose, a habit you can get it back a little quicker than 21 days.

But it snowed again. I was sick again, the hubby was sick, and it snowed!

I'd give up, except I can't. It's my job, remember!

At least the sun was shining this morning! The sun is now coming up when I wake at 6:00 every morning. I don't know why I awake at 6:00, maybe it's a habit. But for once DST will be handy; after this weekend I'll wake up at 7:00.

This Too Shall Pass

Nancy Hagman



I've been hoping to unlearn my "eating" habit. Would one have to stop eating for awhile too before that works?

When we get older it is only natural to start thinking about ways to develop healthy habits. Research now shows that people who walk fast live longer. They also claim this is not something you can change. You can't decide to walk faster and thus extend your life.

One nice thing about this research is we don't have to feel guilty about the speed of our gait. Apparently you are fast or you aren't. Walking slow is not a bad habit. Walking fast is not a good one.

I still remember research that claimed surviving cancer had something to do with keeping a positive attitude. This discovery was announced around the time my mother died from cancer. Along with our grief we had to deal with being told that somehow she brought it on herself.

I do think it's important to develop a positive attitude "habit". Though it has since been proven it doesn't cure cancer!

I've lived a pretty healthy lifestyle. I remember a little ditty from college "We don't smoke, we don't chew, we don't go with the boys that do-----" Of course it ended with "We ain't got no boyfriends!"

I never had any desire to smoke. But I have a lot of sympathy for those who have this habit. I even love the lingering smell of cigars. It reminds me of my beloved grandfather!

Are habits the same as obsession? I think not. Obsessions tend not to be healthy. My obsessions may have something to do with why I wake up at 6:00 a.m. You see sometimes I wake up because of nightmares: about basketball and dogs and Fruit Loops, or was it Skittles? All I know is it was terrifying!

I'm a very slow walker. A friend says her mom, age 80, has been a slow walker all her life. 80 is a pretty good age. I may not live forever (nor do I want to) but as I stroll along I may see things the speedy ones miss.

I'm not going to obsess over it because in a month or two they will decide this whole fast versus slow is all wrong anyway. That's what keeps me at the Wellness Center: we can't depend on the fact that life expectancy is predetermined! But there is always room for improvement.

Do politics interfere with religious attendance

Most would agree we were a more religious, as in religion, country in the 1940s and '50s. A 1947 Gallop Poll indicated 76% of Americans were members of a church or synagogue, now currently 61%. However all indications are Americans are as personally religious now as we were in the 1970s and '80s. By some polls, 86% of U.S. citizens now classify themselves as "religious". So why is there a decline in membership but not faith? We could mull over a variety of causes, but truthfully we have little concrete knowledge of the reason for these shifts.

So given that, I would like to propose one...too much politics and too little spirit. I have referred before to the time in my own church in Nevada when the priest brought a petition supporting abortion. In

Phase II

Mary Kay Woodyard



fairness to him, there was no pressure, but that isn't the issue. I told Jack at the time, "This is setting a dangerous precedent." Not because of the issue, but because of the place. I don't go to church to have my political agenda defined; I go to empower my faith so I might be better able to define and live my spiritual life.

I don't need the church to tell me what to do, even Jesus realized no value in that...hence the parables. Tell me a story,

let me decide. When a church takes on the roll of political advocate, it loses its spiritual strength. They may grow in numbers, but faith may be another issue. If a church promotes business boycotts or sends out political fliers, what does this say?

In 1952, 75% saw religion as "very important"; only 54% see its significance now. Perhaps part of the problem is the very nullifying aspect that politics has inflicted upon religion. At one time, priests, pastors, the clergy in general, were held in high esteem, but as they took on the daily life of opinionated problems they became instead a political agenda.

As Peter Marshall, former U.S. Senate Chaplain, once prayed, "Lord, where we are wrong, make us willing to change; where we are right, make us easy to live with." mkwoodyard@ruraltel.net



Dear Editor:

The American Cancer Society has been an active member of Norton County for many years offering a number of patient and family services, cancer support groups, tobacco control programs, lifesaving educational tools and research. The Society continues its mission thanks to the help of generous volunteers and dedicated staff.

The American Cancer Society Relay For Life of Norton County is a community event in every sense of the word. It is a chance for Norton County to come together for one common cause. Being part of Relay For Life means I'm part of a national grassroots movement to fight cancer. Being a Relay For Life volunteer means I'm making life better for cancer survivors, patients, and their families.

But we are faced with a critical shortage of volunteer leaders. With the challenges of our economy and day-to-day demands, time has become a premium and many people are finding it more difficult to participate in community service. It is because of the volunteers who preceded us, however, that certain types of cancer are now highly treatable or even curable. With more help, we will continue to win the fight.

The American Cancer Society needs your help now. Plans are under way for the annual Relay For Life of Norton County, hosted at Court House Square on May 13-14, 2011, to fight for every birthday, threatened by cancer, in every community, including our own.

Now is the time for individuals, families, organizations, schools, religious groups, corporations and small businesses to build a team and join our fight to reduce the burden of cancer across America. Relay For Life can be the site of a company picnic or family gathering while supporting a great cause.

To sign up to participate or to learn how to form a team, call Dana Hanlon at 785-202-1528 or visit www.RelayForLife.org/Nortoncountyks.

Sincerely,
Gayle & Jay Walsh
American Cancer Society
Relay For Life of Norton County Event Chairs
785-669-2131

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

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Thumbs up to Richard Risewick for the snow removal. What a guy!!! Called in
Thumbs up to Dana Tallent for offering to help scoop snow for me. Thank you. Emailed in.

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