

Concerns expressed over county issues

Dear Editor:

The pool meeting last Tuesday night went pretty much as I expected it would. There were some for the new pool and others were questioning if we need a new pool or could we “fix” the current pool to save us money. I don’t think we can afford to put band-aids on the pool and have to go through this same thing a few years down the road.

I know the old pool in Colby was around the same age as Norton’s current pool. When they went in to tear the old pool down, the cement was turning to powder due to the chlorine used for so many years. Putting band-aids on that pool would have been costly and would have to be done again in a few years.

I would like to commend Collette Miller for her comments last night. She hit the nail on the head when she said we need to be more progressive to bring revenue into Norton. As she said, probably none of us at the meeting last night voted on the existing pool built in 1954. It is time for us to step up and have a nice pool for the next generations.

The gentleman who designs pools made a reference to the pool in Colby. Someone behind me made the comment, “We don’t have a college here to help pay for it.” Let’s not go there. We had a chance to have that college and the powers that be in Norton turned down the chance and Colby jumped in and got it. It’s Norton’s own fault that we don’t have that college. Besides, the college is not in session when the pool is open so the students don’t help support it by using it anyway.

I don’t like paying taxes any better than anyone else does, but I also know that we need to think about the future of Norton. If we don’t become aggressive and move forward, Norton will be a ghost town.

Sincerely,
Rosalie Schulze

Dr. Robert Moser and Norton Telegram,

This is in reference to Terry Nelson’s hog permit application #1156, Calvert Flying LLC, NW 1/4 SW 1/4 19-2-21W.

My name is John Arford and my wife’s name is Ada. We have lived in this location--21270 Rd. H, Norton, Kansas, Section 10, T.2,R.22, Emmett Township--for 46 years; and I was born on this section in 1938.

My wife and I are not crackpots or troublemakers. We are reputable people who love every aspect of our rural lifestyle, except for one thing. For the past several years we have had to live in the proximity, around two miles, of one of Terry Nelsons hog sites (the Burd site). By very conservative estimates we are subject to the horrible stench from this site on average one of every three days of every year. The times will range from 20 minutes to 1-3 days continuous. The degree of stench ranges from objectionable to completely suffocating. This all depends on wind and atmospheric conditions.

BOTTOM LINE - A lot of the time we are prisoners in our own house with the windows shut and the fans on. It stinks too bad to even step outside. It is worse in the spring and fall when the weather is the nicest and being outdoors is the most enjoyable.

I attended a County Commissioners meeting Monday, April 16, where they passed a Waiver to change State Law and EPA regulations to lower the separations distance from home sites to 3,000 feet. This is for one greedy, self-serving individual who is by EPA definition ‘a habitual violater’. A list of their violations goes back as far as 40-50 years, some of which involved substantial fines, which we have documented proof of.

It would seem to us that the Nelson Farms Policy on every acre they acquire is to tear up the grass no matter how rough the terrain, bulldoze all trees and brush, tear up the grader ditches, and level the ground until they can get a tractor or pivot across it. They leave very little or no wildlife habitat. Their waste applications raise the ground levels of nitrates, phosphates, and other toxic substances which eventually run off or leach to groundwater. This doesn’t even take into account the amount of water that is used from the endangered Ogallala Aquifer on all of their Norton County hog operations. They are not good stewards of the land, nor are they good neighbors.

This County Commissioner meeting had no publicity, was hurriedly pushed through, and in our opinion, the Commissioners were lied to, coerced, and intimidated. From first-hand experience, we can understand the concerns of the people in this proposed hog site area. These concerns are very real and life-altering. The residents in this area absolutely DO NOT want this site.

Several years ago the County Commissioners tried to get the EPA regulations changed to increase the hog site distances from homes. The State Supreme Court said NO. The distance was not changed and is exactly the same today. Now Terry Nelson is advocating for more power than the State Supreme Court.

It is hard for us to find a lot of information on all of this, but we understand that you have the final say-so on this waiver. If this is true, we ask you to please not allow the separation distance be reduced to 3,000 feet.

Thank you for your consideration.
John and Ada Arford Norton, KS 67654

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

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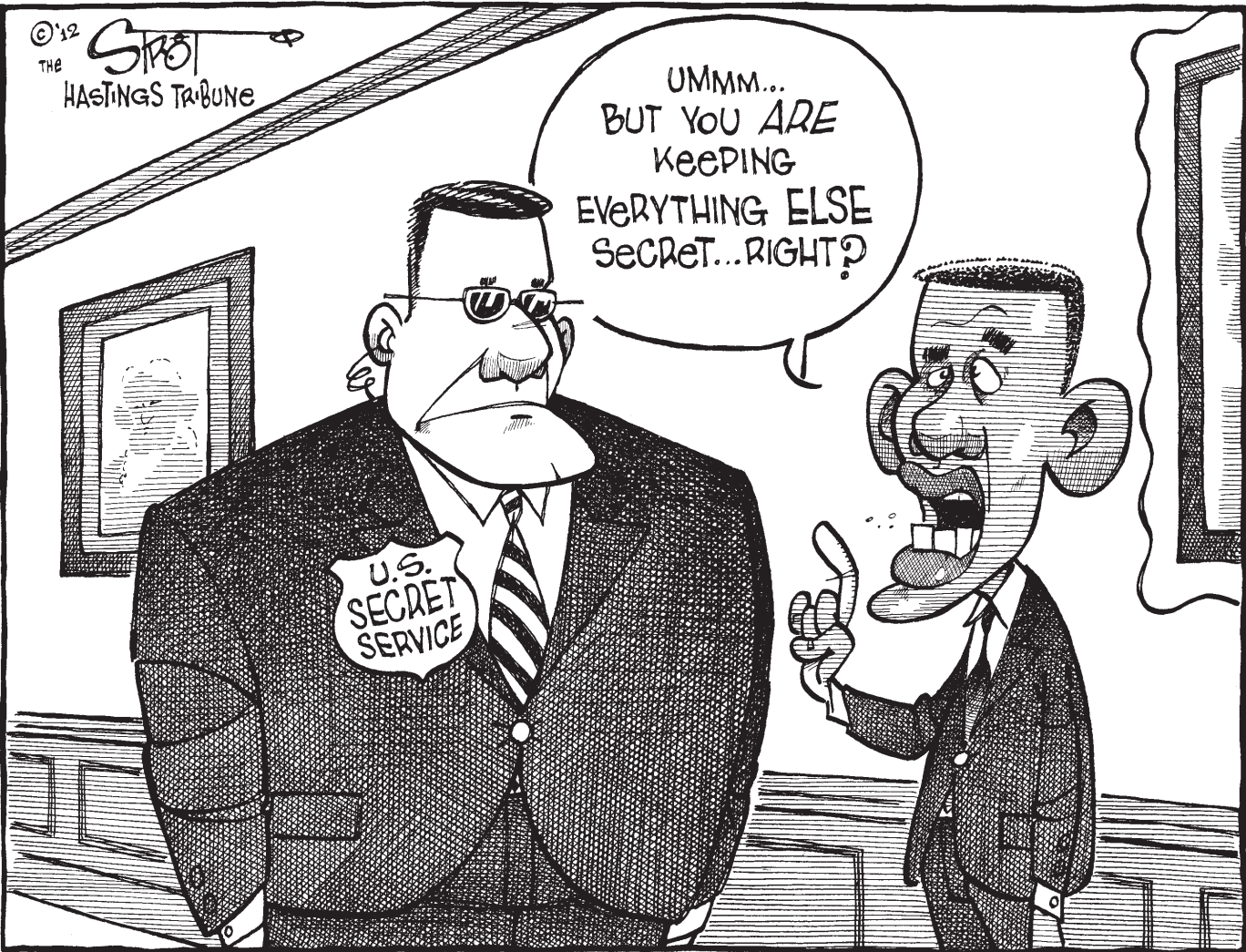
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Birds, bovine and begonias, oh my

Who knew the chicken would have such an impact on the English language.

Think about it. There are many references to chickens. If a husband is dominated by his wife he is “henpecked.” If a woman hovers too closely over her children she is said to be a “mother hen.” When a short man walks with an attitude he is said to be “strutting like a banty rooster.” If someone really messes up a performance they “laid an egg.” If your handwriting is illegible you are said to have “chicken scratches.” If you are a morbid pessimist, you are a “Henny Penny.” In the sixties a cute girl was a “chick.” A person with a pleasant demeanor is a “good egg.” Staying in the fowl family a new father is “proud as a peacock;” a homely girl is an “ugly duckling;” a ballerina may be “graceful as a swan;” and a smart man may be “wise as an owl.”

And you thought they were just chickens.

-ob-

Since I’m thinking of our livestock here’s an update on Rosy and Flossy. If they were old enough to give milk it would come from contented cows.

Out Back
Carolyn Plotts



They have adapted to us quite nicely. They have been eating to their hearts content. So much so that when I came into their pen with some sweet feed (a pellet and grain mixture topped off with real molasses) they got to their feet when I called them. Rosy took a few steps toward me then decided it wasn’t worth the effort and laid back down chewing her cud. Life must be pretty good when you pass up dessert for green veggies.

-ob-

If every flower, bulb and vegetable I planted makes it I will be adrift in a sea of petunias, vincas, marigolds and brocolli. I ordered flower bulbs this year as part of a fundraiser for The Haven House we help operate. A good excuse to buy bulbs I always wanted but thought I couldn’t afford. You know the old “it’s for a good cause” excuse. It is a “good cause,” but the point is, I

wanted the flowers.

I bought hostas, gladiola, and lots of other bulbs whose names I don’t remember. Even had Jim till up a new flowerbed in front of the bay window. I hope it will be as beautiful in reality as it is in my imagination.

I still have hanging baskets and some pots for the front porch to fill. Once everything is mulched it shouldn’t take too much water. At least, that’s my hope.

I use the newspaper mulch approach. First take old newspapers (I seem to have an endless supply), tear into strips leaving several sheets for thickness. Wet them down and lay around your bedding plants, overlapping. Spread your mulch on top of the wet newspapers. Everything is biodegradeable and if you want to add some more flowers, just poke a hole in the paper and place your plant. Keeps the weeds away and holds moisture.

I’m not much of a gardener, but I do love flowers. Can’t have too many. Thank goodness I’m married to a man who loves them as much as I do. But more importantly, he doesn’t complain about mowing around them.

Proactive conservation of our aquifers

Insight
John Schlageck



could reduce irrigation water use by approximately 20 percent throughout a five-year period.

“We must conserve our water so we can extend the useful life of the Ogallala Aquifer,” Brownback told those attending. “This tool allows Kansans to join together and offer up ideas that work on the local level. It allows them to work together on behalf of their children and grandchildren to provide solutions that will save water for the next generation.”

Moving forward, irrigators in the GMDs will now have an enhanced management/conservation option they can use and not be afraid of other things that might happen to them if they start to address their resource concerns in a formal way, GMD manager Bossert

says.

“We believe this new approach will change the water conservation paradigm in the groundwater regions of Kansas,” he adds. “But we’ll have to wait and see how the local water users start to develop and use this new authority.”

Local farmers and their organizations demonstrated the vision to re-work the status quo to deal with the aquifer’s decline. Tools like LEMA now provide Kansas irrigation farmers the ability to make intelligent use of the remaining water.

Additional tools including flex accounts, water banks and the extension of the Water Transition Assistance Program were also signed into law during the 2012 session. All will help with efforts to continue conserving and extending the life of the Ogallala Aquifer.

Kansas agriculture remains the economic key to vitality in Kansas and water is vital for agricultural production. These steps will benefit farmers today and help sustain this valuable water resource for future generations.



A BIG thanks to Patsy Maddy who brought Miss America 2011 to the Norton Schools. Miss Scanlon brought a very good message for all students. Emailed in.

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