

Opinion



Free Press Viewpoint

‘Nightline’ to put face on war in Iraq

You may want to watch ABC-TV’s “Nightline” tonight (ch. 6, right after the news). Host Ted Koppel will read the names of the more than 700 American servicemen and women who have died in Iraq since the invasion slightly more than a year ago.

The program will be extended to allow for the roster to be read and pictures of the war dead to be shown.

Of course something of this note attracts controversy. “In poor taste.” “They shouldn’t be so insensitive.” “They are invading families’ privacy.” Etc. Etc. Etc.

But this is war, make no mistake about it. And in wartime people lose their lives. And, quite frankly, “Nightline” will be providing a service to this country when it embarks on the roll call. They will be putting human faces on the situation in Iraq. And probably any number of viewers will learn for the first time that families they once knew who now live in other areas of the country have lost a child in the war.

We doubt it will hurt troop morale. Those in uniform will have reason to stand proud and salute those who have given the ultimate sacrifice for their country, and also knowing that with this solemn declaration of recognition by “Nightline” that they have the support of the people back home.

We are going to watch it. We may even be among those learning of war deaths that involve people we used to know.

Those who have died on the Iraqi battlefield did so for a cause, a noble cause — freedom. And freedom allows those in opposition to the “Nightline” feature to say so. It allows “Nightline” to do so.

You can watch the program tonight. Or if you choose you can surf to another channel. Freedom of the fingers.

We can find no reason to be critical of the program.

And, likewise, we can find no reason to be critical of those who do.

Tom (TD) Dreiling
Free Press Publisher

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May produces most tornadoes

WE ARE far from out of tornado time in Kansas. In fact, according to research shared by the National Weather Service over at Goodland a shot time ago, in the year 2003 the most tornadoes occurred in the month of May. And if you look at your calendar, we move into May 2004 tomorrow.

May 2003 produced a total of 44 tornadoes in the state, and it may interest you to know that nearly half of all the tornadoes in all of 2003 (91) occurred between May 4 and May 15. Those 91 tornadoes last year were 39 above normal.

The 2003 death toll statewide was 8, the most since 1991. And there were 84 injuries, also the most since 1991. The longest track was 27 miles reported in Crawford County on May 4.

The strongest were F4s, and there were two of those, in Crawford and Wyandotte counties on May 4. Those were the first two F4's in one year since 1993. Labette County reported the most tornadoes in 2003 with seven. The most tornadoes reported in a single day statewide were 21 on May 8.

The first tornado reported in 2003 was on March 12 in Labette County, and the last touchdown was on Aug. 5 in Crawford County.

Property damage from the 91 tornadoes was estimated at \$59 million.

On May 15, 2003, an out break of eight tornadoes in southwest Kansas produced \$15 million damage in and near Liberal in Seward County.

In June of 2003, tornadoes favored northwest and north central Kansas, although fewer tornadoes than normal were reported across western Kansas. The number of tornadoes over eastern and southeast Kansas was well above normal.

Here is the monthly breakdown of Kansas tornadoes in 2003: January and February, 0; March, 1; April, 12; May, 44; June, 22; July, 11; August, 1; September through December, 0.

Since 1950, Kansas has reported a total of 2,794 tornadoes. During that 54-year period that averages out to be 51.74, or rounded off to 52 per year. May was still the most active month over that time frame with 967.

IF “April Showers Bring May Flowers” is correct, then look for a bumper crop of budding beauties all over the place. Up to 8 a.m. today, we have received 2.70 inches of precipitation for



Tom Dreiling

● My Turn

the month, nearly half-inch more than we received in April of 2003 (2.70 inches vs. 2.24 inches). The overnight rains produced 0.10 inches and more is expected before the day is over. Cool. Damp. Isn't that what we've been hoping and praying for?

HAVE you been watching that latest Viagra television commercial? The one showing a neighborhood of men jumping up and down and whooping it up and even dancing around with each other? The one that shows a jubilant mail carrier going bonkers? What a block party! If what I am seeing in that commercial is an accurate portrayal of the effects of taking Viagra, I think they need to install street signs that read: “Entering Viagra Zone. Proceed at your own risk.”

THE year is 2035. You pick up your newspaper and these are the headlines :

Castro finally dies at age 112; Cuban cigars can now be imported legally, but President Chelsea Clinton has banned all smoking

Mexifornia is now the seventh largest country in the world

Congress authorizes direct deposit of illegal political contributions to campaign accounts

Floridians still don't know how to use voting machines

President says war against terrorism will be a long struggle

First legally married gay couple cel-

It's all those little things

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● At Week's End

saw the sunset you made on Tuesday. That was cool.

Dear God:

Instead of letting people die and having to make new ones, why don't you keep the ones You already have?

Dear God:

Maybe Cain and Abel would not have killed each other if they had their own rooms. That's what my Mom did for me and my brother.

Dear God:

If you watch me in church on Sunday, I'll show you my new shoes.

Dear God:

I bet it is very hard to love everyone in the whole world. There are only 4 people in our family and I'm having a hard time loving all of them.

Dear God:

In school they told us what you do. Who does it when you are on vacation?

Dear God:

Are you really invisible or is it just a trick?

Dear God:

Is it true my father won't get into heaven if he uses his bowling words in the house?

Dear God:

Did You mean for the giraffe to look like that or was it an accident?

Dear God:

Who draws the lines around the countries?

Dear God:

I went to this wedding and they kissed right in the church. Is that OK?

Dear God:

celebrates 20th wedding anniversary

Last of jailed Enron officers completes prison sentence

Yankees sign pitcher to one-year \$5 billion contract

College football playoff system resurfaces after Curbside University and Driveway State upset usual powerhouses throwing BCS in turmoil

Postal Service raises price of first class stamp to \$27.89 and reduces mail delivery to Wednesdays only.

I SIGNED up for an exercise class and was told to wear loose-fitting clothing. If I had any loose-fitting clothing, I wouldn't have signed up in the first place!

THIS makes sense:

The population of this country is 273 million. 140 million are retired. That leaves 133 million to do the work.

There are 85 million in school, which leaves 48 million to do the work.

Of this there are 29 million employed by the federal government, leaving 19 million to do the work.

2.8 million are in the armed forces preoccupied with all the things they need to do all over the globe., which leaves 16.2 million to do the work.

Take from the total the 14,800,000 people who work for state and city governments, and that leaves 1.4 million to do the work.

At any given time there are 188,000 people in hospitals, leaving 1,212,000 to do the work.

Now, there are 1,211,998 people in prisons.

That leaves just two people to do the work. You and me. And there you are sitting on your bottom at your computer, reading jokes.

Nice, real nice

HAVE a good evening and a good weekend! Don't forget the Lord's house this weekend.

Tom Dreiling is publisher of the Free Press.

Did You really mean “do unto others as they do unto you”? Because if you did, then I'm going to get my brother good.

Dear God:

Thank you for the baby brother, but I think you got confused because what I prayed for was a puppy.

Dear God:

Please send me a pony. I never asked for anything before. You can look it up.

Dear God:

You don't have to worry about me; I always look both ways.

Dear God:

I think about you sometimes, even when I'm not praying.

Dear God:

Of all the people who worked for you, I like Noah and David the best.

Dear God:

My brother told me about being born but it doesn't sound right. They're just kidding, aren't they?

Dear God:

I would like to live 900 years just like the guys in the Bible.

Dear God:

We read Thomas Edison made light. But in Sunday school they said you did it. So, I bet he stole your idea.

Dear God:

It's okay to be a Republican?

Dear God:

Who do you write to?

Dear God:

You must have awful powerful glasses to be able to watch over us from way up there!

Oh, before it slips my mind, remember that marriage is the number one cause of divorce.

If you have something for “At Week's End,” simply e-mail it to td@nwkansas.com, fax it to (785) 462-7749.