

# Opinion



## Monday's Salute

### Thumbs to...

✓**Col. Eric Peck** — for those encouraging words about the National Guard, it's mission and economic impact on our lives.

✓**All Performers** — on this summer's "Picnic in the Park" series. Excellent!

✓**Rosa Lee Waterman** — for your good work and service to Pioneer Memorial Library. Good luck with your move.

✓**Poll Workers** — for your patience and understanding as voters mark ballots on Tuesday.

✓**Judy Kleinsorge** — on your new role as children's librarian at Pioneer Memorial Library.

✓**Doris Voisin** — on your installation as VFW auxiliary president.

✓**Doctors Hildyard and Regier** — on your 30 years of dedicated service to the community, the area.

✓**Sondra Barnett** — on your new responsibility as correspondent for the Rexford community, area.

✓**Volunteer Writers** — for providing this newspaper with copy on events, particularly in the local sports arena, for consumption by our readers. Your efforts are truly appreciated.

*(This column is prepared each weekend by the newspaper's publisher. You are invited to submit a name of names for consideration. Questions can be directed to td@nwkansas.com or call 785-462-3963. Faxes are welcome, also, to 785-462-7749.)*

### Where to write

- U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts**, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. 202/224-4774
- U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback**, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. 202/224-6521
- U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran**, 1519 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. 202/225-2715
- State Rep. Jim Morrison**, State Capitol Building Rm. 171-W, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7676 e mail: jmorriso@ink.org web:http://www.ink.org/public/legislators/jmorriso
- State Sen. Ruth Clark**, State Capitol Building Rm. 449-N, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7399 e mail: rclark@ink.org



## My dream is to visit Gotham

The Big Apple. The Great White Way. Gotham. All inspiring in their own way, but the last conjures up images of the Dark Knight posed magnificently menacingly (or menacingly magnificent?) on the ledge of a gothic building, the dark night sky occasionally split by lightning as the Caped Crusader keeps a watchful eye trained on the city's inhabitants below.

It's just fiction but the city that is the heart of the Empire State does have a mythology all its own, a dark, glittering, seductive siren beckoning all to her like some kind of dystopian fairy tale.

I've never been to see it for myself. Like anybody else, I've read and heard a lot about the city that never sleeps.

I also have a bit of insider information, considering my mom, dad and little sister Chris have all been there.

Dad took Chris in January of 2002 and she hasn't stopped talking about it since.

She watches "Sex and the City" and has developed a very cosmopolitan fashion sense.

I've been thinking that it can't be just like everybody presents it, just like she says it is because no place is really like that.

Wrong. I've finally started to wake up to the reality that is New York City.

I can't imagine what it's like to have 10 million people packed into such a small area on an island that's slowly sinking into the Atlantic. A city that scrapes the sky and has a real underworld.

My own "metropolitan" experience is with cities in the south and the west. Denver just wishes it had what New York has to offer but it fails miserably because it is still searching for its identity, trying to hold on to its western heritage



### Tisha Cox

#### • Off The Beaten Path

while dealing with an influx of outsiders and struggling to move forward into a new century.

Dallas has its own identity and nothing even comes close to matching the atmosphere there or in the other southern cities I've visited — Memphis, Nashville, New Orleans and Baton Rouge.

They all have their own character and atmosphere that are uniquely southern.

However, I'm starting to see New Yorkers are a different breed, alien creatures that live in their own environment, some never setting foot outside the city where they are born and will probably die.

My hockey team is there, the New York Rangers. Also places I want to see, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which has Egyptian and other antiquities, not to mention all the "regular" art; the American Museum of Natural History (Roy Chapman Andrews, the man who brought the first fossils back from Mongolia, worked there in the early part of the century), Central Park and Broadway.

And this girl from the "Land of Oz" would like to see "The Boy from Oz" on Broadway.

Clearly, everybody who's anybody is in New York now or has been or will be.

Chris' little NYC adventure included riding

the subway everywhere, the Empire State Building, Madison Square Garden (they brought back Ranger goodies), seeing "Moulin Rouge" and a little run-in (literally) with Jaromir Jagr, a hockey player for the Washington Capitals outside MSG.

She said she thinks she came to about a little above Jaromir's waist and he's better looking in person. (One would hope so, considering how the lad from Kladno looked when he was 18 and those incriminating drag photos a couple of years ago).

They also got to meet George Foreman (the boxer who now endorses grills) and got his autograph and picture.

I've been told that the cheesecake is heavenly and the diners are open all the time and they're the best places to go for food.

But as I said, I still can't imagine this place, this metropolis actually exists.

It is a legend in its own time, a place where anyone can go and experience the world in one place, a microcosm representing an entire universe.

History and cultures, the past, present and future all thrown together in one place. I wonder what it would be like to experience that and I know that one can't come in contact with that and not come back changed. If not changed, at least touched in a way that will make them look at the world around them in a different light.

Maybe one day I'll make my own pilgrimage to Gotham. Until then, there is always the myth to explore.

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*Tisha Cox is a general assignment reporter/photographer for the Free Press. Her column appears on Mondays. tcox@nwkansas.com.*

## Cat learns a new trick

Punkin's learned a new trick, and I didn't teach it to him. He's discovered he can jump onto my wheeled walker out on the deck, and propel himself halfway across the deck. If he jumps off, he can propel the walker even further, and I have to get a stick to retrieve it. He can only do this on the deck; it doesn't work on the carpet in the house.

I think he got the idea from Mrs. Murphy in the book I have been reading. Mrs. Murphy is a character in a series of books by Rita Mae Brown and Sneaky Pie Brown. (The books are called cozies, mystery books in a domestic setting, usually with a cat in the book somewhere, even if it just walks through one page.) Mrs. Murphy, a feline Jessica Fletcher, is always one step ahead of everyone in solving the mysteries, but she has trouble getting her human counterparts to understand.

Mrs. Murphy and her sidekick, a dog named Tee Tucker, live with the local postmistress, and one of her favorite pastimes is to jump into the mail cart and take a ride. How the idea got from the book into Punkin's mind is something about which I don't care to speculate.

Oh, by the way, co-author Sneaky Pie Brown is also a cat and has her own web page where she sells tee-shirts, coffee cups, etc.

Punkin's taken to 'bringing home the bacon' to feed his family, no doubt, but the bacon recently has been live birds. He puts them in the bathroom, and I have to prop the front door open and gently herd them towards the door. As soon as they feel the air currents, they head for the door and fly away. Hope Blackie never finds out, or he will be waiting at the door with an open



### Maxine Nelson

#### • Random Thoughts

mouth.

One morning I found a bird behind the stool in the bathroom, and a huge moth on the window screen. Being nocturnal, he was sound asleep. His wingspan was wider than my handspan which is seven inches. I was afraid I couldn't handle him myself so I called the lady across the street. and she came over, slipped a sheet of paper under him, and carried him out to show to her husband, and to get him away from my cats. He was definitely alive. When she tried to turn him over to look at his underside, he flipped right back over and kept on sleeping.

I don't know what kind of moth he was. He was sort of a uniform grayish-brown with circles or eyes in the design of his wings. I wish I had taken a picture, but I was afraid he might fly and get out of reach. Wouldn't want that thing flying around my lamp at night.

I've tried to explain to Punkin that I don't like live birds in the house, and that I know he likes to chase birds, and he is wonderful to be able to catch them, but he can enjoy the thrill of the chase without bringing them inside, or even hurting them. If I were the Pet Psychic I might have a better chance of making him understand.

Speaking of the Pet Psychic, I saw a program about pot-bellied pigs on "Animal Planet." They were all clean and neat and each wore a Hawaiian lei. Their owner said she was taking them around to schools to educate children. I was shocked when she said many children had never seen a pig, but realized it was true. Some of my grandchildren may not have seen a pig. Have my children all seen one? But I shudder to think what she is teaching the school children about pigs. Certainly not what the 4-H kids are learning, and not remotely related to the mud-puddle-loving pigs my parents raised on the farm, and then butchered for food.

-mn-

My granddaughter, Sister (Becky) Boyd is on her way to Frankfurt, Germany, to serve a two-year mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She completed a one-month orientation at the Missionary Training Center at Provo, Utah.

were surprised that she went to Germany because she already knows how to speak German, having majored in it at Wichita State University. Usually, the church prefers to teach its missionaries a new language at the Missionary Training Center.

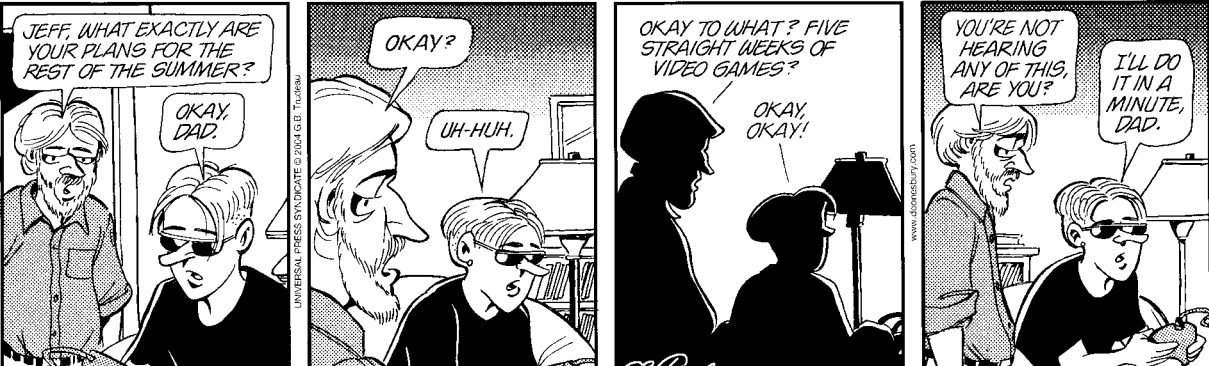
My theory is they do that with young men because they have already learned some 'unchurchly' language if they have mastered a foreign language. The young ladies are too refined to use that language. That is just my theory — it is not church policy.

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*Maxine Nelson is a retired family and religion page editor for the Colby Free Press.*

### Doonesbury

#### • Gary Trudeau



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