

from other pens...

News machines get it wrong again

Again, the biggest news machines in the country got it all wrong. Paris Hilton is not, repeat IS NOT, worth the time spent reporting on her arrest and jailing, her unexpected release, and then her return to jail.

After all, Paris Hilton is nothing more than a rich, spoiled kid who believes obeying the laws aren't meant for her. Well, she is finding out otherwise, no thanks to the sheriff in the county where the situation unfolded.

Somewhere along the line an example needs to be made that those who live in society's glitter are not privy to a so-called double standard where justice, firm and fair, not a mockery thereof, is the expectation.

If it is difficult for most of us to rationalize why, when someone whose name lights up every marquee from coast to coast, is caught breaking the law walks away from punishment, or is rendered a slap on the wrist. Those who live such lives should be made accountable, just like the rest of us.

Many celebrities check into rehab facilities as a means of escaping the claws of justice. Some don't stay long enough to learn where the restrooms are. This practice is becoming more and more common.

Martha Stewart, when she knew the writing was on the wall, stepped up to the plate, served her time and came out of the big house as popular as ever. Ms. Hilton might take note of the way Ms. Stewart handled her situation.

One television network said it was surprised how engaged the public was by the Hilton case. Surprised? Those nitwits are the ones who shoved it down our throats. You couldn't get away from it! Another 24/7 joke.

While immigration concerns lock the country in heated debate, here we are wondering if a poor rich brat should have to sit in the clinker for being a stinker.

Come on, you big news machines, grow up.

—Tom Dreiling/The Norton Telegram

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Drug problem needs parents attention

The woman was worried and upset about an editorial printed in an area daily.

The May 21 *McCook Daily Gazette's* editorial warned parents about a new drug problem.

Young people, with less sense than God gave the gopher, have been using a common cold remedy to get high.

The Nebraska State Patrol was warning parents and the newspaper added its advice that people should talk to their children about the dangers of overdosing on this and other medications.

The woman thought that pharmacists should immediately move all the cold remedies behind the counter, as pseudoephedrine products are. She said she felt it was a mistake for the newspaper to have written about this subject because youngsters, especially her grandchildren, would get "ideas."

She had gone on the Internet and found out about over-the-counter medications with abuse potential. She said she believed in freedom of the press, but just didn't see why the newspaper should print this type of information.

Welllllll. Maybe the newspaper is the only way the



cynthia haynes

• open season

youngsters get information today. Back in my day, we learned about sex, drugs and rock and roll from other kids — not from the newspapers and rarely from our parents.

I don't think things have changed all that much, except now kids get their information and misinformation from their friends, buddies and the Internet.

The editorial named one brand name and gave the active ingredient that is the problem. The ingredient, dextromethorphan, is one of the most common in cough and cold remedies. It is in hundreds of products. To put it behind the counter and have people sign for it would cost hundreds of thousands of hours of work for drug stores and trouble for customers.

If the problem becomes widespread, like the use of pseudoephedrine products in the manufacture of methamphetamine, that would be a

small price to pay.

But, we can't keep our young people totally safe. If they want to do things that put their lives in danger, they will find ways.

There is a stupid game called car surfing. It's already killed at least one young man in north-west Kansas. Speeding and reckless driving have caused many area parents to grieve for lost children.

Should we lock the cars away?

Of course not.

Should we talk to our children about the dangers of overdosing on anything — from Pepsi to Percocet, a narcotic pain pill. Talk to them about alcohol, unprotected sex and the dangers inherent in vehicles and machinery.

We can't keep them safe. We can only pass on our knowledge and values then hope and pray they listen.

And how will we get the knowledge?

I usually find it in the newspaper. I may go to the Internet for more detail, but I get my first hint of most any danger from what I read in the paper, from what is researched and written by people I know and trust to have it right (most of the time).

Not your species, monkey boy

In response to what hopefully is the final tail-slapping video of "The Frenzied Errant Whale Saga: The Sequel," I have some advice for the people in charge that might come in handy the next time a couple of ocean-going behemoths appear in waters in which you don't think they belong.

LEAVE THEM ALONE. GET OUT OF THEIR WAY. DON'T EVEN LOOK AT THEM.

Let the immense beasts go their own way without your questionable assistance. They are not your species, monkey boy. You are helping the same way silverware helps a garbage disposal.

Especially when your idea of help consists of poking them with sticks, banging on pipes, spraying with fire hoses and piping underwater recordings of killer-whale noises near where you think they might be. Pretty much the watery equivalent of throwing crap against a wall and seeing what sticks.

You had no idea what you were doing. You had no idea if it helped. You had no idea if you made it worse. Why? Because, listen closely: You Are Not A Whale.

And I know you can't control the urge to anthropomorphize everything to cute and cuddly beanie baby status but come on: Delta and Dawn? Gag. You don't give solemn ancient behemoth creatures punny adorable names. Their real monikers are probably elegant mournful sounds like Errrauuuuuuuuuugh and Meeceaaaraaaauuuuugh. How would you like it if a whale called your daughter Reeuuuuubaaaaaaag on Television?

No, we don't know why they're here. Who cares? Maybe they had a telepathic message for Nancy Pelosi to get her act together, or were changing the batteries on the delta's pollution



will durst

• raging moderate

monitors, or fresh water annoys the barnacles on their dorsals.

Then again, maybe their ancestors regaled them with heroic Humpback tales of the Delta and they were moseying around looking at the legendary sights; just really big tourists. Like the Germans at Yosemite. With blowholes. And yes, that is funny and no, it's not redundant.

Could be they're related to that whale who made the same trip about 20 years ago. Remember him? You named him Humphrey. He meandered around the Delta for a month and nothing you did deterred him. And you banged on the same pots and shot off the same fire hoses this time around. What, did you think using Teflon pots was going to make the dif-

ference? Or maybe this year's sticks were pointier. Wait, I got it: these recorded Orca sounds were HD CDs.

Here's another tip. YOU DON'T SPEAK HUMPBACK. Be careful of your communication attempts. For all you know, the sounds you were making got translated as "Anchovy Bar: Straight Ahead," or "Special Humpback discount on all things Krill!" Or, "Danger, danger."

For the sake of the planet, swallow the entire boat in front of you NOW."

I have a theory as to why they returned to sea. Either they were distressed at all the diesel fuel you were wasting exhibiting your extreme concern or they were afraid your concern might turn taxidermic.

Does the term "hunting for blubber" have any meaning here? Save the Whales, my ass. They're whales. Save yourself.

Wow, even comic, writer, actor, former radio talk-show host and oyster shucker, Will Durst, is a bit taken aback at his vehemence.

Will Durst is a political comedian who has performed around the world. E-mail Will at durst@caglecartoons.com.

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