

## Simplicity — a whole new thought

They keep talking about campaign finance reform. They never quite get the issue settled. Anything that comes down the pike is usually a diluted piece of political trash, designed to deceive the American public.

Both Democrats and Republicans are sinners in this regard. President George W. Bush has a cash box containing \$150 million — you read that right — with which to wage a war against Sen. John Kerry, the Democratic candidate for the White House next November. Kerry's cash box has been greatly reduced by the necessity to ward off several contenders within his own party. He's now out beating the bushes — not the Bush's bushes — for more money. He'll need to just about equal the ever growing Bush bundle to even make a race of it.

So, where did Bush's millions and millions and millions of dollars come from? Beats us. And Sen. Kerry? A lot of his came from his own pocket — he's not your average working American. He's wealthy beyond description.

So, how do we handle this goofy campaign finance reform? Easy. Very, very easy. But simplicity is not the thing the Washington crowd cuddles. After all if it's too simple the American people will know how it works and that could spell trouble — for those benefiting from the windfalls and whatever else is involved.

So, here's our plan — plain and simple:

There are 50 states.

The candidates for the White House could raise no more than \$1 million from each state.

Math says that totals \$50 million per candidate.

They could then spend those \$50 million as they see fit. In other words if Republicans view our state of Kansas as just another Republican-embedded state there would be no reason to waste their money here. So, they could take the \$1 million raised here and pump it into another state where they feel they need more presence.

Make sense?

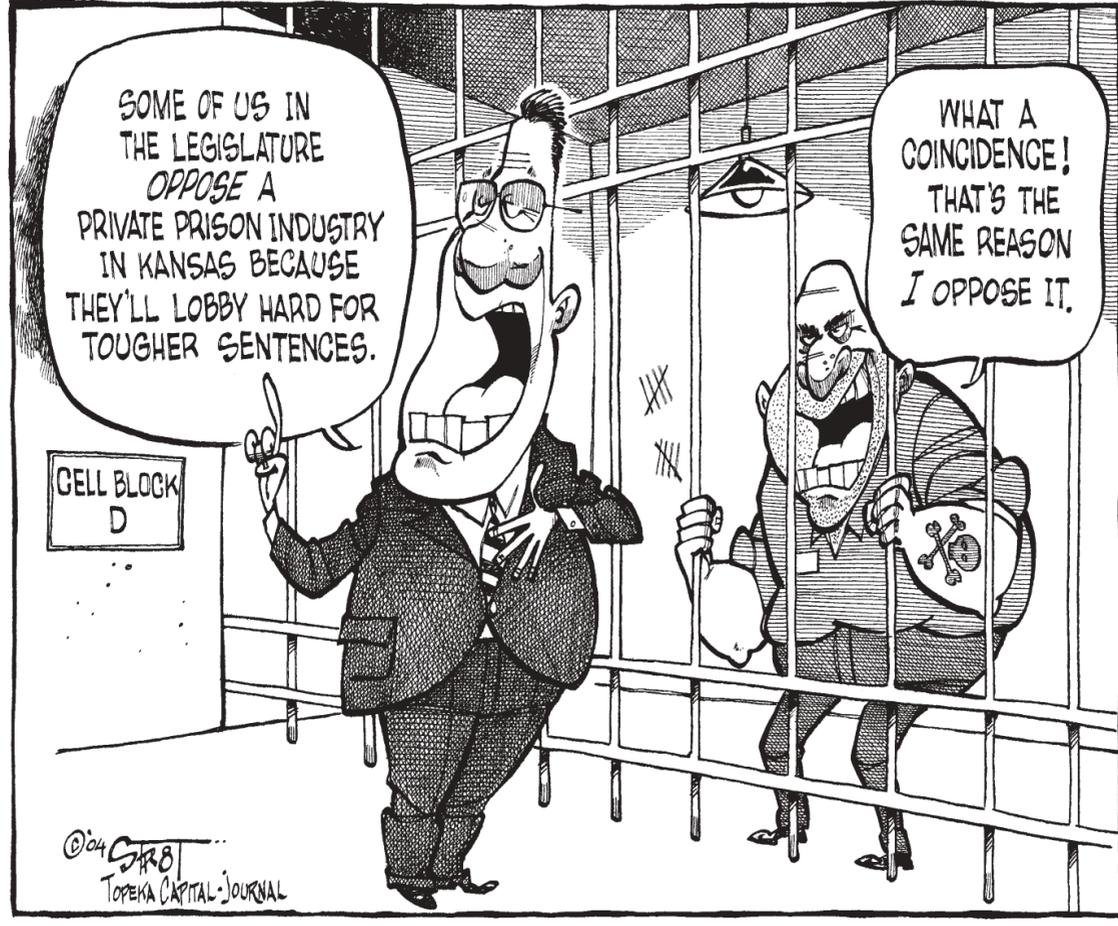
No, it doesn't. Too simple. Too easy for Mr. & Mrs. John Q. Public to understand, and after all they are not supposed to understand campaign finance reform legislation. No fun that way.

Something else our plan would do would greatly shorten the campaign season (and we all yell about that). And that would really test the candidates' ability to handle money to make the sum total stretch. It would give us some sense of their awareness of the importance of spending one's money wisely. And it might also give us a clue as to how they would handle the nation's budget, which, we all agree, just isn't being handled.

That's it. Our free advice.

Fifty states, \$50 million.

— Tom A. Dreiling



## Round and round she goes...

If my head weren't screwed on, I'd lose it.

You see, I'm still "milking" my trip to Washington, sharing the details with anyone who will listen. There must be still be a few people who haven't heard me expound on the topic, because I had an invitation to speak about it this week.

I had dutifully recorded the date and time in my appointment book. More to the point is the information I had NOT recorded. Like to what group and where. I knew when I was supposed to be there; I just didn't know where I was supposed to be.

I discovered my mistake last week when looking ahead in my appointment book. There it was, written in my own hand, "Monday, March 8, 7 p.m., D.C. trip." But where was I supposed to be? My colleagues were no help.

"You're on your own," they said.

Knowing I only had a few days to figure this out, I came to the resolution, "Girl,

### Out Back Carolyn Plotts



if you work for a newspaper, now is the time to let the newspaper work for you." (I can't help it. I loved JFK's inauguration speech.)

Filing my own ad, in boldface caps, I begged for someone, anyone, to inform me of where I was expected on Monday at 7 p.m.

If you ever thought advertising doesn't work, just try publicly admitting you're a ding-a-ling needing help. Carriers picked up their papers about 3:45 p.m.; the first homes got their newspapers about 4 p.m.; and no later than 4:15 p.m., I had my first call.

"You're to be at Prairie Land Electric's meeting room to speak to the 20th Century Study Club," came the sweet voice. "Oh, thank you, thank you, thank you!" was all I could say.

But after about the third or fourth call, my reply came to be more like, "Yeah, yeah, yeah. I know. Prairie Land's meeting room. Right, 7 p.m. OK, you can stop laughing now. Uh-huh, I wrote it down. No, I'll remember."

And church! Forget about it! Those Christians still have a little devilish streak! During the fellowship time between early church and Sunday School, I heard, "Hey, Carolyn. Do 'ya know where you're supposed to be?" or, "So, do you know where you are?" Ve-ry funny.

The moral of this story is: If I don't show up to speak to your club, it's not because I forgot. It's because I don't know "where" I'm supposed to be and was too embarrassed to ask.

## Leaving a note shows consideration

Years ago, when I was young, a purple bottle sat on the dining room table. You probably remember the type, Italian glass, I believe it was called. It was tall with a pointed top. It was our message bottle.

A rule in our house has always been when you leave you tell people where you are going. Parent or child, sister or brother, no one was exempt. Of course there were those times when you would hear, "Don't you trust me?"

It has nothing to do with trust and everything to do with respect and courtesy.

If my parents left and I wasn't home they stuck a note through the bottle top to let us know where they were. Even as adults when we returned home for a visit we still left notes. In every home Jack and

### Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



I have lived in across the country a note holder found its place soon after we moved in.

Note leaving is a learned trait and parents hold the key. Children learn respect from their parents. It is equally, if not more important, for parents to tell their children where they are and when they will be home.

It sets the pattern. This is a practice to

start when they are very young. My 4-year-old grandson dictated a note to me last week, to inform his uncle he had borrowed a movie, a small, but important task.

Sticky notes have made "note leaving" very easy. The glass on our back door holds our communication now.

Throughout the years the technology has changed things. E-mail informs others of where we are and cell phones make immediate contact possible, but the idea is the same.

Respect begins at home and with little things, whether it is a note to say I'm working in the garden, or have gone to the library or I'm playing with my friend. The note first and foremost says you matter to me, you are important something we all need to know.

## Animal ID brings up questions

U.S. Congressman Jerry Moran participated in a House Agriculture Committee hearing in Houston, Texas, to review the development of the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal Identification Program. Animal traceability has become a priority in the wake of a single case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (mad cow disease) in Washington state. Among the witnesses testifying before the committee was the President of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, Jan Lyons from Manhattan.

"As the Department of Agriculture and Congress work to develop an identification system, we must ensure that it is done in a way which does not burden our producers," Moran said. "Implementing the system should be based on common sense, and it should be flexible to meet producer's needs and allow for new technology. The system also should not place a tremendous financial burden on our producers or expose them to a liability that could shut down their operations."

### Capitol Views

Rep. Jerry Moran



Moran questioned witnesses on the costs of a mandatory national program and the costs for producers to adapt to new regulatory requirements. Other issues

highlighted during the hearing were producer liability and the ability of technologies to communicate.

"Even though the United States has the safest food delivery system in the world, recent events require additional measures to improve that system and to reassure foreign and domestic consumers," Moran concluded.

For more information, contact Congressman Moran at (202) 225-2715 or visit his web page at [www.house.gov/moranks01/](http://www.house.gov/moranks01/).

## WRITE:

The Norton Telegram encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of public interest. Letters should be brief, clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise.

We do not publish form letters or letters about topics which do not pertain to our area. Thank-yous should be submitted to the Want Ad desk.

Letters will not be censored, but will be read and edited for form and style, clarity, length and legality. We will not publish attacks on private individuals or businesses which do not pertain to a public issue.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Thank you for printing my last letter to the editor in total. Convincing the governor that the funds she has cut from the mentally handicapped needs to be rescinded can not be taken lightly. It is imperative we receive the funds she has cut or services, and possibly locations, will be discontinued.

Norton County residents, please continue to write and send letters to the governor concerning this issue. Your letters do not have to be lengthy. They can be as simple as, "Gov. Sebelius, please reinstate the funds to the Intermediate Care Facilities for the mentally retarded program. We have two homes in Norton which help maintain the economy in this county."

To those who signed the letters Friday night at Town and Country, thank you. There were between 60 and 70 signatures on each of the four letters. Thank you for taking the time to read and sign them. The letters will be sent to the governor this week.

Continue to inform the governor of the need for these funds for the continued service to the 12 people who call Norton "Home," for the continued benefit of Norton County's economy, and the continued employment of the 34 employees.

Thank you,  
Sondra Graham  
Developmental Services  
of Northwest Kansas  
Norton