

GOP not finding way to upset Sebelius

Call her Governor. So far, no one has laid a glove on Kathleen Sebelius. Like two or three other popular Democrats in the last century, she appears to be headed for an easy victory in November. It's not that you can't beat an incumbent governor; it's happened. But to succeed, someone has to try. None of the Republican candidates gained much traction in the primary.

Robin Jennison of Healy, a former speaker of the House, is presentable enough and worked the state, but had no issues. The fact that he had spent his off years lobbying for the caisson interests did not endear him to many Kansans.

Ken Canfield of Overland Park appeared to be a nice guy and a good thinker. An expert on fathering with no political experience, he failed to project much leadership.

The Republican victor, Jim Barnett of Emporia, grasped the ring, but not so far the essentials of chasing an incumbent from office.

You have to give voters some reason to change. If the incumbent is unpopular, then it's a little easier.

You can't just ride the bus from town to town and talk with people. You have to go on the attack.

Of course, it's hardly a fair race this year. The governor has millions piled up in her campaign account, more than all three Republicans raised. With the current level of excitement, Sen. Barnett is not liable to raise half as much as she has.

Last winter, the GOP candidate did try to stake out a position as a leader on settling the school issue. He proposed his own plan, but since he's not in the leadership, or even in fellowship with them, it went nowhere.

Now the governor — who kept a low profile during the school debate and lawsuit — is suddenly claiming credit for "solving" the school issue. One television spot shows her "driving the bus."

Everyone agrees it's a reach, but her image is unsullied by the battle and she's ready to take credit for the resolution. Such is politics.

And the reality of politics is another four years of Kathleen Sebelius as governor, unless she happens to hitch her star to the Democratic ticket and wind up as somebody's vice president.

There are no dim prospects in the governor's future, at least not in the short run.

From this perspective, though, it's unlikely anything will change by November. Sebelius it is.

— Steve Haynes

Thumbs Up to . . .

√**Dr. Todd Zerger**, eye'm glad you chose Norton. (e-mail from a patient)

√**Frank Kaiser**, you are a real "pro" when it comes to picking football winners! (e-mail from a fellow guesser)

√**Jerry Sloan**, for picking, sharing, and even delivering elderberries to his friends. (e-mail)

√**Erma, Rita, Gladys, Mable and Eleanor**, for the work you have done to make the American Legion Thursday night a success and helping the younger ones learn the ropes. (e-mail)

√**The Norton County FSA office staff**, for all that you do for the agricultural producers in Norton County. Your job is endless but we appreciate the extra steps you take to help us. (e-mail)

√**Laura Brooks, Darla Ellis, Donna Foley, Janis Monier, Kelli Perez, Kelly Hill, Marvin Matchett, Mike Haresnape and Patty Rowh**, newest members of the Leadership Norton County class. (e-mail)

√**To that special group** of morning coffee drinkers who always greet everyone with a smile and cheery "Good Morning!" (e-mail)

(To submit a name or names, simply e-mail tomd@nwkansas.com, call 877-6908, mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton 67654, drop by the office or fax 877-3732. This column is open to ALL who read The Telegram. Thanks!)



'Gauge not a season by one game'

I seldom venture into sports in this column, but I think the Norton Blue Jays, despite the loss to Smith Center to open the new football season, gave the fans reason for optimism as the season moves along. An old friend of mine once said, "Gauge not the season by one game." Although the Jays suffered a loss, they were in the game and held the highly-ranked visitors' feet to the fire.

Coach Lucas Melvin, his assistants and all those guys on the field and on the sidelines will give the fans a lot to cheer about — at home and on the road — before this season is over. I would suspect Friday's game at WaKeeney will draw a big following. Trego lost to Ellis last Friday, 27-13. Good luck to you.

-td

This is always my favorite time of year. Anxiously awaiting the arrival of fall (which it is beginning to feel like early mornings), high school and college sports, the NFL. Gotta love it! In the small college ranks, I'm a Fort Hays State University Tiger fan, on the bigger stage I cheer for the Kansas State Wildcats and on the major circuit I've been a Denver Broncos fan and have been for more years than I care to count.

I know you have your favorites, too, so be loyal and cheer them on as the leaves fall, the temperatures chill and the indoors begin to replace the outdoors.

Good Evening Norton Tom Dreiling



-td

Well, I see where the television cameras worldwide are now showing pictures nearly nonstop of the Tom Cruise and what's her name's baby. I couldn't care less. So, enough of that.

-td

Katie Couric is now in the evening news anchor's chair at CBS, Charlie Gibson is well settled in the same position at ABC and the "Good Morning America" show isn't the same anymore. I like to get in on some of the phone calls to C-Span's "Washington Journal." Some of the callers preface their remarks with, "Thank God for C-Span." That comment really escapes me. I thank Him for a lot of things, but C-Span doesn't appear anywhere on my list.

I've also had no luck getting a call into that show, and believe me I've tried.

-td

Again, and we cannot say this enough, but if someone calls on the phone and wants your bank account number and so-

cial security number, hang up! Don't hesitate, because that's exactly what these scammers want. That way they will (and sadly often do), lure the unexpected into revealing those two very important numbers. Once they have those numbers in their possession, Nellie bar the door! You've been had. And that's sad. Authorities continue to urge potential victims to simply hang up the phone. Keep this theme ringing in the ears of the elderly in your family..

-td

"Good Morning America" kicked off its news report Thursday telling us that Paris Hilton was arrested for drunken driving. That was its lead news story! News? Just another spoiled brat from one of the nation's richest families doing her thing. I was sort of wondering about the Iranian situation, terrorism in general and what was happening on Capitol Hill. But what did ABC-TV give me? Paris Hilton! Another thumbs down.

-td

On the positive side, isn't it nice to be living in Norton, or any of those other special places in what we call Northwest Kansas? You bet! And the sign is so right, "Where the Best Begins."

-td

It's the weekend, so among your planned stops be sure it includes your favorite place to worship.

Campaigning can be deceptive

At Week's End

With the 2006 mid-term election machine now in full mode, a reader thought perhaps it would be a good time to share the following with readers of this column. It should cause some chuckles. It also gives a whole new meaning to the word "campaigning." Enjoy.

While walking down the street one day a U.S. senator is tragically hit by a truck and dies.

His soul arrives in heaven and is met by St. Peter at the entrance.

"Welcome to heaven," says St. Peter. "Before you settle in, it seems there is a problem. We seldom see a high official around these parts, you see, so we're not sure what to do with you."

"No problem, just let me in," says the man.

"Well, I'd like to, but I have orders from higher up. What we'll do is have you spend one day in hell and one in heaven. Then you can choose where to spend eternity."

"Really, I've made up my mind. I want to be in heaven," says the senator.

"I'm sorry, but we have our rules.," St. Peter replies.

And with that, St. Peter escorts him to the elevator and he goes down, down, down to hell. The doors open and he finds himself in the middle of a green golf course. In the distance is a clubhouse. Standing in front of it are all his friends

and other politicians who had worked with him.

Everyone is very happy and in evening dress. They run to greet him, shake his hand, and reminisce about the good times they had while getting rich at the expense of the people.

They play a friendly game of golf; and then dine on lobster, caviar and champagne.

Also present is the devil, who really is a very friendly guy who has a good time dancing and telling jokes. They are having such a good time that before he realizes it, it is time to go.

Everyone gives him a hearty farewell and waves while the elevator rises. Up, up, up, up it goes and the door reopens on heaven where St. Peter is waiting for him.

"Now it's time to visit heaven." St. Peter says.

So, 24 hours pass with the Senator joining a group of contented souls moving from cloud to cloud, playing the harp and singing. They have a good time. Before

he realizes it, the 24 hours have gone by and St. Peter returns.

"Well, then, you've spent a day in hell and another in heaven. Now choose your eternity."

The Senator reflects for a minute, then says, "Well, I would never have said it before, I mean heaven has been delightful, but I think I would be better off in hell."

So, St. Peter escorts him to the elevator and he goes down, down, down to hell.

The doors of the elevator open and he's in the middle of a barren land covered with waste and garbage.

He sees all his friends, dressed in rags, picking up the trash and putting it in black bags as more trash falls from above.

The devil comes over to him and puts his arm around his shoulder. "I don't understand," stammers the Senator. "Yesterday I was here and there was a golf course and clubhouse. We ate lobster and caviar, drank champagne, danced and had a great time. Now there's just a wasteland full of garbage and my friends look miserable. What happened?"

The devil looks at him, smiles and says, "Yesterday we were campaigning. Today you voted."

(If you have something to share, simply e-mail tomd@nwkansas.com, fax to 877-3732, mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton 67654, or drop it off at the office. Thanks!)

From the Mailbag:

Sonya receives special recognition

To the Editor,
I would like to say a big "Thank You" to Sonya Montgomery, who did most of the planning for the NCHS all-school reunion this past Labor Day weekend. It was a great success!

Sonya, thank you also for the added

touch of the "Welcome" street signs (Sonya and committee).

In appreciation,

Elaine Kimmel Johnson
Class of 1958
Almena

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