

Sex scandal won't figure in Nov. 7 vote

The situation created by the sudden resignation two weeks ago of Congressman Mark Foley of Florida is supposed to turn control of the government from that of Republican to Democrat on Nov. 7. That's what all the hot air blowing around the Washington political landscape would lead us to believe. The experts are practically out of breath explaining how all of this is going to play out at the election.

We all know about former Republican Rep. Mark Foley and his apparent attraction to male Capitol Hill Pages. What the experts and some overly excited Democrats are forgetting is that politics is all local. And Foley's problem shouldn't in any way, shape or form have any bearing on the outcome of the contest in the First Congressional District of Kansas.

House Speaker Dennis Hastert is the target of a lot of darts because he, and supposedly many other Republicans in leadership roles on Capitol Hill, knew Foley had this problem for quite a long time and shoved it under the rug. If all those people knew, then does it not stand to reason that there are any number of Democrats who also knew? There are no secrets back there, so why would this Foley revelation come at this point in the mid-term campaign?

We find it hard to believe that because of the Foley sex scandal that Congressman Jerry Moran of the huge First District of Kansas should be booted out of office on Nov. 7. That just isn't going to happen. Matter of fact, if there is some hesitation in the GOP ranks about retaining Speaker Hastert in that role should the Republicans maintain control of the House after the Nov. 7 vote, we would be among the first newspapers to publicly encourage Jerry Moran to seek that office.

This whole Foley fiasco smells of an October surprise, thanks, as we see it, to wannabe House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and her liberal bunch of babblers, including national chair Howard Dean. These people are so out of touch with reality that the thought of Pelosi being the next speaker should send chills down everyone's spines. There are just too many good, sensible Democrats out there to sit silently by as that wing of the Democratic Party waits to seize.

Playing into the mid-term elections won't be Foley. He's no longer a congressman. The House cannot act against him in any way. And the result of the House investigation into who knew what and when won't be known until after Nov. 7.

So, the election will probably bring out voter reaction to two issues: the Iraqi war and illegal immigration.

Please vote. And remember that the registration deadline, for those who need to do so, is 5 p.m. on Oct. 23. You can register at the following locations: Norton City Office, Almena City Office, Lenora City Office and Library, and the Norton County Clerk's Office. If you have questions as to your status, please call the county election officer at 877-5710.

—Tom Dreiling

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Governor Kathleen Sebelius, 300 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-3232

U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774; fax (202) 224-3514

U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521

U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran, 2443 Rayburn HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715; fax (202) 225-5124

State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, State Capitol Building, Room 262-E, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-7399

State Rep. John Faber, 181 W. Capitol Building, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-7500

Say it with a 'Letter to the Editor'

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

Office hours:
8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.
Phone: (785) 877-3361
Fax: (785) 877-3732
E-mail: telegram@nwkansas.com

STAFF

Tom Dreiling editor and publisher
Veronica Monier staff reporter
Dick Boyd Blue Jay sports
Carolyn Plotts society editor
Sherry Hickman bookkeeping/circulation
Vicki Henderson computer production

Nor'West Newspapers

Dick and Mary Beth Boyd
Publishers, 1970-2002
Incorporating the Norton County Champion
Marion R. Krehbiel, editor



NINA
NATIONAL NEWS PAPER ASSOCIATION



Would you like a little bear with that?

Well, I feel like the Davey Crockett of the 1950s hit song. Remember, "Born on a mountain top in Tennessee - Kilt him a b'ar when he was only three." I didn't really kill a bear, but I did eat one this weekend. Not exactly the whole bear, but it was a healthy sample of barbecued bear. And, quite tasty, too.

The head chef at the local antique car and tractor show was supplied with bear meat and prepared it, along with a roast hog, for everyone to sample. Some wouldn't get near it, and others, like myself, eagerly helped themselves.

It was a little dry, but still very good. Nothing a little barbecue sauce wouldn't cure. If all mountain men had to eat was grizzly steak, they would have fared pretty well.

Bear meat is not the most exotic meat I've ever eaten. I have tried squirrel, rabbit, rattlesnake, crawdads, buffalo, squid, shark, pheasant, quail, ostrich, turtle and worms. Worm cookies to be exact.

Kind of like Rice Krispie cookies.

Out Back Carolyn Plotts



I don't know — do worms qualify as "meat"? They are certainly a good source of protein. In fact, that was the selling feature on an investment I made, one time, into earthworm farming. We were going to supply a cheap food source to third world countries. Perhaps, it was an idea ahead of its time.

I still think small cities should consider using earthworms to dispose of their biodegradable waste. Not only would the worms eliminate the trash, but would leave a highly marketable, nutrient-rich "soil" behind.

Another by-product would be a never-

ending supply of bait.

-ob-

A drizzly rain started last night and it's still coming down this morning. Just what all the newly planted wheat needs.

This weekend I saw a field where tender, little green shoots were already emerging. It's a critical time right now. Getting enough moisture before winter's dormancy.

-ob-

We are three weeks, and counting, from our projected move-in date. Anyone else might look at the house and say, "No, way are you going to be able to live in that." But, they don't know Jim Plotts like I do. He said we will be in before pheasant season, and we will. We won't be finished — but, we'll be in it.

Then, I'll do what a "paying customer" would do. I'll make a "punch list" and we'll tackle each little finishing task as it comes up on the list.

We just celebrated our 12th anniversary. It will be a great way to get started on our next 12.

Guest Editorial: Rural America counts

By REP JERRY MORAN

In the last year, I have been all across Kansas and our great nation meeting, talking and listening to farmers. Whether at a town hall meeting in Axtell, Kansas, or chairing an agriculture subcommittee field hearing in Valdosta, Georgia, I found that farmers and ranchers share the common goal of providing the next generation the opportunity to continue the quality rural lifestyle the previous generation afforded them.

In recent weeks, attacks on our nation's farm policy have increased. These attacks come from both Democrat and Republican urban members of Congress who have seemingly lost touch with where food comes from and the importance of the agrarian lifestyle. Many members of Congress and those they represent seem not to care about farmers or the rural communities their business supports.

It is easy for them to say we should cut agriculture spending because those Congressional members do not believe they have a connection to the lives affected by agriculture policy. I care about farmers and their

families. When Congress develops farm policy, it is about the economic survival of an important component of the U.S. economy. A farm bill is not just about farmers — it is about whether we have children in our rural school systems; whether we have people to shop on small town main streets; and whether we maintain the sense of character, integrity, values and common sense that is unique to rural America.

Many seek to portray agriculture policy as wasteful, saying that American farmers should be able to compete on their own in the global marketplace. If all were equal, our farmers could compete, but the excessive tariffs and subsidies used by other countries create a significant disadvantage.

Furthermore, critics overlook the demanding regulatory burden imposed on U.S. producers believed to benefit consumer welfare. Meanwhile, we have asked our producers to compete with agricultural goods brought into the U.S. under some of the lowest tariff rates in the world.

When all this is considered as

a whole, it undermines the American farmer's ability to survive.

As Congress considers farm policy, we should not overlook opportunities to change current farm policy if there is a more effective and efficient way to deliver support. However, we must not lose sight of why we as a nation commit resources to agriculture. If we wish to maintain rural stability, we must give farmers the tools to remain profitable.

I believe that farm families and rural communities matter. Absent them, our country will be diminished. If Americans are not allowed to earn a living from the land and bring their sons and daughters back to farm side by side fathers, mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers, we will be different people than we are today.

This is an issue that transcends party lines and is one that should unite us, not only as Kansans, but as Americans. Preservation of the family farm means preservation of rural communities across the nation, but it is also much more — it preserves who we are as Americans.

Don't forget that Friday is 'Thumbs Up' day.