

Mother Nature still rules

We are mere nothings when Mother Nature decides to slap us around. And that was so obvious over the weekend when a winter storm dumped a couple of feet of snow, blowing snow and ice on a large area of northwest and western Kansas.

Helpless, would best describe the situation. Man and machine did their very best against staggering odds. They deserve a round of applause. You hear the word "hero" surface now and then when people go beyond the call of duty. Our heroes, then, are the people who did and continue to do their very best to get us all back to some degree of normalcy.

Roadways and downed power lines were, and continue to be, the focal point. There is a need to get around, there is a need for heat and lights. It's a slow process but it is ongoing process.

Oldtimers say they can't remember the last time such a large area of western Kansas was beaten up so severely by a winter storm. It doesn't always happen on the scale of this last one.

Snow depths of two feet were not uncommon. And in those areas where deep snow and towering drifts were not the exception, ice was. And ice can be more of a danger than snow.

What a wild way to bring in the New Year!

There is a plus behind all of this. Moisture! The heavy snows in Colorado and the heavy snows in western Kansas certainly spell the end of the lingering drought. We probably won't see the effects until the crops emerge from winter's treatment.

For readers wondering about their *Telegram* and *Extra*, we thank you for your patience and understanding. We sided with caution when decisions were made not to put a driver out on the treacherous roadways. And then when it was a "go", we worried until his return.

The winter storm on the last weekend of 2006 will go down as a record breaker in a wide area of northwest Kansas. Here in Norton we escaped with just a few inches, but ice caused us much grief, too.

Mother Nature, charming, for the most part, can also become upset. We wonder what put her into that mindset this past weekend. Whatever it was, she got our attention.

Happy New Year!

—Tom Dreiling

Let's make resolutions succeed

At the beginning of a new year, about half of Americans make resolutions to change something for the better in their lives, including losing weight, quitting smoking and saving money. Most people say they also need to improve their lives in more specific areas such as family relationships, self-esteem, volunteer work and community involvement, supportive friendships, physical appearance (other than weight), career and education.

Most people are very serious about changing and improving areas of their lives, yet few get really serious about accomplishing their goals. One of the primary reasons is that they don't have a good plan in place, which then results in procrastinating and a lack of follow-through. Another important component of achieving personal goals is the need for social support. People who have friends, family or a support group and work at this together tend to be more successful. The following are suggestions in regards to accomplishing resolutions:

- Get serious about your own personal goals; write them down and set yourself a time-line to meet, whether it is one month, one year, or five.
- Have a support system of family,

Health

Perspectives

By KAREN SCHUELER

friends and/or co-workers, and get together to set goals and plan how to achieve those.

• Get busy! Use a daily planner or calendar to identify specific dates and times to begin and the task you want to accomplish.

• Celebrate even the small successes. People tend to focus on the negatives that are more obvious, but this can cause discouragement and lack of motivation. Instead, give yourself credit for any effort and keep the momentum going.

The process of setting goals and sticking to them can become a personal growth experience, whether it is joining a health club, enrolling in a college class, or learning more about your personal home computer.

Long term, positive results are often the reward, along with a great deal of personal self-satisfaction.

This column came from the High Plains Mental Health Center at Hays.

FIRST CAME THE WINDS,
THEN FREEZING RAIN.
SNOW BROKE THE TREE LIMBS
AND DARKNESS REMAINED.

OUR ELECTRICITY WAS DOWN.
THE KANSAS LANDSCAPE WAS DARK,
WHEN THE KIDS STARTED SHOUTING
AND THE DOG GAVE A BARK.

THERE, DOWN THE ROAD,
FOR NEARLY AN HOUR,
ON A POLE STOOD A LINEMAN
RESTORING OUR POWER.

HE REACHED UP WITH HIS HOTSTICK,
A SWITCH WAS HIS MARK,
AND SLAMMED CLOSE THE FUSE
WITH A SMALL, BRIGHT SPARK.

GOD SAID "LET THERE BE LIGHT."
OF THIS THERE'S NO DOUBT.
BUT THEN HE SURELY CREATED LINEMEN
TO TURN ON WHAT GOES OUT.

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THE MANHATTAN MERCURY



We've watched many state funerals

We watched the funeral of President Gerald Ford today.

He struck me as an unassuming man, and, by all reports, as a genuinely nice man. The measure of a man can be found, largely, in the character of his children. President Ford would have been proud of the dignity, composure and kindness his children showed at his funeral.

They were not there to remember the president of the country, but, rather, to remember their father.

Jim and I began to list all the state funerals of presidents we have witnessed in our lifetimes. It's getting to be a pretty long list. Neither of us can remember President Harry S. Truman's funeral, but I remember living in Topeka and watching the televised funeral of President

Out Back

Carolyn Plotts



Dwight D. Eisenhower. Whether you agree or disagree with the political views of a president, you must still respect the office of the presidency.

The big news here, is the weather. This could have been a deadly storm. It was that cold and that dangerous. Thankfully, authorities closed roads and kept travelers from getting stranded. We were out in it

more than we should have been, perhaps.

But, on New Year's Day, we exerted no more energy than what it took to go from bed to the recliner and back to bed again. We, both, literally slept the day away. When we said good morning today, I told Jim, "I hope today is more productive than yesterday was."

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But, here we come, ready or not, into another year. We don't know what lies ahead. If we did, we might not have the strength to go on. Today, we have the benefit of being able to look back. There were some bad things that happened in 2006. And, some wonderful things, too.

This next year will be the same. Good and bad. That's life.

Each year Christmas, card pile grows

I got the last of my Christmas cards mailed on Friday. Hey, just because some of them were going to Washington state doesn't mean they were late. If they're mailed before Dec. 25, I got them out on time.

We send out a lot of cards. We send cards to our relatives; friends from Kansas City days; friends from Creede and Monte Vista, Colo.; friends from Colorado Press, Kansas Press, Missouri Press, Nebraska Press and the National Newspaper Association. This year, we also sent out cards to all the people who joined us to ride the nuclear submarine USS Nebraska.

That's a lot of cards, and it took me three weeks to get them all done, working mornings before work and evenings after supper.

I didn't have any problems with cards. I always buy mine the week after Christmas and store them in a cubby of the cabinet in the living room. I get them cheap and send them out by the score.

But over the years, I've started to develop a case of Christmas Card envy —

Open Season

Cynthia Haynes



an insidious and difficult-to-treat malady.

As our circle of friends expands from going to national meetings, we've started getting "statey" cards.

Friends in Texas send us a card with Santa and his sleigh going across the full moon. The moon is surrounded by stars in the shape of Texas. At the bottom of the card, a longhorn steer and an armadillo with a jackrabbit on his back watch the jolly old man and his team.

From Arizona came a card featuring a cactus decorated with lights and ornaments surrounded by a rattlesnake, quail, an armadillo, a cottontail, a mountain lion and a roadrunner — and, I swear, a wild pig playing guitars. More cactus and yucas are in the background.

From our favorite Missouri fan came a card with a tiger in the snow — simple but elegant.

I do think that our Louisiana friends have them all beat, however.

They are Louisiana State fans and their card shows Santa's sleigh being pulled by alligators and led by one with a red nose. Santa has a tiger with a football and crawdad on its tail in the sleigh with him and he's circling a football stadium, where the marching band has spelled out LSU. The fans in the stands have spelled out Merry Christmas and "Geaux Tigers."

My cards have wise men, nativity scenes and Santas on them.

I'm not saying they don't make them, but I've never seen a really fun "Kansasy" card.

Steve and I decided we needed cards with a Santa's sleigh pulled by buffalo on top of a tornado coming over a field of sunflowers and wheat.

Well, maybe I'll stick with the wise men, nativity and Santa. They're not too memorable, but they're all on sale this week.

Andbe Home quality of care not compromised

To The *Telegram* Editor,
I feel compelled to respond to Mrs. Winder's letter concerning the Andbe Home. She has a valid concern about the apartments being constructed. I personally feel there is a greater need for a complete special care unit for dementia and Alzheimer's residents.

But because my mother suffers from this disease I have a very personal reason. But it was not my decision and we have to trust the board's reasons for their actions.

My greatest need to respond to her letter was the reference to resident care suffering from the lack of administration. I have worked part time at the Andbe Home as a CNA/CMA for the past four years.

I also worked under Wilma (Winder) when I first moved to Norton 30 some years ago. The Andbe Home was a wonderful facility then and remains one to this day!

The soul of the Andbe Home is the residents, but the heart that keeps it going are all of the caring hands-on staff. Even though we are concerned about the current lack of administration, the house-keeping, dietary, office, activities, main-

LETTER

tenance staff and, especially the nurses at the Andbe Home, are quality caring individuals who have always put resident care above all else.

Yes, the administration situation has been stressful for all employees. But I want to assure all of Norton that I am proud to be a part of such a clean, caring facility. So much so, in fact, that my mother now resides at the Andbe Home. I would never put my mother in a facility that I did not trust. The staff gives her the kind of mental and physical care I demand.

I have put my full trust in those at the Andbe Home for her care. I do so without hesitation and great faith in all those who work with her. So please, Norton, know for a fact from an employee and family member of a resident that every resident is treated as if they were our own family.

We rejoice in their improvement, laugh with them, and cry for them when one of

our residents passes. We are a family — employees and residents together — you cannot separate the two. Be assured that our family is stronger than ever and determined to continue the Andbe Home tradition of quality care.

You elected the Andbe Home board of directors. Please do question the board's decisions! They will encourage your questions and answer your concerns. Encourage them, pray for them to make an informed, educated choice as they search for the kind of administrator and director of nursing that will carry on the tradition of excellent care that was started years ago by Bessie Bieber and then Mrs. Winder.

Also encourage and be thankful for those of us who still carry on the cheerful everyday care of your family members and friends. Be reassured, Norton!

The quality of care has not been compromised by lack of administration at the Andbe Home. The soul and heart are alive and doing great!

Sincerely,

Wendy Sloan
CNA/CMA
Norton

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