

### Stimulus package sounds good, but...

What Congress is considering can bring a whole new twist to the presidential candidate campaigns and another level of frustration and confusion for voters. While America was out Christmas shopping, the people with the fancy calculators and equations were punching in numbers and the result they were getting was the country is headed for a recession in 2008.

Congress, which has a joined-at-the-hip relationship with those mathematicians, has since tried to figure out how to either avoid, or limit, the impact a recession will have. (Remember, it's an election year. Great opportunity for somebody to come up with a razzle-dazzle, voter-appealing answer.)

Sure, there are lots of suggestions on the table, but one that appears to be attached to the table is offering tax rebates from \$300 to \$600. No, it's not a done deal, yet. Government has paid back before, most recently in 2001, right after the Bush Administration got started, the last time America was in a recession, according to the economic eggheads.

The \$600 check solution sounds (and looks) good on paper. But that's as far as it goes. America has mastered the possibilities with its economy. Credit card companies, like Discover and American Express, are doing well. No, not the banks behind the names, the companies that actually produce the cards. America's consumer spending via credit is rampant. Cards are all over the place and are being used all over the place. Also, we Americans are spending more than we are earning. Very scary.

How much will \$600 go for each American? That could be the total monthly payment for some Americans and their credit cards.

The recession fear may put a twist on all the presidential candidate campaigns. Most of the campaigns and debates have been based on the Iraq War. Health care and immigration have been mentioned. Smart economic plans have not had the attention they deserve.

If Congress and the candidates want to make Americans happy and a little more proud of their bank accounts, create jobs for them. Make the American worker happy, not just the American stockholders. Create tax incentives for companies to stay in the States. Don't let the companies blow a raspberry at American tax laws after they send those jobs overseas. America needs productive jobs; building more than Big Macs and Whoppers.

That may mean the party or candidate will lose the big donation from Acme Corporation.

But that also may be enough for American families to not rely on or abuse a credit card, which partially led to our economic woes in the first place.

What's more important?

— John Van Nostrand is publisher of the Colby Free Press

### Your turn

## Norton Andbe Home a great place

To The Editor,

This is a positive reply to some of the negative articles on the Opinion Page of *The Telegram* about the Andbe Home.

The family of Levina Ingram would like to extend their sincerest appreciation to the nursing staff and the administration of the Norton Andbe Home. The decision to move our mother to a nursing home was one of the most difficult decisions we have had to make.

Our mother was failing right before our eyes, she was not eating properly, had become very weak and needed a walker to help her feel secure, not to mention how lonely she felt.

Once the final decision was made, both my brother and I were steeling ourselves for the very worst. We had many long sleepless nights. I made a trip from Colorado to "check" out the "home" and give my approval.

Joyce took time out of her busy schedule for us on numerous occasions to answer

questions, give an encouraging word, and sometimes just a hug or a pat!

When moving day came, we all felt pretty low. We arrived early and were met with smiles and kind words. We were invited to stay for dinner and were served an excellent meal.

By the end of the evening, Mom was feeling better, by the end of the week she had new friends, had played cards, bingo, is exercising with the determination to lose that walker and was calling this home and so glad she made the choice to move.

I know that I speak on behalf of the 42 members of our extended family. Words are just not enough to express our feelings of gratitude at having our mother, grandmother and great gram back!

Sincerely,

Pam and Ken Martin  
Gordon and Twila Ingram  
Gloria and Dick McChesney  
Duane and Ceil Ingram

### Thumbs Up . . .

To... **Doug Gallentine**, for helping a family that needed help badly. "Goodness of heart" is still alive and well. (called in)

To... **Beatrice Hickert**, fondly referred to as "Tucky," on your 80th birthday on Tuesday, Feb. 5. (e-mail)

To... **Edwin & Edward Johnson**, winners of the *First Calf of the Year* contest. In their case, it was "first calves" as twins resulted. (Story details and photos were in the Jan. 29 issue of *The Telegram*.)

(To submit a name or names, please e-mail tom.d@nwkansas.com, fax 877-3732, call 877-3361 or 877-6908, mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton 67654, or drop by the office. Thanks for your continuing input. - td)

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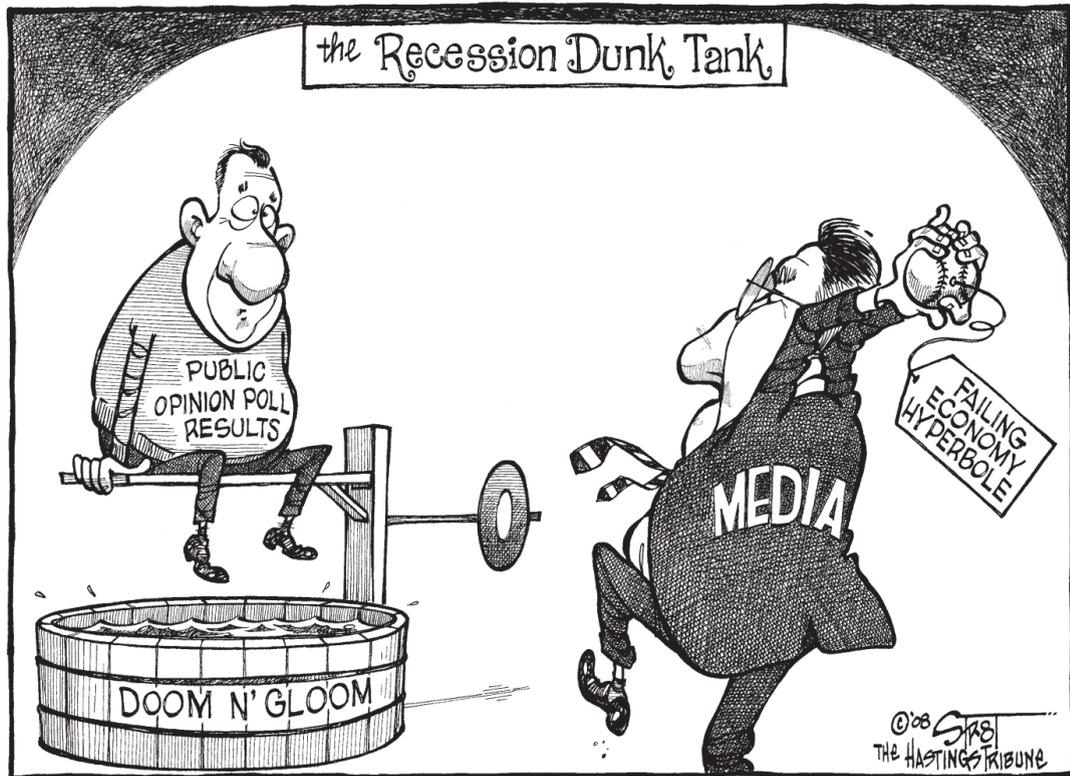
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## Politics aside, let's see what Phil tells us

Monday, President Bush gave his final State of the Union Address. Tuesday, Florida held its hotly-contested Republican presidential primary. Wednesday, the Republican Party presidential candidates debated. Thursday, the Democratic Party presidential candidates debated.

And now, breathlessly, we await Saturday, a day the entire nation will be given a significant result. You see, Saturday, Feb. 2, the most famous groundhog of all tells us whether winter's about ready to bite the dust (or snow), or if we will have six more weeks of winter. If Punxsutawney Phil sees his shadow, there will be six more weeks of winter, if he doesn't, spring is just around the corner. Keep in mind that more times than not he sees his shadow.

Punxsutawney Phil did his thing in secret until the mid-1960's, when he became a national media star. And each Feb. 2 since then, literally thousands upon thousands of people travel to Gobbler's Knob, described as a wooded knoll near Punxsutawney, Pa., to see Phil come out of his warm burrow and give his forecast. He generally does this around 7:30 a.m. (Eastern Time), which is 6:30 a.m. our time.

It's important to note that Punxsutawney Phil started his career in weather forecasting back in the 1880's. I'm not sure how many Phils there have been over the years, but rest assured we won't run out of them. There's always a Phil to fill the vacancy.

Come on, Phil, make this one of those rare times when you don't see your shadow.

Prove the polls wrong!

-td-

Ash Wednesday, which ushers in the season of Lent, is just days away — Feb. 6. That means Easter will be March 23, earlier than last year's April 8. Some religions encourage fasting and penitence during this period of time. I well remember giving up something I didn't think I could ever give up — but did and to this day I have not gone back to it. That was smoking. The evening before Ash

Good Evening Norton Tom Dreiling



issues, not on anything else. Simply name recognition. Most important, however, was the fact she and Sen. Obama each got ZERO delegates. Clinton's 50-33 percent win comes on the heels of a tremendous loss she suffered in South Carolina last week where she received only 27 percent of the vote vs. Obama's 55 percent. As it now stands, each of them won two states: Obama in Iowa and South Carolina, and Clinton in New Hampshire and Nevada. Florida didn't count. And, incidentally, Mr. Edwards dropped out of the race on Wednesday. So it's now a two-person battle.

-td-

I suppose you've noticed the two new words in the political arena this election year: "Going forward." They replace words such as "upcoming" or "future" or "down the road."

-td-

Talk about shooting one's self in the foot! Former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani did just that. For a smart guy, he certainly took some bad advice to ignore the early primary and caucus states and put all his eggs in the Florida basket. His showing in Florida — where he spent all of his time — was nothing short of disastrous. It knocked him out of the race. And at the outset of this presidential derby, he and Sen. Clinton were favored to battle it out for the White House at the Nov. 4 election. My, how events can turn.

-td-

A highway patrolman pulled over a car containing five elderly ladies traveling 36 miles per hour. He told the driver she was going too slow, she was a hazard and he would have to ticket her. She told the officer she was driving the speed limit as posted along the highway. The trooper told her those signs meant she was on Hwy. 36. "Oh," she said, "then I guess I was traveling way too fast on Hwy. 183."

-td-

Have a good evening. And there's no need to speed to the church of your choice this weekend. Just give yourself plenty of time.

## It's just too early to be 'accepting' bugs

We had a brief reprieve from winter. As per usual I failed to appreciate it until driving to town in a blizzard the following day! We listen to the weather and we knew the "sweater" weather was to be short lived. As we prepared for bed on the eve of the latest cold front, the hubby observed the temperature (39 degrees). He was counting on it to be freezing in the morning so he could get his chores done with out fighting the mud.

Be careful what you wish for!

We had seen several signs of spring during the warm spell. The melting ice and snow revealed tender green blades of wheat. We worried a cold spell would be a terrible shock without the insulating blanket of snow.

Again be careful what you wish for. Mother Nature thoughtfully provided us with a little more snow and winds of such a gale force, it was surprising any of it stayed put. It did fill the drill furrows up nicely, though.

The geese had been testing their wings, flying further and further from their winter nesting grounds. I love hearing the

Back Home Nancy Hagman



a circular pattern across the road. Fortunately I slowed down in time to realize the critter had a couple of white stripes down its back. I had to completely stop and wait for him to decide which way he wanted to go. Do skunks hibernate? He appeared to have just awoken from a deep sleep and did not know which way to go.

I do not like skunks any more than I do birds on my porch, but I hope for his sake he burrowed back down in his little den. I'm sure God had something in mind for all his creatures, so many things are just beyond my understanding.

Ground hogs are supposed to be the official forecaster of winter's length. Ground Hog Day is Feb. 2. I'm wondering if a skunk seeing its shadow on Jan. 28 might have some significance!

Six more weeks of winter? I'm not crazy about the cold. But if we had many more warm days I would have run out of excuses for not putting the Christmas decorations in the attic. Being just a tad lazy I'm thinking the cold might not be such a bad thing.

My concern for the honeybees aside, I'm not ready for bugs just yet!