

Central Park doesn't have everything

A New Yorker decided he wanted to get a different take on the country, so he packed up a bunch of stuff, loaded it in his Rolls Royce and headed out. Central Park is fine, but it can become a bore for someone who has been locked in the big city too long and is out of touch with the rest of us.

Good Evening Norton
Tom Dreiling



While driving to nowhere in particular, the name Nebraska came to mind. So he pointed his Rolls Royce in that direction. Arriving there, he decided to bypass the cities, large and small, and drive around in the wilderness, off the beaten path. While doing so he came upon "the tiniest cabin" he'd ever seen.

Intrigued, he went up and knocked on the door. "Anybody home?" he asked.

"Yep," came a kid's voice through the door.

"Is your father there?" he asked.

"Pa? Nope, he left before Ma came in," said the kid.

"Well, then, is your mother here?"

"No, she left before I got here," the youngster said.

"Gosh," said the city slicker, "are you never together as a family?"

"Sure, but not here," said the kid through the door.

"Why?" inquired the New Yorker.

"Because," said the kid, "this is the outhouse!"

Apparently Central Park doesn't have one of those 'tiny cabins'!

Two down, one to go. I'm talking about presidential debates. Wednesday of next week will be the last face-off between Sen. Barack Obama and Sen. John McCain before we vote Nov. 4. Tuesday's debate of this week was interesting, using a town hall-type format — supposedly Sen. McCain's favorite way of addressing crowds. It lacked the familiar town hall setting, whereby hands are raised and a roving microphone taken to the seats of questioners. In this debate, questions were written down prior to the debate and moderator Tom Brokaw selected the ones to be used. I felt Mr. Brokaw's involvement was a distraction. And if the moderator had used his authority in controlling the time for each candidate, I think we might have had more questions. I'm always skeptical when a moderator is the only person who determines questions asked, which was the case in the three debates to date — including the vice presidential showdown. But they say without these controls, the debates could get out of hand. At least they wouldn't be so boring.

They tell me the roundest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumberfence. He probably acquired his size from too much pi.

True: A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Lino-leum Blownapart.

Duh?! I wondered why the baseball kept getting bigger. Then it hit me.

I need to thank all of you who took part in our straw poll over the past several weeks. I had hoped for at least 150 respondents and it exceeded that. You can still vote through the weekend, with Sunday the cutoff date. And because the office is closed Saturday and Sunday, feel free to call me at home at (785) 874-4394 or e-mail me at tom.d@nwkansas.com. Again, thanks for participating. And remember to vote!

I keep hearing these misguided statements asking the question, "Who is Barack Obama?" Sometimes I hear statements using his full name with emphasis on his middle name, Barack HUSSEIN Obama. So, what's in a name?

I bring this up because I have Eichman blood in me. My mother was an Eichman and her ancestors came from Germany. Many of the older folks reading this will recall a jerk by the name of Adolf Eichmann who was responsible for the demise of millions of Jews in WWII death camps. That killer spelled his name with two n's — which doesn't change the pronunciation.

So, if I decided to run for public office and the scumbags in our political system did research and found I have Eichman blood in me, I guess I would be under the scope just like Barack HUSSEIN Obama is.

"What's in a name?" I guess the answer to that would be it depends on who is trying to muddy it up.

Have a good evening! And this weekend when you attend the place of worship of your choice, keep in mind that God doesn't give a hoot about your name.



'Agree to disagree' is a gift of friendship

As you have heard me say before, the decision to "agree to disagree" is one of the greatest gifts of friendship. I remember when one of our children informed me we couldn't be friends with a certain couple.

I asked, "Why?"

The young teen replied, "They're Republican."

My response? "So are Pam and Dan," (our best friends from Reno).

Needless to say the teenager was sure I was wrong. But it brought to mind a variety of things. Somehow this child felt friendship could only happen if you had similar ideologies, which according to Webster is "a systematic body of concepts particularly about human life or culture." With this couple we talk politics, religion, everything and although we differ in the path we agree on the destination.

A young person told me the other day they needed to change a class because they didn't agree with the professor. Or the young woman who told me she wanted to let her friends know she didn't appreciate

Phase II
Mary Kay Woodyard



their right wing emails, but she was afraid she would lose their friendship. How sad when friendship can't withstand honesty.

There is no better way to dissect one's beliefs and justify them both to ourselves and to others than questioning each other on the whys and the how comes of our beliefs. I always have to wonder if those who can't agree to disagree aren't basically fearful of their own beliefs. Perhaps they can't justify them to themselves any better than they can to someone else.

It seems to me when people are attacked for their beliefs the attacker does not understand (a John McCain phrase) the meaning of democracy. Cambridge On-

line Dictionary defines democracy "as the belief in freedom and equality between people." The very heart of equality is a clear cut respect of one another.

In today's campaign we are subjected to outright rudeness even on the part of the candidates, let alone their supporters. When one candidate cannot shake hands or look the other in the eye it clearly shows the lack of respect for democracy in general for themselves in particular. When a VP hopeful will listen to a room full of constituents chant "kill him" and do nothing we have become the enemy. No longer can we put down Islam for their radical views. We are far from Jesus' teachings.

Our country has endured over two centuries of elections and surprisingly campaigns too. We will endure this one as well, but at what cost? I keep reminding myself of the quote once heard on the History Channel, "Our nation was conceived by geniuses to be run by idiots." Welcome to America.

(mkwoodyard@ruraltel.net)

Your Turn

Maybe I could have said something back then

To the residents of Norton,

My name is Lucas Maddy and I want to thank the Norton Community. I was raised on a farm west of Norton, attended Eisenhower Elementary, and graduated from Norton Community High School.

When I was in elementary school, the librarian noticed my love of reading and gave me books that were about to be discarded due to wear.

As a teenager, one of my baseball coaches spent hours of one-on-one time with me, helping me hone my swing and batting eye by tossing pinto beans into the air for me to hit. Garrett Beydler taught me that if I thought something would be all right by him, God, and my parents, then I should always go for it.

I spent hours in Lary Stull's office talking about my future, the community, and listening to his advice. I have been greatly supported by this community throughout my upbringing and continuing on to my

college career at Kansas State University. I'll be graduating soon with a master's degree and have a great chance to be a success because the wonderful people in this community helped build my character and convictions.

I didn't always make the right decision, but one of my driving forces was to make Norton proud and to be proud of Norton. That incentive goes with me today and is why I am writing this letter.

When I was a 6th grader, a group of us were chosen to read to some troubled kindergartners. We met probably 5-10 times total, sometimes reading books and sometimes taking them outside to play during recess.

I don't remember much, just that my little buddy was awkward, his clothes were tattered and ill-fitting, and every once in a while he mentioned his less-than-perfect life at home. He wasn't the brightest in the class or best at sports, and

the most memorable thing about him was likely his crooked smile. Nobody took extra time for him because nobody saw much potential in him. It seems he never got off that unfortunate road he didn't choose to start his life on.

When I heard that my little buddy felt he had no choice but to take his life, I cried. Please remember Elliott Conard as you would the kid you gave books and baseball advice to. Please remember Elliott as you would the kid you helped make into a man. I'll forever be wondering if there was something I could have said 13 years ago that would have made him realize that WE ALWAYS HAVE A CHOICE.

Norton Community — thank you for the wonderful foundation you have given me with which to build my life and continue to do so for everyone you can.

Sincerely,

Lucas G. Maddy
NCHS Class of 2002

Thumbs Up

To... The Norton Telegram, a newspaper that's not afraid to show its religious side. (e-mail)

To... the 6th grade Junior Jays football team, for being 5-0 and outscoring opponents 128-0. Continued good luck. (called in)

To... all the Norton youngsters who walked to school on Wednesday. (called in)

To... those deserving firemen, on your new truck. (regular mail)

To... Beverley Bethune, Vesta Hobbs and Gil and Carol Otter, on the letters on respect for life and the election. (called in)

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

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