

Tuesday's snippets

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius has given up her state post to become Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Lt. Gov. Mark Parkinson can now officially remove the Lt. from in front of his name. Funny how Parkinson, a former state Republican Party Chairman, was able to jump ship and is now governor as a Democrat and didn't even have to run for the office! Only in America...or should I say, only in Kansas.

**Stop
Look
Listen**
Tom Dreiling



An unsigned note last week by regular mail sarcastically noted that "Kansas could finally be rid of Mrs. Sebelius (title not used) and hoped Mr. Obama (title not used) picked her to that secretary's job." Democrats alone could never elect anybody to any statewide post in Kansas, so many, many Republicans voted to keep Gov. Sebelius for two terms.

Bill O'Reilly is of the opinion that the lady who birthed 8 babies a while back should not be able to keep them. His argument was sound, but it'll be a raging debate. Glad he wasn't around when my mother brought 9 of us into this world — granted, not all at once, but the first six came pretty close.

Today they are 83-82-81-80-79 (the oldest, who died 4 years ago, would be 84). The other 3, which includes me, were our parents' "second family," coming along a few years later. And two of those are no longer with us.

Listen to those cable network analysts closely — gosh, they've got a lot of them — because they aren't saying anything. *Shallow*, is the word. They go before the cameras dressed the part, but fail miserably when sound comes out of their mouths.

The best thing on television over the weekend were replays of past Red Skelton Shows. He was a funny, funny man, and the Smoky Hills Public Television flashback brought as much laughter today as it did in his years.

Paul Harvey, who was unique in his presentation of news, died at age 90. Only he knew when and how to emphasize, and how to bring silence as listeners awaited his conclusion to something out of the ordinary. He will truly be missed.

Heavy snows in the northeast headlined some of the early morning newscasts Monday. As if that was anything new.

Dee Dee Myers, former press secretary to former President Bill Clinton, is out promoting her new book, "Why Women Should Rule the World."

Catchy title. But...

And talk show host Laura Ingraham is also promoting her latest book, "Power to the People." Her buddy Rush Limbaugh puts it up there with the best.

Got anything on your mind?
Let me know.

—Tom Dreiling



Smoking ban best left to our state's communities

During each year that I have served in the Kansas Legislature, I have considered legislation that, in my opinion, continues to erode a citizen's personal rights. A good example of that for 2009 is Senate Bill 25, the smoking ban. I have never supported smoking and I do realize the debate for and against this issue is very emotional.

Both sides realize differences in testimony and hope to convince the other. I still maintain that if it is as destructive and dangerous as non-smokers have testified, then a ban should be the direction to go. And, if that is the case, then from where would the revenue stream of money come from to replace the tobacco tax?

That is why tobacco taxes are raised in small increments, to protect the flow of tax dollars, which is then used to fund health care and other children's programs. I didn't vote against SB 25 because I was in the pocket of big tobacco, but because I am in the pocket of my constituents who sent me to Topeka. There was an exemption built into SB25 for our state-owned casinos. There is no way that I can support state level legislation that imposes regulations to local businesses that has an exception for state-owned businesses.

I believe this issue needs to be a decision made by the local communities.

Senator Steve Abrams has generously allowed me to reprint his explanation of vote against SB 25 as follows:

"Mr. President: Comments were made that indicated that those who oppose this bill don't care about the health of citizens, or are in the pocket of big tobacco. I would suggest there is another reason. Is it desirable to protect all of the state's citizens from those vices that have a negative impact on themselves or other citizens? Is smoking the only individual right that some people choose to engage in even when they know it's to their detriment and even knowing that it might have a negative impact on others around them? How about gambling, or drinking alcohol? So, the question becomes, does the force of government require every individual who enjoys a vice that is legal to then submit to having their rights subsumed within the concept of 'the state knows what is best.' Just as there are already many laws regarding cigarettes, there are many laws concerned with the use of alcohol and regulating gambling. Should we continue to try and regulate them out of existence? The state cannot, nor should it be in the

business of infringing on the rights of its citizens, even when those rights are counterproductive to good health and well being of that same citizen."

I welcome your feedback on any issues of concern. I look forward to seeing my constituents as we enter the second week of district tours.

On Saturday, March 7, our schedule is:

- 8-9:00 a.m. in St Francis at Main Street Coffee
- 9:45-10:45 a.m. in Atwood at Williams Brothers Grocery
- 11:30-1 p.m. in Oberlin at Decatur Co Courthouse, 3rd floor
- 1:45-2:45 p.m. in Norton at Town & Country Kitchen

Please feel free to contact me at any time. I can be reached by writing to:
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Senate Doings



state wrestling tourney in Hays on Saturday! (e-mail)

To... Coach Johnson and the wrestling Blue Jays, you're still the best of the best. (mail)

To Troy and Zach Bainter, wow!, how proud you made the community, how proud your family must be! (e-mail)

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

To... Ryan, Walter and McClymont for donating the parking lot next to your building to the city for public use, and also to the City of Norton for accepting the lot and refinishing it to provide convenient downtown parking. It is a great addition to downtown! (e-mail)

To... the Bainter boys, great show at the

Out Back



We're hearing the pitter-patter of little feet in our house. Actually, its the pitter-patter of size 12s belonging to Jim's son, James. James is relocating to northwest Kansas and will be staying with us as he conducts a job search.

In the meantime, he could write a book on, "How to be a Good Houseguest." We came home from our Sunday afternoon prison ministry to find the dishes washed, carpet vacuumed, and a pot roast in the crock pot. He's promised to properly install the sound system for the television and CD player. I've compiled a "To Do" list a mile long and I'm sure James will

Pitter-patter not coming from little feet at our place

earn his "keep."

I know I'm gullible but, I wish Jim wouldn't capitalize on it so gleefully. Our Sunday evening Bible study group is digging into Paul's letter to the Phillipians. We had just finished the part, in Chapter 2, where Paul writes of the serious illness of his good friend Epaphroditus.

In an aside, Jim muttered, "He drank the water at Corinth."

Aghast, I said, "Did he really?" Jim looked at me like, "I can't believe you bought that."

Later, my friend Jane, said, "Don't feel bad, Carolyn. I believed him, too."

I need to remind Jim (one more time) about the little boy who cried, "Wolf."

Now that James is here, Jim is anxious to take advantage of another pair of strong hands to help with the remodel of those last three rooms. Boxes have been flying as "stuff" is being packed up and either discarded or moved to other storage. It feels good to see the ball rolling again.

To those of you worried about our safety on our upcoming Mexico mission trip to Juarez — don't. We'll be fine and won't do anything foolish. I promise.

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

ISSN 1063-701X
215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, KS 67654

Published each Tuesday and Friday by Haynes Publishing Co., 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, Kan. 67654. Periodicals mail postage paid at Norton, Kan. 67654.
Postmaster: Send address changes to Norton Telegram, 215 S. Kansas, Norton, Kan. 67654
Official newspaper of Norton and Norton County. Member of the Kansas Press Association, National Newspaper Association, and the Nebraska Press Association

Nor'West Newspapers
Dick and Mary Beth Boyd
Publishers, 1970-2002
Incorporating the Norton County Champion
Marion R. Krehbiel, editor

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Appointment of Sebelius reflects caliber of our state

Finally a star in Kansas' crown. After the fiasco of the board of education a few years back we finally are offering something to the country which reflects the caliber of our great state. With the appointment of Governor Sebelius to the position of Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS), the eyes of the country will be upon an individual who was first able to be elected and then reelected in a solid red state. She is well aware of the challenges facing the healthcare system and individuals as

well. Given any opportunity by Congress she will bridge party lines to find compromise.

No issue in this country is as critical to each family as health care. Whether it is the young family contemplating children or the children seeking quality care for aging parents, healthcare is an issue we all face at one time or another. Not everyone owns a home or needs to be rescued by a bailout, but everyone has health issues for themselves or others sometime in his/her life.

Phase II



As HHS Secretary, Sebelius must face the difficult dilemma of finding a way to both provide quality health care and yet restrain the rising costs of this care. In addition to this is the GOP concern of too much government control. The main opposition to Sebelius' appointment will most likely come from anti-abortion conservatives. Hopefully Congress will realize her personal views of abortion can be dealt with as we hammer out healthcare issues. Let us not throw out the baby with the bathwater, pun intended.