

### Funny how the times have changed so much

I can remember when it was rare to see a woman driving a car. Or smoking. Or smoking while driving. That just wasn't in the playbook.

My, how times have changed. Now it seems rare to see a man behind the wheel. And it's also getting rare to see either gender smoking, whether in- or out- of a vehicle. (applause)

I am leading up to the days when my mother was learning how to drive, thanks to her instructor, my father. Whew!

Dad most generally used a favorite country road leading to the farm of my aunt and uncle, Adelia and Ambrose Brungardt, for the test-drive. He would pull the car to the side of the road, turn off the engine and get out, motioning to Mom to move behind the steering wheel.

After he was settled in the passenger seat next to her, he would patiently tell her to turn the ignition on. She followed his instructions carefully.

Although the start-up sometimes was bumpy, it couldn't compare with what was yet to come. When Dad was satisfied with her starting the car, he would remind her what the two pedals on the floor were for. He simply called them the "stop" and the "go" pedals.

He would then tell her to slowly move the car from the side of the road onto the road. "Easy does it," he would say. Well, his definition of "easy does it" was no where near what the result was. My brother Jim and sister Mary, passengers with me in the back seat, knew the drill: we would hold onto one another, and for good reason. Mom would tap on the "go" pedal and just as quick hit the "stop" pedal. We three kids usually ended up bumping our heads on the roof, the sides of the doors or on the floor. Ouch!

Dad would instruct Mom to try it again...and again...and again. All that time we back-seat passengers would hold onto one another knowing the end result. By the time we reached the farm, we were wore out, bumped and bruised, but more than glad to get out of the car.

I remember as though it was just yesterday, Mary asking Mom, "Why do you drive so bumpy? Daddy doesn't do that!"

The return trip from the farm back home was always under Dad's control. What a relief.

As I look back on those days, I am convinced the manufacturers of seat belts could not have devised anything that could have held us in place when Mom was at the wheel. But she turned out to be a pretty good driver, and not a smoker.

Political observation: Gov. Rick Perry, when he is using his hands and arms to help emphasize a point, looks like he is rolling the dice.

Snippets: "That Bachmann lady from Minnesota had a close call when Rep. Paul from Texas almost knocked her off her perch at the Iowa Straw Poll. ..."

"Two Texans seeking the GOP presidential nomination? Neither stands a chance."

"... Mitt Romney will give Pres. Obama one heck of a run in the general election next year. I can already see a Romney-Bachmann ticket."

"Your obesity column was right on target. I hope it was read by those who needed to get that message most. Well stated."

"I think the word 'obesity' is a bit strong. They are fat, plain and simple. And has it ever occurred to you that some of those people are fat for health reasons? Lay off the subject!"

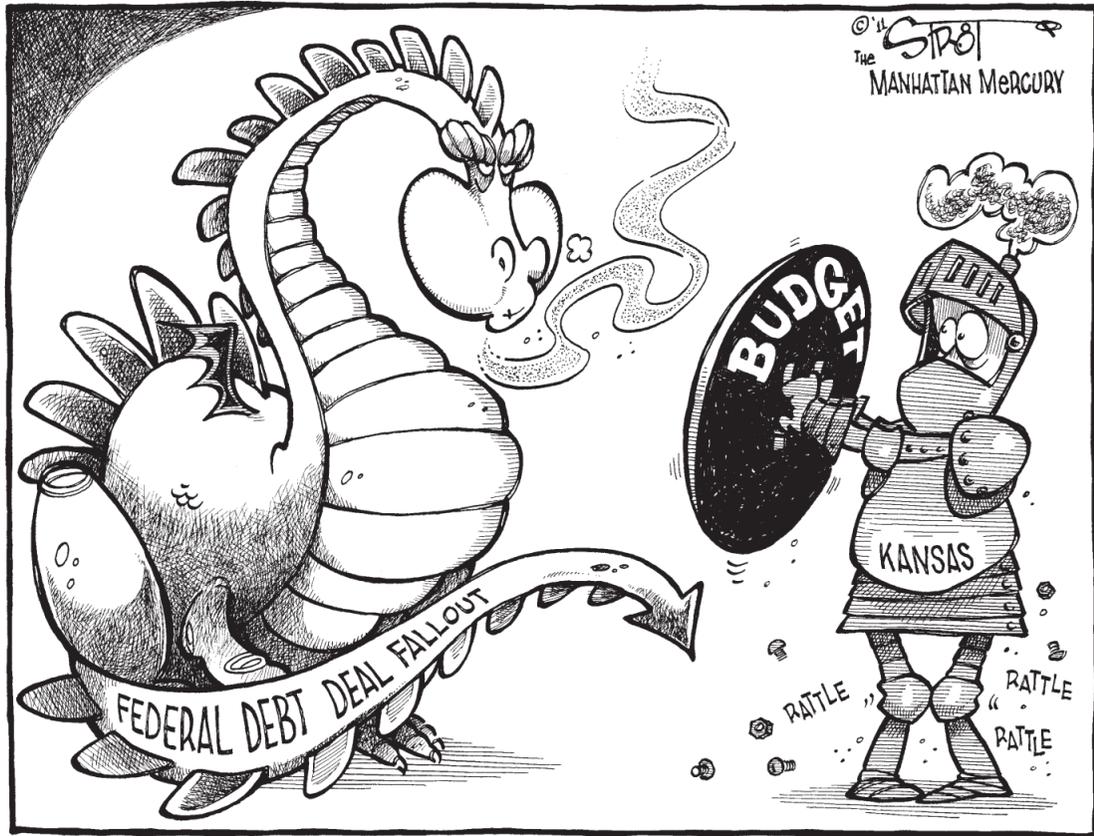
"You were raised in a totally different atmosphere. You never had fast food joints, and what's more when you grew up most moms stayed at home, but today they are forced to work to keep the family going. ..."

"We went from AAA down to Double A+. Heck, I'd settle for that grade in school!"

"Instead of raising hell, they raised the debt ceiling! What kind of stooges do we have back there in Washington! ..."

Your comments on anything that appears in your favorite newspaper coming from my computer, are always appreciated, regardless of the tone. Simply email me at milehitom@hotmail.com

### Man of the Plains Tom Dreiling



### A celebration of the union of two people

June is supposed to be the month for weddings but there have been a lot of milestone anniversaries in the paper this August. My husband says that's because August was a convenient time to marry. You lived with the parents through the summer and married right before you went back to school.

Yeah, that worked back in the dark ages! When you married while you were in college and did not live together before marriage.

A study proclaims the younger generation is more committed to marriage than any other because the divorce rate is down. Factors contributing to the improved marital success stats include couples being older at the time of first marriages and having lived together before marriage.

Whatever---I have a feeling as many relationships are failing as ever. They just are not married relationships. Couples who marry may take marriage more seriously, but there is ample evidence other relationships are quite casual indeed.

I'm particularly thinking of this because the hubby and I just got to 40 years. The kids wanted to have a party. Some people like parties (like party planner Elizabeth). Some don't (the hubby and

### This Too Shall Pass Nancy Hagman



me). But it's difficult to stop a train, or Elizabeth, once it works up a head of steam. So party we will.

There will be entertainment. I'm torn between excitement and dread. Hopefully Nacho and the Chips will perform; if Nacho makes it back from Southwestern Kansas from the scheduled C-Section birth of a grandchild the day prior.

As a music teacher, Elizabeth loves directing a show! She spent the summer assembling pictures and writing a script. She had pictures of our parents at their 40th anniversaries.

My mom grumbled as much about a 40th party as we have. She said "no one deserves it until 50." But she was ill, so we had an immediate family celebration. She did not live for 50.

The hubby's parents were more social, at least his mother is. We had a big party for them. Then his dad became ill and did

not live to celebrate their 50th.

As I looked at the pictures I commented on how both shared the same fate. We could take it as an ominous sign. Or a reason to celebrate NOW!

Seize the day and all that!!

Optimists see the glass as half full, pessimists see it as half empty. Engineers wonder why the glass was designed too large.

Why did we make 40 years? I don't think it is because we were more committed or loved each other more than those who did not.

Some might attribute it to luck. But every relationship encounters hardships.

In my estimation, optimists are romantics. Pessimists, of whom I may be one, are not. The hubby may have an engineering mindset. But luck did enter in: we are both practical.

Practical people figure out a way to fill the glass, find one the right size, or accept that everything is not a perfect fit. They deal with what they are given.

Thus it is. Our big day was August 14, 1971. But the party is Sept 4, 2:00 at First St John's Parish Hall, Kensington, Ks!

Seize the day! Come celebrate with us!

### Memories that will forever honor a brother lost

Some memories we have are firmly stamped in our minds, but others we have are based on stories told by those who witnessed the event. So it is with one of my earliest memories of my brother. I remember my mother telling me of the afternoon she decided to cut my hair. Long blonde braids shortened into curls. My brother came in and was most distressed because my long braids were gone.

I remember going to wrestling matches as a four year old. I don't remember anything about the wrestling, but I fell in love with the "hip hip hooray" girls and vowed I would one day walk or jump in their shoes.

I remember an early morning phone call announcing the arrival of my first nephew. Duaine said he was healthy and strong; a nephew closer in age to me than either my brother or my sister.

I remember sleepless nights in December as I awaited the arrival of the

### Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



California Zephyr. Knowing when morning came they would all be there and Christmas celebrations had officially begun.

There were countless trips to California for visits and fun. Then the opportunity came to move to Reno, Nevada, a mere 130 miles from my brother and his family. We attended kids' ballgames, fundraisers put on by my sister-in-law, Ward family reunions and visits in different states bringing the three of us and our families together.

Throughout the years and happenings we have drawn strength from one another, my brother, sister and me. When Daddy died we formed a circle in part to support mother, but also to strengthen ourselves. Whether it was getting together for visits, phone calls or rushing to South Dakota to be near our mother when she had surgery we were there for one another.

And then came the final hour. He knew it was coming to an end even before seeing the doctor. He was ready, but he was also sad to leave his children, grandchildren, his dear friend, Sally, and, yes, his sisters.

JoAnne is the oldest now, a position she told him she wasn't ready for, but none the less, she has become. Your life will live on in us all, Duaine, and we will love and cherish our memories forever. Thank you for being my big brother, the "best big brother". Duaine L. Foley, 1932-2011



Thumbs up to those home gardeners who share the fruits of their labor with friends and neighbors. A grateful thank you. Called in.



Dear Editor,  
How do you think our community rates on watching out for your neighbor? I am a 52 year old woman and at about 1:30 p.m. on 8-5, I decided to gas up my motorcycle and make a round through town and south out of town on Highway 283. I was turning around in the drive way at 15590 US Highway 283, approximately three and a half miles south of town and I killed the bike and it wouldn't start. Since I had left my cell phone at home I headed back to town on foot. I saw a good number of cars and trucks going both north and south; a Nex-Tech vehicle, a county truck with lights running as well as a sheriff's car. No one ever stopped to check the status of my situation. After Friday my opinion of this community is tainted. Would you like your mother, grandmother, sister or daughter out on the highway walking and no one was concerned enough to stop? It is hard for me to believe this is what it came to, even public officials who are elected to serve and protect drove right on by.  
Sharolyn Bredemeier