

Senator writes letter to the Postmaster General

Dear Postmaster General Donahoe:

Many post offices in my home state of Kansas and across the country are currently or will soon be studied for viability and profitability. Post offices serve a vital economic role in many of the communities that I represent. While the service is important to communities across our country, it is extremely important for rural residents.

If the U.S. Postal Service is attempting to discontinue services in these communities because the post offices do not make revenues in excess of expenses, my concern is with the possible violation of Section 101(b) of Title 39 of the United States Code. This section states: "The Postal Service shall provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to rural areas, communities, and small towns where post offices are not self-sustaining. No small post office shall be closed solely for operating at a deficit, it being the specific intent of the Congress that effective postal services be insured to residents of both urban and rural communities." Taking this into consideration, what is the justification for the USPS to close rural post offices?

Additionally, it is to my understanding that the Postal Regulatory Commission has found that maintaining rural post offices only amounts to 0.7 percent of the USPS's total budget. If these communities do lose access to their post office, I would like to know how the resulting savings would ultimately impact the Postal Service's financial crisis.

I sincerely recognize the situation that the Postal Service is facing, but I believe that reducing service to these communities will significantly impact rural citizens with little benefit to the Postal Service's bottom line. My constituents that will be most affected by these decisions would like answers to the questions proposed in this letter. I look forward to your prompt response.

Very truly yours,
Jerry Moran

Living in peace

My last column generated a number of responses. I'd like to write a little more about living in peace. I seriously considered finding a way to go to Darfur right after I retired to offer my skills to help the people who were being so cruelly abused. That desire quickly fell apart when I was diagnosed with breast cancer. After recuperating from my surgeries and chemotherapy, I decided I might be able to do as much right here by reaching out to other women diagnosed with breast cancer. That has become my passion.

I contact women when I learn of their diagnosis. I offer services as a Reach to Recovery volunteer. I send cards of encouragement. It doesn't matter whether they respond to me; I remember how miserable I was during chemo and how much a cheery card or short note meant to me.

I was not able to make a difference in Darfur, but I have made a point to reaching out to people I know and meet here and anywhere I may travel. I ask people how they are, and I mean what I say. Some people respond and others do not. I query others about a family member or an illness I know exists, and I am often amazed at their responses. Most people tell me in detail what is happening, and some even thank me for asking. One woman added a request

Life is Good
Rita Speer



for me to pray for a family member she had discussed. I believe these are ways to achieve peace—certainly I feel more peaceful after an encounter like that.

One thing I am working on is to remain calm and kind when other people are rude to me, talk past me or simply do not listen to what I have said. We've all been in these situations, and it is easy for me to become short or sharp with the other. That does not improve anything. Sometimes it is best for me to simply close my mouth, hear what the other person has to say and then to decide if there's any point in responding.

This all leads up to a prayer I want to share with you that exemplifies living in peace. It is the beautiful, familiar prayer of St. Francis of Assisi.

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.



Canning and school time are here again

Imagine a creepy, eerie voice saying, "Car-o-lyn. Ca-ro-lyn. Ca-ro-lyn-n-n."

That's not your imagination. That's the big box of peaches in my kitchen calling my name. They're saying, "It's time to make jam. It's time to make jam."

I was tempted not to order peaches this year. After all, I still have frozen peaches in the deep freeze from last year. But, then I thought of the disappointed look on my granddaughter, Alexandria's face if she did not find at least one jar of peach jam in her Christmas box. Alexandria is a tall, smart, blonde, beautiful 16-year old that reacts like she's six when she gets her jar of jam. I don't even mess around with the little 8-ounce jars anymore. It all gets put up in pints. It's quicker that way.

Then, every time we visit, I am handed a bag filled with something that sounds like glass "clinking" together. It is. It's all the empty jam jars going home with me for a refill.

-ob-

Speaking of Alexandria, her mother

Out Back
Carolyn Plotts



just texted us pictures of Alex and her little sister, Ani, on their first day of school. Alex is a high school junior but, this was Ani's first day of school. She looked so sweet in her little outfit with her blonde hair shining in the sun. Wish I could be a fly on the wall in that classroom.

School was okay for Ani today; we'll see if she wants to go back tomorrow.

I remember my oldest daughter, Halley's, first day of kindergarten. She looked so cute in a little white dress with a zipper up the front and matching white shorts underneath. The dress had red trim and I had a red barrette in her hair. It was the last time I ever got her to wear a dress to school. Oh, well.

Her father took off work so the whole family could walk the four blocks with her to school. As we got closer and closer to the building we could hear crying and pleas of, "Mommy. Don't leave me. Mommy. Mommy."

Our independent daughter looked at us with horror in her eyes and said, "You're not going in with me, are you?" She could handle anything as long as it didn't involve kissing her parents good-bye in front of the other kids.

-ob-

School beginning all over the country officially marks the beginning of fall. Even if the temperatures still linger around three digits. School signals a new season for sports, styles and study.

Safety should be included in that list. No matter how many times you tell them, kids don't always look both ways before crossing the street. Make sure you are looking out for them when you're driving. Keep it a safe school year.

The definition and the meaning of the family farm

Insight

John Schlageck

It seems people outside agriculture routinely try to define the family farm. In our contemporary society this means people one or two generations removed from the land live in sprawling suburbia.

Today, men and women whose great grandfathers or grandfathers worked the fields with mules and horses, progressed to tractors and are now using GPS, sit behind desks and computers serving a public they rarely, or never, see or know.

The world as we knew it a few short years ago is different today. Computers, smart phones and our entire way of communication has changed the way we live and work. Social media has replaced traditional sources of learning and made our world smaller and in some ways more constrained.

Considering these factors and many more too numerous to mention, let's take a look at the family farm. Today's contemporary farm needs to be based on owner operation. This means the rights and responsibilities of ownership are vested in an entrepreneur who

works the farm for a living.

The second key in defining the family farm system should include independence. Independence is defined as financing from within its own resources using family labor, management and intellect to build equity and cash flow that will retire the mortgage, preferably in the lifetime of the owner.

Economic dispersion is the next important step in defining what a family farm should entail. Economic dispersion would include large numbers of efficient-sized farms operating with equal access to competitive markets worldwide.

No family farm would be complete without a family core. This family-centered operation must have a family that lives its life in harmony within the workplace. All family members share responsibilities and the children learn the vocation of their parents.

The ideal family farm would be commercially diversified. Production of diversified commodities should help reduce price risks and maximize the use of farm resources to produce crops and livestock that would, in turn, provide greater self-sufficiency.

One final attribute necessary in defining today's family farm would be the acceptance and use of innovative technology. This should not only enhance farm labor but also help boost production.

Family farming carries with it a commitment to specific, independent values. These values become a part of the community and include conservation, frugality, responsibility, honesty, dignity in work, neighborliness, self-reliance and concern and care for future generations.

While it's rare indeed that one particular family farm may possess all of these attributes, together they have created a system of agriculture that has been a part of our rural culture since this nation's beginning.

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

E-mail: nortontelegram@nwkans.com

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

OFFICE HOURS:
8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mon.-Thur.
8 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Friday
Phone: (785) 877-3361
Fax: (785) 877-3732

STAFF
Dana Paxton..... General Manager
Advertising Director/
email: dpaxton@nwkans.com
Carleen Bell Managing Editor
cbell@nwkans.com
Dick Boyd Blue Jay Sports
nortontelegram@nwkans.com
Vicki Henderson..... Computer Production
Marcia Shelton Office Manager

Kansas Press Association



To our NCHS Friends
We have just learned that Duaine L. Foley has died. Duaine was a nearby neighbor when I lived in Reager, KS.

The Foley farm was two miles east of Reager and one mile north. Duaine was a great friend for so many years. During the past few years Duaine sent me many interesting emails and we often heard from him daily. A few years ago we were in Norton just before his mother, Alice Virginia (Sproul) Foley, celebrated her 100th birthday. Thank My Lucky Scars is an interesting book that Ward Foley wrote. We have many good memories of Duaine and his family.

Phil Young
Liberty, MO. 816-781-1825 NCHS 1954



Thanks to Robert Kaus and his work crew for a great job marking the streets downtown! Emailed in.