

Crime is an equal opportunity offender

Several years ago, Tom Brokaw narrated a special on violence and women. He began by announcing, at any given time, one half of our population is scared of the other half.

Some men would see this as unbelievable, but when asked, "When you hear footsteps behind you on an empty street, are you fearful?"

Most would reply, "No, they wouldn't be." For women, however, the answer is much more tenuous.

Republicans, looking for a way to attract more female voters, need to examine their stand on the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). The Senate vote of 78-22 to reauthorize the 1994 act is cited as the reason for the declining domestic violence rates. The bill is co-sponsored by Republican Mike Crapo of Idaho. Twenty-three Republican Senators, and all female senators from both parties, voted for it.

No one is suggesting male dominance equals domestic violence, but for a party wanting to attract female voters in upcoming elections the need to give an appearance of equality and concern for women is tantamount. The success of the VAWA is reflected in a 67 percent decrease in "intimate partner violence" between 1993 and 2010.

All too often, we think this is a crime of either professional athletes or drug dealers, but it is as equal opportunity as they come. It infects all socioeconomic, cultural and age communities. Perhaps you think your high school daughter wouldn't be a victim, but according to the American Medical Association Journal (2001), one in five high school girls reports being abused by a boyfriend. The Justice Department reported in 2005, three women a day are murdered by their husbands or boy friends.

The U.S. Surgeon General reported, "Domestic violence is the leading cause of injuries to women age fifteen to forty-four, more common than auto accidents, mugging, and cancer combined."

Our elected officials are husbands, sons, wives and daughters, parents, aunts and uncles. Our country will never be perfect, but we have it in our power to effect change. Mail to: mkwoodyard@ruraltel.net

Phase II
Mary Kay
Woodyard



Giving to the Adairsville victims

Giving to Adairsville
A couple of weeks ago, about 11:15 AM, our middle daughter called home. When I answered, she said hurriedly, "I don't know if you have been watching the news, but I am okay!" She sounded anything BUT okay, so I began to question her. She was at work, and her home community, Adairsville, Georgia, had been hit by a tornado. She couldn't get to her community to check on her home and her dogs, as the interstate was closed and the other highway into Adairsville was also unavailable. She works at a museum about 15 minutes away, and there were warnings there, too. With approximately 200 school children at the museum, they spent most of the time "hunkered down" in the theater.

We immediately turned the news on and saw early pictures of what happened to Adairsville. A manufacturing plant near the downtown area was leveled. One hundred employees escaped unharmed. The twister turned over cars and semis; this is why the interstate was closed. The top was torn off the water tower, much as one would remove the lid from a can of sardines. People lost their homes, their possessions,

their pets. Authorities determined this tornado, hitting in January, was a category EF-4.

Later that day we again talked to Allison, and she told us she had been able to get home. She took the secondary highway and then back roads to her house; still, she was stopped by police and required to show identification to prove she had a reason to be in Adairsville. She determined that her home, her dogs and her neighbors were all unharmed. Power lines were down, and she was without electricity; that seemed minor compared to what some people suffered.

She and I both posted updates on our facebook pages, and my friends here in Norton soon learned about the devastation. Because my husband and I have visited Allison in Adairsville a number of times, some of the places we saw on television were familiar. We wanted to help and found a reliable place to send some money. Because so many structures were unsafe, no volunteers were let in to affected areas to do physical clean-up for several days.

I was in the quilt shop one day (one of my favorite hang-outs, as quilting is

Life is
Good
Rita
Speer



one of my hobbies) and Regina Stark said there were still some quilts from last year's Jellyroll Contest; these quilts had been designated to go places of need. After visiting, Regina offered to send these quilts to Allison to be distributed to people affected by the tornado. Two boxes of quilts have left Norton, Kansas to go to people who lost so much in Adairsville, Georgia. These quilts won't rebuild houses or replace belongings, but they will communicate that there are people 1200 miles away who care about their pain.

I believe this example of caring demonstrates the very best about us as human beings and about living in a compassionate community. The next time someone says something negative about living here, counter that with a comment about the compassion and charity of this voluntary act.

Farmers seem to get more blame and less money

In my comments, last week, about the Ram commercial I did not have room to cover criticisms leveled at farmers about farm subsidies and food safety.

Why do we have a farm program? Do farmers own the land, thus have the right to do as they please, to the extent that it does not infringe on the rights of others?

Is there a larger hidden debate about the right to own? Are we guaranteed equal opportunities or the collective right to what we need? People need food; ergo the Ag Department. However one could argue with current spending of less than 15 percent of its budget on farm subsidies; the Ag Department has become the "Food Security Department."

The Federal Government needs some information about farmers, it helps them plan and regulate. You can't opt out. You can't say, "Keep your money. I'm not turning in acreage reports." So they pay for it. If they stop paying, farmers probably won't report.

Then there are allegations farmers are poisoning people with unsafe food and chemicals. Why would we kill our market?

I cannot put my hands on the story but a renowned European scientist, formerly leading the opposition, changed his mind about the dangers of genetically modified seed. He's now convinced GMO's are a better alternative than hybrids.

With gene manipulation only the trait

This Too
Shall Pass
Nancy
Hagman



(standability, drought tolerance, insect resistance, etc.) we wish to modify is changed. With hybrids an entirely new life form is created with characteristics that may prove to be undesirable.

Think of it this way, if scientists could modify the BRCA-1 gene which causes women to develop breast cancer it would be a far superior option to preventative mastectomies or bombarding the whole body to chemotherapy after cancer develops. So why wouldn't we do that?

The "Scientific American" has just put forth a theory that modern agriculture and rats are responsible for tooth decay. Once we began cultivating and storing grain; rats began transferring Streptococcus mutans, which causes cavities, into the grain. Neanderthals didn't have cavities!

Huh, does this mean vegetarians are wrong; we should stick to being carnivores?

There are many aspects to the issue. The article mentioned the role increased sugar consumption plays. Good news, we can blame that on farmers also!

It appears tooth decay is on the rise.

One contributing factor: parents give their children bottled water which is not fluoridated.

We have the world's safest water supply. What a luxury it is to live in this country. Yet we just keep creating problems with our paranoia.

Have you seen the internet video: "First World Problems" read by Third World People? "I hate when my leather seats aren't heated." "I hate when I asked for no pickles and they give me pickles." "I hate when my phone charger is downstairs"

Another internet video advertises a kit for people, who have lifestyle disabilities: those who can't cope with things like carrying overflowing groceries bags to their high rise. Included is a full glass with a lid so it would not spill. No more worries about if it is half full or half empty.

There was also a straw. When trying to win an argument it is best to be respectful of the other side, to listen carefully to what they have to say. But sometimes I want a box of straws to hand out; with this advice, "Suck it up!"

A large part of the reason we live in a first world country is modern agriculture. Safe, abundant and convenient food frees women from the kitchen, extends our lives, gives us leisure and a host of other benefits too numerous to mention.

First World Problems! Thank a farmer!

Letter to Editor,

Rose Garrison's letter in the February 1 Telegram absolutely infuriates me. If you are so "embarrassed" by the conditions of some of the properties in town, then move back to Colorado and enjoy the beautiful scenery there.

How dare someone think they are so special that they have to apologize to a "news station representative" for the condition of others' property and belongings. The state of yards, homes, vehicles, etc. really ISN'T any of your business. Rose. If it is so important to you that things look nice, then make sure your property and belongings are well-groomed and don't worry about mine or anyone else's.

In response to your comments about how certain businesses and other entities are "keeping up their appearances", well, it is much easier to do when you are getting funding from tax dollars, govt. grant programs, etc. Especially in today's economy, it is much more important to keep clothes on your family's back and food in their bellies than it is to spend money to make your yard acceptable for your neighbor's discerning eye.

As for doctors, teachers or any other potential businesses that will not consider making Norton their home because of the way a few properties look, well, I prefer they don't move to town. I want a doctor, teacher or anyone else to be concerned about me, not the appearance of my yard. If you are such a snob that you choose not to move to Norton or to start a business here because your next door neighbor has a junky old car parked in their yard, then move elsewhere. I have to figure that prospective employers aren't offering decent wages or incentives if they don't take the position because of my unkempt flower bed.

Please bear in mind as well that it is the middle of winter and not the most pleasant time to do yard work or house painting.

It is important to me to try to keep my yard as nice looking as I can, but I do it for myself and my family, not for anyone else. I've always thought if you don't like the way something looks, then look the other way. Besides, who really cares if the news station comes back to do a piece on Norton or not? We have good schools, good churches, a nice hospital and clinic and lots of other great things going for our town. I love my hometown and don't think any less of it because someone's weeds are taller than mine.

No disrespect intended but honestly, mind your OWN business.

Sincerely,
Teresa Shearer Poage



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