

OPINION

OUR VIEW

Not ready? Just say no

When is early too early?
Seems like that’s the issue causing more controversy than others this year is about when to open stores, or even start decorating for the Christmas holiday season.
Sure, many of us have not yet finalized the menu for Thanksgiving dinner, and already we’re seeing retails stores putting out the Christmas displays. But because there are six less shopping days (it’s just the way the calendar falls, similar to a later opening of deer hunting season) store owners are feeling pressure to advertise and offer their specials earlier than in past years.
Take a look at Facebook. (Or if you’re like some, skip the social networking and take our word for it.) People on both sides of the issue are angry someone dare have an opinion different than theirs.
Some people say shoppers feel pressure to start buying early when they seeing Christmas items on sale before Halloween. And some people may feel the other holidays, like Halloween and Thanksgiving, are getting

the short shrift.
But budgets during the holidays are always tight, and we certainly can understand shoppers attempting to stretch out the economic struggles over a few paychecks, instead of waiting till the end and relying on credit cards to fill in what one paycheck can’t totally absorb.
And the increasingly popular Black Friday is adding to the controversy. More and more stores say they’ll open earlier than the Friday after Thanksgiving and are now competing for the earliest opening time on the big turkey day itself. That in turn is causing concerns and possibly demonstrations by employees of those early opening stores.
But what’s the big deal? If you’re not ready for Christmas carols, don’t listen. If you don’t want to see Christmas decorations yet, don’t look.
And if you don’t buy into the need to shop early, just say no to shopping before and on Thanksgiving and wait until you are ready and truly feel the Christmas shopping spirit.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

President Obama’s war on coal

To the editor,
A cheap, reliable source of energy, electricity, is a vital part of virtually everything we buy, use or consume on a daily basis.
We residents of the Midwest rely most heavily on coal to generate our electricity while coal-fired plants account for 50 percent of all electricity. President Barack Obama was unable to get his cap and trade bill through Congress during his first term in office. To bypass both Congress and the people, the president has now issued a presidential memorandum to the Environmental Protection Agency.
The EPA must have a new set of proposed regulations for both new and existing coal plants in place by June of next year; they will become permanent a year later. The EPA proposed the capture of carbon dioxide from coal plants through the installation of new hardware that would theoretically gather and store carbon dioxide. This carbon sequestration technology does not exist outside the laboratory and its cost is believed to be crippling.
The Heritage Foundation found that implementing this technology would cost over 500,000 jobs. The proposed carbon sequestration scheme would cost a family of four \$1,400 per year and electricity rates 20 percent higher.
Paul Knappenberger of the Science and Public Policy Institute wrote, “If the U.S. as a whole stopped emitting all carbon dioxide immediately, the ultimate impact on projected goal temperatures rise would be a reduction or ‘savings’ of approximately 0.08 degrees Celsius by the year 2050 or 0.17 degrees Celsius by 2100.” This is a negligible amount of carbon reduction and negligible temperature changes. Likewise, sea level changes would be equally tiny; under a quarter inch by 2050 and three-quarters inch by 2100.
President Obama’s war on coal is ineffective public policy. In spite of enormous cost to America, it will, at best, result in insignificant climate results. Worse yet, the administration has placed this bet by gambling on the United Nations’ computer modeling that does not agree with actual observations. No temperature increases have been observed since 2000. The common sense

and affordable approach to climate policy would be for us to utilize the “all of the above approach” recommended by President Obama in his 2012 campaign speeches.
I propose that we let the coal and electric utility industries move forward with development on new innovative and cost-effective ways of burning coal in an environmentally responsible manner. They must continue developing natural gas reserves and renewable energy sources so they, too, can fill their niche in the marketplace in a reliable and cost-effective manner.
North Star Electric Cooperative is currently engaged in this war on coal. Like all of us, they want to live in a region with clean air, clean water and a sustainable environment while also producing affordable energy. In order for us to win this battle against “Big Government” and its out-of-control bureaucracy, we all need to become engaged. Go online at <http://www.action.coop/> to find out what you can do to help. Your action and help are essential to winning this war.
**Bruce Sampson
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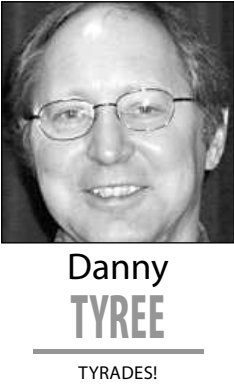
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Danny
TYREE

TYRADES!

In 1971 when Granny Tyree passed away, her belongings included a scrapbook of World War II editorial cartoons, a freezer container labeled (yum!) “strawberries” (but containing turnips!) and a little book in which she had jotted down her own poems and grandchildren’s witticisms.
One of the poems dealt with the tragic assassination of President John F. Kennedy “in Dallas town.”. Remembering that book, I relished the prospects of including Granny’s poetry in this column marking the 50th anniversary of the event.
Except that I can’t find the cursed thing! It’s lost somewhere in the last four decades’ accumulation of documents, keepsakes and treasures.
But with the “make do” resourcefulness of Granny, I’m switching gears and writing about how to get the clutter out of your own commemoration of the life and death of JFK.
Remember an idealistic era when Americans would choose to send a man to the moon “not because it’s easy but because it’s hard”? Now we clutter our lives with shortcuts, stopgap measures, stalling tactics and comfort zones.
Commemorate November 22 by committing to something bold, decisive and a little unnerving. Whether you salvage a relationship, take a survivalist excursion, stand up at an AA meeting or

write the first line of that Great American Novel, try working without a net.
JFK’s “Ich bin ein Berliner” speech has become an iconic reminder of Cold War solidarity. But too often our view of the Big Picture is cluttered by that pot hole on our own street.
November 22 is a good day to increase your daily consumption of international news, get a foreign pen pal, donate to missionary work or otherwise face the reality of being a world citizen.
Historian David Halberstam immortalized JFK’s advisers as “the best and the brightest.” Unfortunately, quite often we put our brains in neutral and clutter our day with things that are far from enriching.
No need to become an elitist snob, but November 22 would be a good time to reevaluate your reading/listening/viewing options, seek out a mentor, become a mentor, return to college or otherwise stretch

yourself intellectually.
Our lives are cluttered with transitory distractions that make life lessons or details of family lore go in one ear and out the other. You can make a small step to change that.
Even if you don’t start a full journal of your life, at least write down for your loved ones what you remember about November 22, 1963 — or what older friends and relatives passed on to you.
(My mother was spending part of her fifth wedding anniversary getting dental fillings, when Dr. Hopper’s mother called the office, distraught over the news bulletins. Me? I just remember that some sort of big funeral messed up my Saturday morning cartoons that weekend.)
After the hoopla over the JFK anniversary subsidies, our lives will again be cluttered with data about the Next Big Anniversary or the Next Hot Topic or the Next Outrageous Celebrity; but the successes and failures of the era need to remain fresh in our minds.
The JFK presidency, of course, was popularized as the “Camelot” era. In the spirit of that Broadway musical’s title song reprise, I hope your activities on November 22 will carry the theme “Don’t let it be forgot.”
Tyree’s column is distributed exclusively by Cagle Cartoons Inc. newspaper syndicate.