

OPINION

OUR VIEW

The simple things in life

Borderland has a lot to be thankful for this holiday season.

Being thankful may be more difficult for people who have lost their jobs or had their hours reduced as a result of the elimination of positions at our local paper mill. We understand that.

But look around our community; we have been blessed.

Our mill has made changes in an attempt to become more competitive and retain the nearly 600 jobs filled by our friends, family and neighbors who help to sustain the local economy. Packaging Corporation of America officials have said they want to make this mill and this community successful and are making plans toward that result.

We have received special status to provide additional benefits for those displaced by the mill job loss and we have local leaders that have come together in an attempt to fill the needs of workers and diversify the economy in an effort to be less reliant on the mill jobs.

We have not lost family, friends or property in natural disasters. We've experienced a deer season without human tragedy, and the lakes are firming to allow for ice fishing by locals and visitors.

And we have a community that comes together to generously give to those in need.

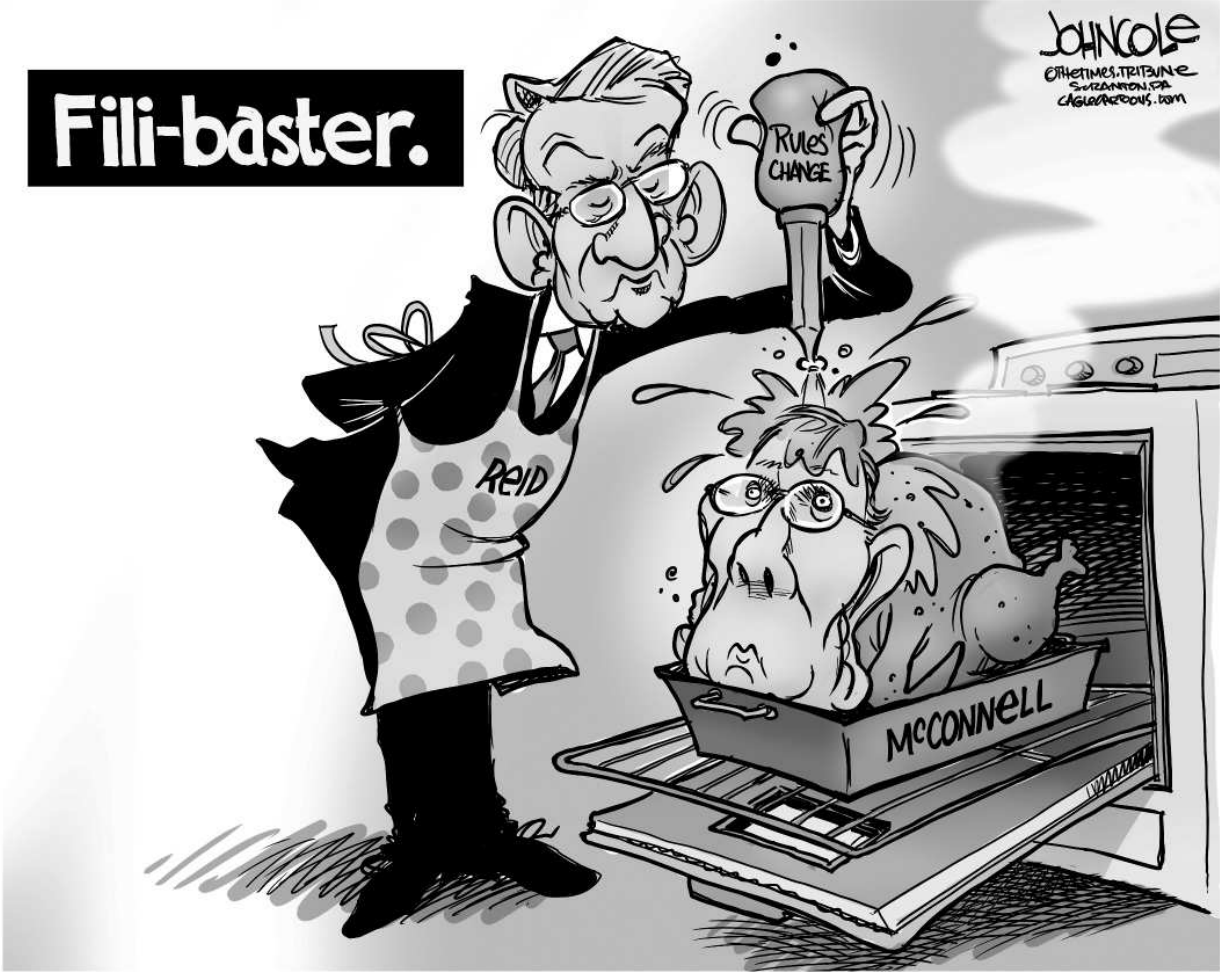
Again this year, the community is offered a way to feel thankful and give thanks in a community Thanksgiving feast Thursday at the Elks Lodge 1599. Hosted by The Salvation Army, the dinner is 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and welcomes anyone who would like to share a meal. People who cannot travel to the event can call The Salvation Army at 283-3394 or the Elk's Lodge at 283-3440 for delivery.

Following Thanksgiving is the kickoff of The Hometown Holiday Weekend with mini bonfires and hot chocolate at Centennial Park, Third Street and Third Avenue in downtown International Falls, prior to the 'Twas the Lights Before Christmas parade at 7 p.m. Friday. The day also features a pet contest at 4 p.m., caroling and wagon rides from 3:30-6:30 p.m., and an Elks Lodge 1599 sloppy joe dinner at 5:30 p.m. with Santa visits for the kids there from 5-6:30 p.m.

Saturday brings the Backus Holiday Shopping and Craft Festival from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., during which is the Servants of Shelter luncheon, with proceeds to be used by the organization to help homeless people in the community. At 10 a.m. there are free holiday movies for kids at Cine 5.

It's easy to take for granted the good things in life living in a community like ours. But it's the simple, hometown things for which we can be grateful.

Happy Thanksgiving, Borderland.



GUEST COLUMN

Thanksgiving goes to the dogs

In 2006 I came up against a holiday deadline crunch, so I turned my column over to Turpy, the beloved eight-year-old Golden Retriever/Chow mix who had turned up at our doorstep as a puppy.

Turpy provided the column that follows:

Hi! Over the river and through the woods to grandmother's house, we go? Ha! Maybe that's the way it was for Norman Rockwell's canines, but for me it's more like "through bumper to bumper traffic to the kennel."

But I shouldn't complain. I can understand my master's reluctance to have me in the way while eating turkey and watching parades. All in all, life is sweet. I have lots of things to wag my tail over this Thanksgiving. For instance...

- OPEC failed in its bid to expand into the international kibble market.
- Fleas never got involved in the big steroid scandal.
- Richard Simmons' voice? So high-pitched even dogs don't have to listen to it.
- Thanks to inflation, every dog now has his day and a half.
- Cousin Bingo (B-I-N-G-O) finally started collecting royalties from the senior citizens center.
- Just learned that Betty Crocker is planning to market Garbage Can Helper.
- Discovered it's a lot less trouble to bury calcium tablets



Danny

TYREE

TYRADES!

instead of bones.

- Blue Cross waived the \$500 deductible for checking to see if my nose is cold and wet.
- Civilization has finally progressed enough to put the whole "quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog" ethnic slur behind it.
- My mother wasn't one of those obsessive "Frisbee moms" who would embarrass me in front of the coach.
- Saved a bundle on car-chasing insurance thanks to GEICO.
- Former Soviet scientists blocked from selling "opposable thumb" technology to cats.
- The "Dog is God spelled backwards" craze died down. Now if I can keep anyone from noticing that the stain on my water dish kinda sorta resembles Mother Teresa...
- "Synchronized Rolling In Stuff" is being considered for an Olympic event.
- My poker-playing friends

survived their IRS audit.

- This year not a single tree limb got away with its nefarious plot of scraping against the side of the house at 2 a.m.
- Maybe this Christmas the guys will quit kidding around with "Jingle Bells" and bark Handel's "Messiah," like we rehearsed.
- - The election is over, so politicians can stop marking their red-state and blue-state territories. That creep who always tries to fake me out by pretending to throw the tennis ball? Diagnosed with carpal tunnel syndrome!
- Yes, it has been a pretty good year. I don't have a bone to pick with anybody — unless you count those delicious leftover turkey bones. C'mon, have a few, sit a spell, and tell me about your own Thanksgiving plans. Sit, sit. I'm not going to beg.

I wish Turpy could fill in again this year; but he passed away in January, after suffering from many ailments. I am truly thankful for the years we got to share with that sweet dog.

I am also thankful that there are ample opportunities for other people to provide a home for stray dogs.

And, unlike Turpy, I'm not too proud to beg. Do the right thing; you'll have something else to be thankful for next year.

Tyree's weekly column is distributed exclusively by Cagle Cartoons Inc. newspaper syndicate.

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WHAT OTHERS SAY

Debt keeping graduates out of grad school

Graduate school enrollment is on the decline at the University of Minnesota, Minnesota Public Radio reported last week. Over the past five years, the university's graduate enrollment has dropped by 9 percent, while the state has seen a more than 13 percent decline system-wide.

Some colleges on the Twin Cities campus have been hurting more than others. Graduate school enrollment has dipped 16 percent at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, 22 percent at the College of Biological Sciences and as much as 23 percent at the Carlson School of Management.

The drop in graduate enrollment is part of a nationwide

trend. The U.S. has seen an 11 percent drop in the number of students pursuing graduate and professional programs, according to MPR's report.

The drop is the result of a long trend of rising tuition costs as well as shrinking government funding for student positions. According to a recent survey, roughly one in five postgraduate applicants at the University of Minnesota declined an offer of admission for financial reasons.

Large debt accrued as an undergraduate can become a serious deterrent regarding the decision to go to grad school. Interest remains high _ applications are up nationally _ but graduates either can't or aren't

willing to take on more student debt. This has serious consequences for universities and the U.S. as a whole. Administrators at the University of Minnesota may have to restructure graduate programs, and the nation's talent pool will inevitably shrink if this trend continues.

The solution may be uncertain, but the cause is clear: Rising tuition prices are keeping graduates from reaching their full potential. Lawmakers at both the state and federal levels should understand that the urgency to decrease tuition costs at public universities has never been higher.

The Minnesota Daily, Nov. 19

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