"Let us all hope." by mel griffith

We have now elected a president who has never lived outside a big city, never had a real job, never done any actual work and hasn't been in Washington long enough to know how it works. His vice president has been a pampered senator for most of his adult life and knows nothing about the real world we live in. Let us all hope.

Much of this disaster is the fault of the Republican party. No, not John McCain, who is a real national hero, and certainly not Sarah Palin, the only one of the four who isn't a millionaire and the only one who knows what life is like for us ordinary folk. The fault lies with the Republicans who have been running Washington for the last eight years. Republicans took over Congress in 1994 and did some good things in spite of Bill Clinton. They balanced the budget, threw millions of lazy freeloaders off welfare and enacted NAFTA which helps business with exports and consumers with imports. Then in 2000, their golden opportunity arrived when they took control of both congress and the presidency. But like a dog chasing a car, they had no idea what to do when they caught what they were chasing.

> "The fault lies with the Republicans who have been running Washington for the last eight years."

Strangely, they showed no interest in using the opportunity to accomplish much of anything. They seemed to feel that getting elected was about all they needed to do. They did cut taxes, but didn't even make that permanent.

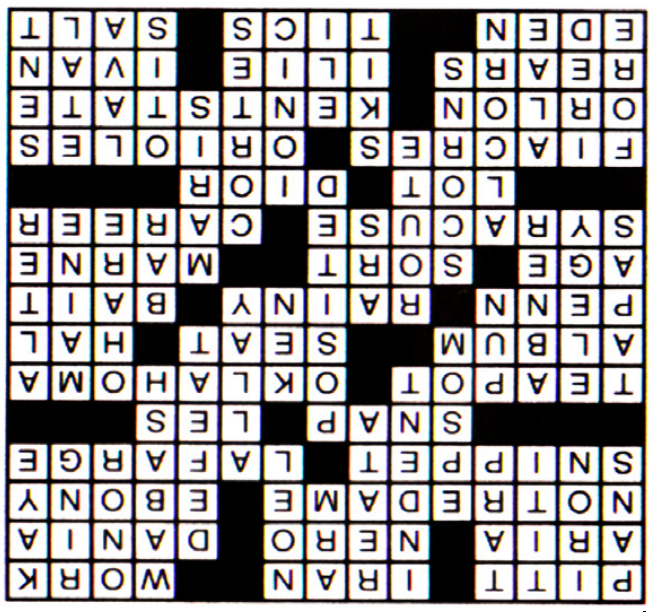
They failed to reform the absurdly complicated tax code or reform the IRS. They continued to allow environmental fanatics to destroy business with oppressive regulations and frivolous lawsuits. Allowing environmentalists to drive up costs, slow down progress and drive business overseas, is one of the main causes of the present economic collapse. They dashed into a war in Iraq with little planning and inadequate troops. Instead of keeping the budget balanced they went on a wild spending spree with lots of pork barrel giveaways for all their friends, although everyone knows that it is wrong to spend more than you have year after year and leave your grandchildren to pay the bills. They used "Homeland Security" as an excuse to pass out funds for "fighting terrorism" to a lot of places that are about as likely to have a terror attack as they are to have an invasion from Mars. They tolerated crooks, perverts and scum in their midst while giving lip service to family values.

Now the opportunity to reform government has been lost, perhaps for a generation. The Republican party must be rebuilt to practice the principles it claims to believe in.

The one bright spot in the election was here in Tennessee where the voters responded to the kind of Republican party we ought to have nationally. As they take control of the Tennessee legislature, Republicans will do well to remember that they were sent to Nashville to fix problems, not to enjoy power.

- Mel Griffith raises cattle and chickens on his farm in the southern part of the county. He is the 6th District member of the Bradley County Commission. He also serves on the Bradley County Planning Commission and is a Valley View volunteer fire fighter.

Answers to this month's Crossword



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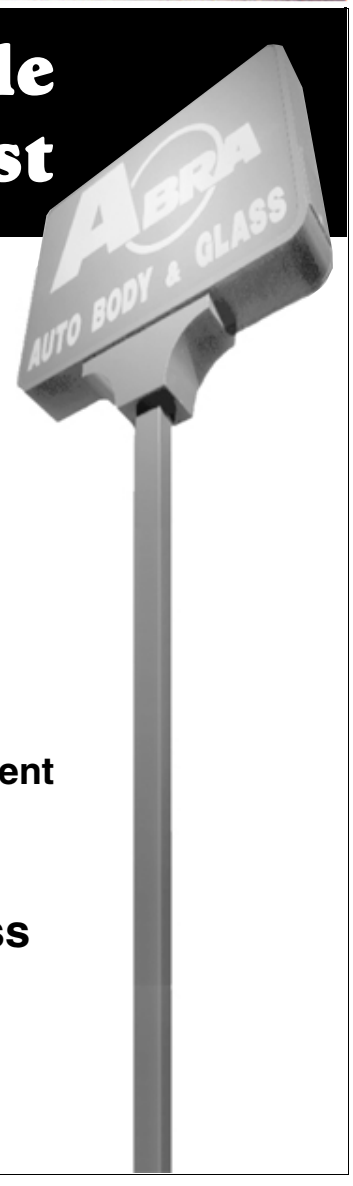

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