

## Area Bloggers



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# Boyd's Blog - How I Got Fat

NOVEMBER 05TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

Boyd's Blog - How I Got Fat

Written by  
Neal E. Boyd  
Sikeston, Missouri

## How I Got Fat

I would like to think that I have a big heart because I have a charitable spirit. I would like to believe that I am three times the size of a normal person just because that is the way God made me. But the hard truth is I eat too much, and stress too much about a variety of things.

I've comforted myself with food after a long, hard day, and I have hung out with my friends and sometimes socialized to excess. I am a typical American man with a love for life...but in my case a short life if I'm not really careful.

I hear that the first step to recovery is to admit you have a problem. Well, I have to admit I have a problem with Food! Why do I eat so much? Let's go through a list of some of my excuses;

- My father left before I was born...

- A girl turned me down for the dance...
- Death of family or friends...
- Insecurity...
- My mother's cancer...
- "Dawson Creek's" ended and "How I Met Your Mother" is ending...
- The Cardinals lost the World Series...
- Just because it's delicious...

I love the show "Madmen," and back in the mid-part of the last century it was cool to smoke, drink, and eat a lot. Television is so inspiring!

However, by the latter part of the century our icons were mostly gone due to a variety of incidents or ailments due to their vices. I once thought I could look, act, and be anybody from that generation. I did all that dreaming with a piece of pizza, a cheeseburger, or chips in my hands for years...and now on the cusp of my 38th birthday...I regret it all!

My weight has been the single greatest struggle of my life. And I realize I'm not alone in this fight, but I also know that I am in a war I have to win. After all, children are watching and waiting to see what I do. If they think I believe that being big and fat is healthy, and they want to be like me, they might just follow in my footsteps to an early grave! I won't have that on my conscience.

So, How do I Win? My girlfriend told me, "Don't let your weight kill you." That's the ultimate goal. I could lose the weight for other people...for my friends...or for my mother. But this battle is personal and nobody but can fight it except me!

I did not get this far in life feeling sorry for myself or even paying attention to how out of control I was. I am the one who gets to split my pants in public or break flimsy, folding chairs. I get to hear the ridicule about my size based on certain Facebook pics. I get to wake up to the scale and the mirror. I get to choose if today I move forward or step backwards.

Well, today I declare WAR on my weight, and I am prepared to fight it with everything I have! And luckily I have some new weapons in my arsenal...an army of friends who love me, a devoted family, and the girl who finally said yes.

My mother said "Nothing worth having ever comes easy." Lord, please be with me...again...

Neal E. Boyd

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## Boyd's Blog - Soft Bigotry

NOVEMBER 03RD 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

Boyd's Blog - Soft Bigotry

Written by  
Neal E. Boyd  
Sikeston, Missouri

I was told about a week ago that,  
"You've come a long way for a colored boy!"

It was hard to take offense because it was actually a genuine compliment from an eighty something year old Caucasian man who obviously meant no harm.

Still it got me thinking of the generational divide we deal with in our everyday lives. It made me think of the expectations we set for ourselves and others, and

President George W. Bush's line about, "The soft bigotry of lowered expectations."

In my opinion, Bush's line had nothing to do with Race, but it was more of a statement on class and our perceptions of each other based on socio-economic factors, and pure old-fashioned motivation and apathy regardless of the color of your skin or the content of character.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the Petri dish known as the world of higher education. I always thought of college as a great battle where rich and poor competed for the Middleclass...where only the motivated survived, but the truth is we do not know who is motivated by what or who will go on to achieve great things!

I was not given a choice in my house when it came to education. I was told that I would go to college and get a degree. Mom always knew best! But there were friends around me who were told they could never go to college due to financial circumstances, or those friends who were pushed by some educators toward vocational trades and told they could never make it at a four year college.

Sometimes people of all nationalities and creeds are motivated by the desire just to simply make a better life for themselves and their families...to simply live for the more and more seemingly unattainable American Dream. But who are we to judge who has the right "credentials" or "will" to succeed.

We the People limit ourselves so readily and willingly for a variety of reasons...the main reason being the Fear of Failure. Well, we are all destined to fail when we listen to those voices of doubt...or of ridicule...or of just plain soft bigotry. We are destined to fail when we heed those voices that tell us that failure is eminent, and that our dreams are foolish.

Truth is, I HAVE come a long way for a colored boy...and I am proud of it!

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## One Two Three Four By Ruth Dockins

OCTOBER 29TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

One Two Three Four By Ruth Dockins

*Submitted Article to  
news@showmetimes.com  
Age Spots – By Ruth Dockins*

### ***One – Two – Three – Four***

As I started this article it just seemed to keep growing, thus the name of the article had to keep changing. Finally I just got frustrated with myself and decided to give it a simple name.

#### **#1:**

Medicare Prescription Drugs (MED D) open enrollment started Oct. 15 and will run through Dec. 7. This is the time for those of you who have a MED D plan to check to see if there is a better one out there for you. Every year most of the plans change their premium cost, deductible and/or the drugs they cover. Some Medicare Advantage plans change the counties in which they choose to offer plans. We have heard from several people who tell us their Advantage plan is

leaving their area and they need to find a different plan.

Each person who has a MED D plan should have received a notice from their plan in late September stating what the new premium will be as well as the deductible and list of drugs covered. If you don't remember receiving this notice please check with your plan to learn if there will be any changes. My husband has had a plan ever since the plans began and has had to change plans every year. The least expensive MED D monthly plan premium for 2014 is \$12.60 and the most expensive is \$137.90, so as you can see there is a wide variety of plans from which to choose.

## **#2:**

Something that will not change for 2014 however is the Medicare Part B monthly premium,

It will be \$104.90 in 2014, the same as it was in 2013. The premium has either been less than projected or remained the same, for the past three years. The Medicare Part B deductible will also remain unchanged at \$147.

"We continue to work hard to keep Medicare beneficiaries' costs low by rewarding providers for producing better value for their patients and fighting fraud and abuse. As a result, the Medicare Part B premium will not increase for 2014, which is good news for Medicare beneficiaries and for American taxpayers," said CMS Administrator Marilyn Tavenner.

## **#3:**

We, at Aging Matters, (formerly known as SEMO Area Agency on Aging) are always looking for people interested in helping others by becoming SMP volunteers. These are the people who help fight Medicare fraud and abuse simply by providing information to Medicare beneficiaries. This is a very rewarding volunteer job because SMP volunteers have played a big part in the recovery of millions of dollars that were returned to the Medicare system. Makes you wonder if part of that money returned is why the Medicare Part B premium and the deductible have not gone up for next year. The SMP volunteers are helping the entire country!

## **#4:**

People with Medicare do not have to sign up for the new Health Insurance Marketplace. The Health Insurance Marketplace is for people who are uninsured or under-insured, so if you are on Medicare just relax and don't worry about all the problems that you are hearing about on TV it doesn't affect you!

LAST UPDATED ON OCTOBER 29TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

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## Medicare Open Enrollment

OCTOBER 25TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

Medicare Open Enrollment

*Submitted by  
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

**Congressman Jason Smith Capitol Report**

**8th Congressional District, Missouri** - Soon senior citizens across our congressional district will be receiving information about Medicare Open Enrollment. During this two month enrollment period, current Medicare beneficiaries can alter their coverage plans and new beneficiaries can sign up for a Medicare plan for the first time. Medicare Open Enrollment begins October 15th and closes December 7th. During Open Enrollment, beneficiaries will have the opportunity to:

- Change to a Medicare Advantage Plan or select a different plan that better meets your needs;
- Join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan;
- Change your Medicare Prescription Drug Plan.

Open Enrollment is an important time for seniors to make sure they have the Medicare plan that best suits their individual needs. Navigating any federal program can be daunting, and my staff and I are here to assist with this process. By visiting [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) or calling 1-800-MEDICARE, you learn about the various plans Medicare offers. Should you encounter difficulties in this process, I encourage you to contact one of my district offices.

You may call my Cape Girardeau office at 573-335-0101, Farmington at 573-756-9755, Rolla at 573-364-2455, or West Plains at 417-255-1515.

Our Eighth Congressional District is home to many senior citizens who rely on Medicare for medical and prescription needs. I understand the importance of Medicare in seniors' daily lives, as both of my parents are Medicare recipients. Since my election to Congress, I have worked to keep the promise of Medicare to our seniors. Moving forward, I will continue efforts to improve seniors' access to Medicare and fight any actions to deny care or change benefits for our Greatest Generation. Seniors who have worked hard their entire lives and paid into Medicare and Social Security deserve the best options possible. Please know that my staff and I are here to help you and we hope you will contact us if we may be of assistance.



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## DHS and DMS Marching Bands Compete for Top Awards

OCTOBER 15TH 2013 BY DEE LOFLIN

DHS and DMS Marching Bands Compete for Top Awards

*Written by  
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Editor*

**Charleston, Missouri** - Congratulations to the DHS and DMS Marching Bearcats for their victories this weekend at the Southeast Missouri Band Directors Association Marching Competition.

It's been an annual tradition for the Charleston R-1 School District to host the Marching Contest. Since the 1980's when the marching Bluejays needed new uniforms and decided to host a fundraising event they have invited area bands to compete on the street and on

the field to raise money for the band.

In the parade competition they received: Outstanding Music, Outstanding Field Command, Outstanding Marching, and Outstanding Flags. 1<sup>st</sup> Place in their Division and Highest score of 20 high school bands in competition.

On the field, they received 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the 3<sup>rd</sup> division beating Park Hills and New Madrid County Central, and received the 4<sup>th</sup> highest score of the 14 bands in competition on the field! "We were even victorious over a band we've never beaten before," commented Scott Rybolt, DHS Band Director.

Bands performing included North County, Sikeston, Ste. Genevieve, Perryville, Jackson, Northwest, Puxico, East Prairie, Woodland, and Charleston.

Congratulations to the Dexter High School Band on their awards and performances Saturday. Mr. Jim Wade and his middle school students also competed well.

T.S. Hill Middle School finished in 1st Place in the parade portion of the marching contest. They scored a 72.25 beating Advance, South Pemiscot, Charleston, Caruthersville, and Richland. Of the 9 years under Mr. Wade's direction, the middle school has taken first place 8 times. Quite the record!

T.S. Hill Marching Bearcats also earned Outstanding Music, Outstanding Marching, Outstanding Percussion, and Outstanding Flags in the parade contest.

Not only did they receive 1<sup>st</sup> Place in their Division BUT they had the 4th highest score overall for the day. This included all the middle school and high school bands who performed, 26 total band for the day. Only three bands scored higher, one of which was the Dexter High School Band. Way to go Middle School!!

The Dexter community is extremely proud of each band student and for all that you do on and off the field. We appreciate your talents as well as your entertainment during pre-game and half-time shows.

Band directors Jim Wade and Scott Rybolt are very proud of their students regarding their effort and achievements at Charleston, and are also very thankful to the parents and community for their help and support.

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