



**David Lias**  
*Between The Lines*

## I confess... I like Brett

I know there are some people who could show nothing but disdain for Brett Favre – even before he signed on last year to be quarterback for the Minnesota Vikings.

Frankly, me not being a die-hard Packers fan (I've noticed that most of the Favre haters – and I don't think 'hate' is too strong a word to use) are Green Bay fanatics, who, I presume, are ticked that he retired from the Packers, only to play for the Jets, and then sign on last year with Minnesota.

Those same people, and I would assume some Minnesota fans, are likely ticked at Brett, too, because of that pass. He will, sadly, always be remembered for making that errant throw that was intercepted as he tried to get his team within field goal range with just a few seconds on the clock in the NFC championship game.

Mustering all of my sports savvy – I can sometimes beat the 7-year-old my daughter babysits in bowling ... on a Wii, no less – I thought it a bit strange that the Vikings, with perhaps one of the best, most reliable kickers in the league, didn't try to advance the ball a few more yards on the ground.

I mean, I know it would have been a long field goal attempt. But they were playing indoors for crying out loud. It's not like Longwell had to boot the ball through a raging snowstorm or against the gale that usually blows across Lambeau Field. It was nice and dry and calm.

For all those who are tearing their hair out, replaying Brett's interception over and over again either in their minds or on their DVRs, since they can't bear to delete their video recordings of the game, I think there's a couple things that must be considered.

The Vikings haven't been this exciting to watch since Fran (I know, all of you youngsters are saying to yourself "Fran who?") Tarkenton scrambled like crazy every Sunday on the sometimes frozen tundra of Metropolitan Stadium.

This was a football season that Vikings fans could actually savor. Right away this fall, it seemed, Brett appeared to play like a 30-year-old rather than a 40-year old.

And, on Sunday, I couldn't help but admire the guy. While the Saints QB, so spry in his youth, could languish untouched for so long nearly every time he went back for pass, Brett got hammered.

Time and again. The fact that he could get up every time he was rocked, and keep playing while obviously being hobbled after he got nailed both high and low by two New Orleans defenders made me, who admittedly is a few years older than Brett, a bit proud. We members of a growing AARP-era generation tends to cling to every hero it can.

It should also be noted that Brett alone didn't contribute to the Vikings' loss.

Vikings receiver Bernard Berrian fumbled a Favre pass at the New Orleans 5-yard line in the fourth quarter. Receiver Percy Harvin lost a fumble at the Minnesota 22 in the fourth quarter. If it weren't for a ridiculous 12-men-in-the-huddle penalty on the play before Favre's last interception, gaining a few more yards for Longwell wouldn't have been necessary.

I found it extremely disappointing, and I know all you Favre-haters out there probably took great delight in the fact that he had to finish the magnificent journey that his team was able to take this season, thanks in large part to him, watching it all end from the sidelines.

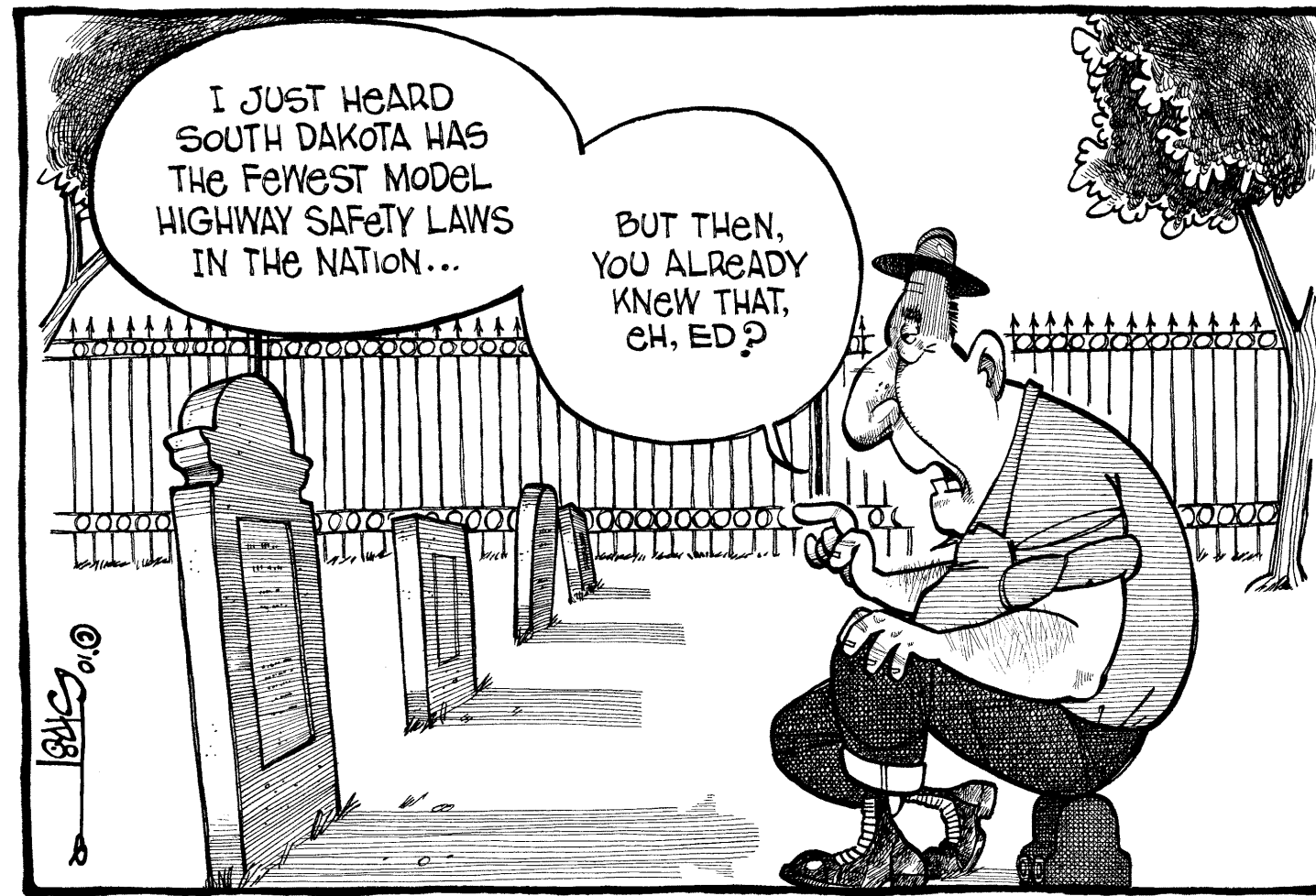
While typing this, I – who admittedly enjoys watching the game but is not a fanatic (I don't play fantasy football or study stats or make predictions every weekend) – can't even recall who won the Super Bowl last year.

Because, when you stop and think about it, there's nothing really super about that final football match-up of the year. There have been many years when the game has been incredibly boring, and the only thing that lasts in one's memory is when a half-time performer has a wardrobe malfunction.

I know I won't forget last Sunday's Vikings/Saints game for a long time, even though it didn't turn out the way I would have liked.

And, I wouldn't be surprised if the upcoming Super Bowl turns out to be a real yawner.

Love him or hate him, that upcoming game would no doubt be much more memorable for everyone if Brett was playing. Sigh.



## Bob didn't know cats could be supernatural

Recently I read a book about a cat that was so smart it could tell if a postage stamp or a painting was counterfeit just by sniffing it. He could tell if a five pound note was real. He had supernatural powers.

Besides that, it could do lots of other things which a cat was not supposed to do. The book was written by an Englishman so there were lots of words that were not American. The story was not lost in the telling except for a few expressions which I did not learn at Sacred Heart School.

The cat was named James which was a funny name for a

cat, but it sort of fitted him.

He liked to eat anchovies, crab salad and drink good whiskey which he lapped up from a bowl.

Every chapter I decided would be my last ... but I couldn't quit until I found out how much mischief the dumb cat got into. For awhile he was

an Egyptian prince who raised lots of money for a crook named Mr. Poachway. Poachway falsified answers to his congregation to make it sound like he was getting the answers from James.

I asked our cat Bailey why she didn't raise a solitary nickel for us.

James looked as if to say what are you doing asking a cat something like that! I just let that go figuring I had hit a sore spot in our relationship.

James slept a lot dreaming up some dastardly deeds to play on us poor humans. He wasn't content being just a cat.

You should read this English book yourself so you wouldn't be mixed up with the ending which wasn't like you expected it to be.

James, who started out being a docile feline, ended up being a hero.

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**Bob Karolevitz**  
*Writer At Large*

## Whazzup? Whazzup? Yo Whazzup!

I've always wondered why people say, Hello, the way they do.

Come to think of it, fewer and fewer people actually use Hello these days.

I've noticed how other words have taken its place, like Hey and Hey there. And depending on where you are in the U.S., the old standby Hello translates to Hullo, Heylo and Hi Y'all.

Now that I think of it, we rarely hear Good morning, Good afternoon or Good evening. While we may hear Good morning, Good afternoon and Good evening from the consignor at a posh hotel in Chicago, San Diego or New York City, it is doubtful we'll be greeted by our spouses or neighbors with "Good morning." And we probably should never expect to hear "Good morning" from a teenager.

For the most part, these greetings of yesteryear are artifacts from a bygone culture – a more formal and genteel one, unlike the "Yo!" times we find ourselves in today.

Not too long ago, a new synonym for hello entered our lexicon of greetings: Whazzup, which is a slurred

### MyStory YourStory



**Paula Damon**  
*Columnist*

way to say, "What's up?" You couldn't go anywhere without hearing Whazzup.

I'm glad that craze is over. I could never bring myself to greeting anyone with Whazzup. Not that I thought it was bad, it just wasn't natural.

Sometimes I greet people with "What's going on?" or "How's it going?" but that's the closest I ever come to Whazzup.

I have never said, Hi ya. Once in a great while, I eek out a Hey and occasionally, I say, Howdy, but never Howdy, Partner. That's a little too "Out West" for me, even though I do live west of the Mississippi River, which technically is considered The West.

I've done some reading on the salutation Howdy. I learned that it originated as a shortened form of the greeting "How do ye?" and was first recorded as part of the

Southern U.S. dialect in 1840.

According to Wikipedia, "The use of Hello as a telephone greeting has been credited to Thomas Edison. Hello is alternatively thought to come from the word hallo (1840) via hollo...an exclamation originally shouted in a hunt when the quarry was spotted."

I read about a county in Texas that said, adios to Hello. A few years ago, the Klegberg County commissioners unanimously designated "heaven-o" as the county's official greeting. Why? Because they believed "Hello" contained the word "hell," even though "Hello" has no linguistic roots in the term.

They adopted "heaven-o" to symbolize peace and friendship. So now, when Klegberg County courthouse employees answer the phones, they say, "Heaven-o." I am thinking about calling

down there just to see if they are doing their jobs.

After contemplating how we say, Hello, I have concluded that the way we greet each other telegraphs our attitude and our spirit within. The way we greet one another reports not only what's on our minds but what's on our hearts.

Whether our salutation is Hi Y'all, Howdy, Yo, Watzup, Hey, Heaven-o or Hello, it's the spark in our eyes, the lilt in our voice and the energy in our words that serve as verbal hugs for those we greet.

*A resident of Southeast South Dakota, Paula Damon is a national award-winning columnist. Her columns have won first-place in National Federation of Press Women, South Dakota Press Women and Iowa Press Women Communications Contests. In the 2009 South Dakota Press Women Communications Contest, Paula's columns took three first-place awards. To contact Paula, email pauladamon@iw.net, follow her blog at www.my-story-your-story.blogspot.com and find her on Facebook.*

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Only signed letters with writer's full name, address and daytime phone number for verification will be accepted.

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