

By Jan Schultz, The Imperial Republican News Editor

It was a long shot when I submitted an email to Bill O'Reilly's "The Factor" show last week that it would make the cut and air. But, that's what happened on March 10, and I'm glad to say it gave Imperial, Nebraska some national exposure.

I had just finished reading O'Reilly's book, "A Bold, Fresh Piece of Humanity" the day before. I have to admit, I laughed a lot through the various chapters, and most of my laughs came as he related his experiences growing up in Catholic schools back East. So many of the stories about his mischievous school behavior mirrored in many ways what students attending St. Adalbert's School in Omaha experienced.

Some of the discipline he sustained because of his antics led me to recall my grade school years at St. Adalbert's when, I must say, similar prices had to be paid for misbehaving. While O'Reilly got sent to the convent study room to do math problems with a non-teaching nun keeping an eye on him, the nuns at our school, I guess, preferred that we remain in their sight. One of the punishments I recalled that evidently left a lasting impression on me was kneeling on field corn, for a half hour or longer, there on those hardwood elementary classroom floors. Just so you know, we wore uniforms back then, so, for the girls, it meant bare knees on that hard corn. But, I lived through it, and needless to say, it caused no emotional damage. Some of you may disagree with the emotional damage statement, though.

Anyway, that's what I wrote to Bill O'Reilly about. And then I asked him why he didn't have to kneel on corn as we did. He put the letter up on his show's email segment, then commented that they didn't have a lot of corn back East, but they had linoleum, and he kneeled plenty on that.

It was all of five or 10 seconds on national TV, but it's been amazing how many people saw it. Most missed the actual message I wrote, but everyone saw "Imperial, Nebraska" there at the bottom of my email.

Since it's aired, I've had lots of comments from people in town who saw it. Boy, a lot of people sure watch O'Reilly's program here. I've also had a call from a woman in Wisconsin who has ties to the Wauneta area. One of my brothers in Colorado saw it--there was a message from him blinking on the phone when I got home that night. There were also a number of other out-of-town calls from friends and family.

Anyway, the community got some exposure and that's great as far as I'm concerned. It's great knowing so many people took the time to call or comment about it. I think that speaks well of our town and how proud people are to see its name splashed across the screen on national TV.

□ I'm just hoping none of my former teachers, the Sisters of Notre Dame, in Omaha saw the program. If one of them did, I may end up kneeling on some of that corn again, and, I'm just not sure my knees so many years later can take it like they did back then.