

Not everyone hailing Interstate's 50th

You'll read a lot this week about celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the Interstate highway system, but some of us are not celebrating.

The Interstate system, if anything, is a mixed bag. Only about 2 percent of the nation's road system, it carries fully 25 percent of the traffic.

Being on that 2 percent can be great for a town's economy, but the Interstates have meant slow death for towns that aren't on (or even close to) a freeway.

U.S. 36 across northern Kansas is a good example. Until the 1960s, there was plenty of through traffic headed for Denver on U.S. 36. I-70 changed all that.

Since the opening of I-70, through traffic has fallen to a fraction of what it once was. Except in towns with other business — Marysville with its railroad center, Belleville with U.S. 81 — hardly a hotel has been built since the 1960s.

Don't talk to people in southeast Kansas about Interstates. They've waited 40 years for good roads since I-35 went to Wichita rather than Tulsa. They haven't got them yet.

With the coming of the Interstates, railroads lost much valuable traffic. They had to close many branches, forcing heavy grain trucks onto the state highways. Passenger trains dried up as mail and people shifted to the roads.

Even along the freeway, prosperity is uneven. In Salina or Russell or Goodland, old motels sit in decay and service stations in town are abandoned, even as new business centers spring up along the freeways.

Crime, violence, drugs and decay ride the freeways. Drug busts, seizures of cash, holdups and thefts come to town on the Interstate. Other towns seldom see such action, so it seems, there are benefits to being off the beaten path.

Economic growth is not one of them. Slow times are common along the two-lane roads. Businesses don't want to locate off a freeway. With an Interstate, the rich towns along the freeway get richer and the poor towns off the road just get poorer.

No one planned it that way. President Eisenhower and his giddy allies doubtless saw a vision of fast, efficient roads moving people from city to city.

No one saw the negatives. No one saw the shift of business, the decline of railroads and the change in economic patterns.

No one much cared, either. Progress is progress. New is new.

There is no way the state can build a freeway to every town.

There's not enough tax money to build them, not enough trucks to fill them if they were built. But there ought to be something the state and federal governments can do for the communities that were collateral damage to this progress.

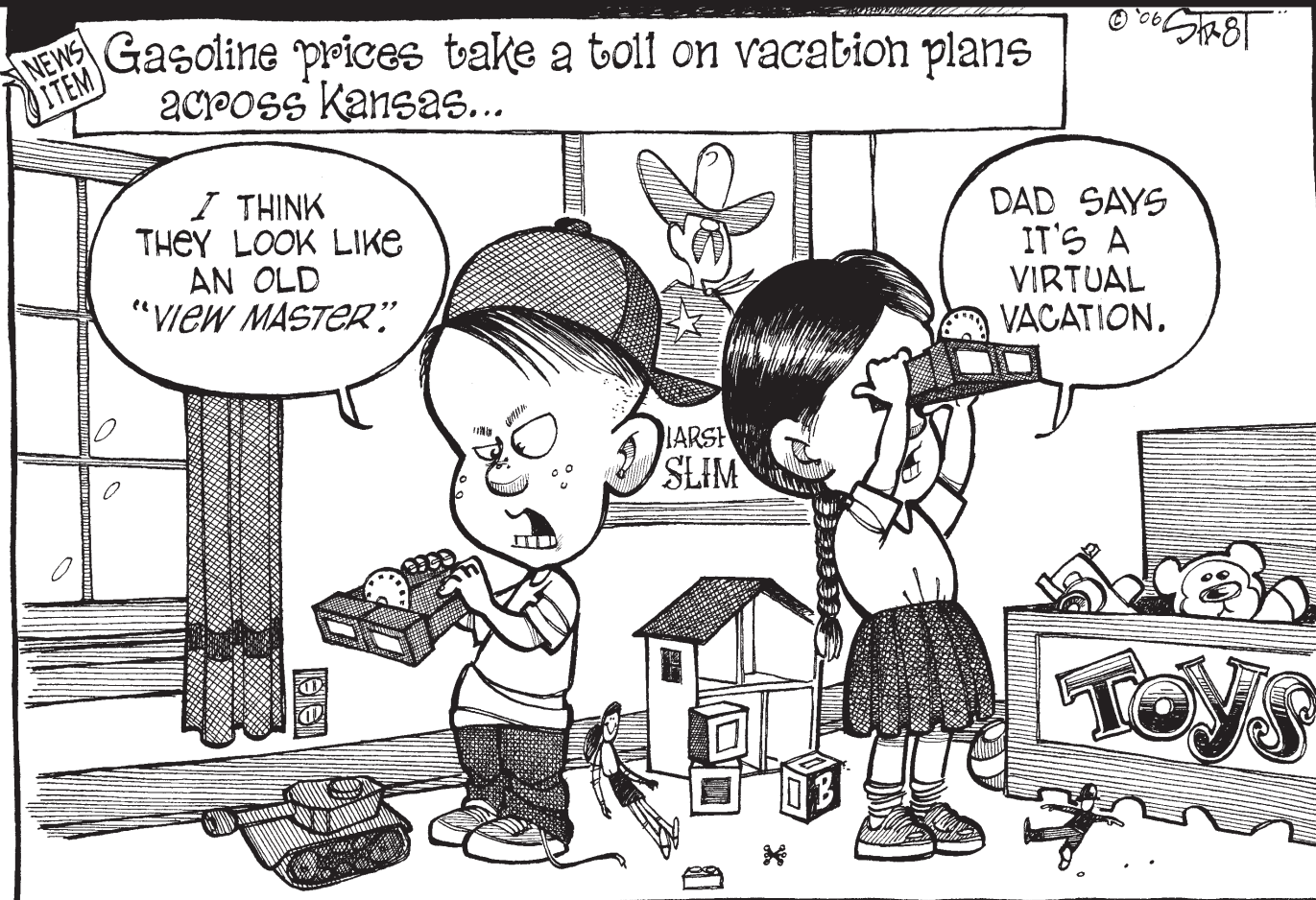
Kansas, slowly, is pushing better roads into the southeast. The southwest still lacks even four-lane expressways on U.S. 50 and U.S. 54. Northern Kansas has no four-lanes at all.

Let them celebrate down on I-70.

We've got our peace and quiet.

But it would be nice to have some jobs, too.

—Steve Haynes



Three-letter word helps sell a lot of stuff

I guess I will just have to be chalk it up to the times in which we live. But one evening a week ago I paid close attention to television commercials. I was trying to see how many commercials had an underlying sex theme in them. Wow! — amazing!

The latest to catch my eye was a commercial for a car. It shows this beautifully styled car, being driven by a very attractive young lady, pulling up to a dry cleaning establishment's drive-up window. While waiting for her cleaning, she glances in her rearview mirror and sees this handsome equally-aged guy at the wheel of the car behind her. Body language tells the story as the attractive young thing studies this potential playmate in her mirror.

She gets her clothes and then hands the lady in the window some money and says she'll pay for a couple of shirts for the guy in the car behind her. She then asks the lady in the window to pass along her business card to him. She then smartly drives the car away. We are supposed to bet they met.

All of this to promote a car? In a nutshell, sex sells. And this is the method used to grab the viewer's attention, time and time again. Just look closely as these commercials flood your television screens. Most of them, in some form or another, are sexually driven.

Parents sometimes complain about the content of movies. But these commercials get a free pass. Sex sells, my friends, and

Good Evening Norton
Tom Dreiling



it's being sold to you right in your own homes, right under your noses, with your kids looking on. It just comes in a different package.

But, for most part, we have become a tolerant society. Nothing seems to bother or shock us. Be it the skimpiest of clothing, next-to-nothing swimwear, bras, panties, men's underwear — it's paraded across our living room screens 24/7. "It's cool," as the kids would say. It's like having a fashion catalogue come to life.

I can remember my high school days. In our town we had a private girls' high school and they wore uniforms. The hemline was below the knee. Well below the knee. When they wanted to get our attention, they'd pull their skirts up an inch or two. Our hearts would beat rapidly. Our hands would get sweaty. We would become goo-goo eyed.

During the summer months, however, those same girls were instructed by the school not to wear shorts. "Sinful," they were reminded. "Boo," was our response. But my town also had a public high school where the length of their skirts was never an issue. Gosh, those girls had knees! And

their summer shorts? Well (borrowing a phrase), "were pretty cool."

Little by little since those years of the '50s, things changed. Each decade seemed to become a bit more revealing than the one before. Pushing the envelope, if you please. And of course all of this explains what we are seeing today.

In our wildest dreams, we could never have envisioned what has unfolded (no pun intended) over those years. Forty years from now, it will be interesting to see what the kids are wearing, or not wearing and how television commercials are handling it.

By the way, I can't tell you what kind of car was being promoted.

-td-

Try to read this. I'm sure you can.

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-td-

Have a good evening! And remember church beckons this weekend.

Retiree says it's been a wonderful 25 years

This is the fourth of six columns written by retiring staff members of the Norton School District. We thought what they had to say at their retirement reception would also be enjoyed by the readership of The Telegram. We thank Superintendent Mann for his assistance in helping us expand their comments to include all residents in the Norton district.

Today: Kaylene Hahn

As I was thinking, what can I possibly write about myself that would not be boring, that would be significant, or even interesting? I couldn't think of thing! I look around and I see all these young teachers and I think, "Am I really this old?"

Mr. Hauser, I want you to know, much to the dismay of my Jayhawker children, I was born a Cornhusker in Beatrice, Neb., then moved to Kansas when I was 18 months old. My Grandfather Whitney bought a farm two miles east of Norton where my parents set up farming. For several years rural electricity was not available and I remember my father wiring our house. After working a whole day and into the next trying to finish this one wire through the studs they got no where. They finally discovered, in what we called the shed room and attached to the house, a false floor covered with a foot or more of dirt. Hidden, resided an old bootleg cellar. The wire had disappeared into this hole. Some empty bottles signified the after effects of Prohibition.

Our first alliance with the schools began when Wesley and Frances Whitney started a dairy and was doing quite well selling and delivering bottled milk to the Norton schools. I remember standing on a stool washing pint bottles in a vat. They did this until he bought a cow that tested positive to Bang's disease. I remember

In Their Own Words

my mother crying when they shipped their complete dairy herd loading them on train cars. They received pennies on the dollar for their Holstein herd.

The oldest of seven children, five girls then two boys, we entertained ourselves by playing in the pasture where a creek filled with water (no longer running), was tempting, or jumping from rafters into the wheat with our made-up acrobatics. My siblings are Anita Wyatt, Janet Meyers, Neva Jo Beydler, Patricia Smiley, John Whitney II and Evan Whitney. We are blessed in that all live here with the exception of one sister.

A one-room school, Pleasant Valley, District #3, better known as Frog Pond School, housed my primary education. We didn't walk very often to school, but had to walk home most days. In those days, the teacher arrived early, started the fire, hauled in the drinking water, all before the first child appeared. The teacher taught all eight grades and the most students in school was probably 24.

So when I started at Norton Community High School (a school between 400 and 500 students), I was scared to death. And there was the "Intimidator," Mr. Gerald Travis, whom we grew to love. But we developed a close relationship with our schoolmates. To this day we treasure our classmates and get together every five years or more often.

Both graduates of Norton Community High School, Dick and I were married just before the Berlin Crises and he was acti-

vated for a year in which we lived in Manhattan. Our first son, Kyle, was born there, then we moved to a farm in Nebraska where it used to rain once in a while. We farmed there for five years before purchasing the farm where we now live.

We have six children: Kyle and Crystal Hahn, who is a hospital administrator in Oakley; Kurt and Cyndi Hahn, who is in sales in Wichita; Ken and Julie Hahn, who own and operate a pharmacy in Stockton; Kevin and Kayla Wurm, a nurse at McCook Community Hospital; Kevin and Leigh Ann Hahn, who is hospital pharmacist at Mitchell County Hospital in Beloit; and Kendall and Jami Hahn, who is a regional bank manager in Omaha. All of our children graduated from Norton Community High School and received exceptional schooling from this district.

We have 20 grandchildren — Brianne, Cole, Logan, Cody, Piper, Emily, Cade, Mickey, Anna, Matthew, Cory, Aaron, Jenna, Sophie, Rachel, Jacob, Addison, twins Tyler and Seth, and Luke. My wish is that our grandchildren receive as good an education as our children.

I started my library work at Eisenhower Elementary under the tutelage of a great teacher and friend Alta Fahrenbruch. She expected perfection and moral values were part of her teaching because of the fine lady she is.

I never expected to work under the second "Intimidator," Mr. Stull. But eight years later, I transferred to the high school/junior high library where Karen Cox's pride in our library constituted an enjoyable learning atmosphere.

I will miss these students and the faculty. It has been a wonderful 25 years. May God bless Norton Community High School and this community.

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