

The race for office in Kansas

Kansas and Virginia? Is there any relationship between the coastal state where voters in the Republican primary last week rose up to smite their party's No. 2 leader in the House of Representatives, and the plains state where a virtually unknown Leawood radiologist is running against a venerable three-term incumbent U.S. senator?

Only time will tell, but the halls of the Statehouse echoed the talk last week, as reported by the Associated Press, after House Majority Leader Eric Cantor lost a Republican primary to retain his seat in Congress.

Supporters of Kansas "tea party" candidate Milton Wolf were cheered by the victory in Virginia of a largely unknown, poorly financed challenger against a top Republican leader. Roberts' backers say things are different here, however.

In Washington, Rep. Cantor was widely seen as the next speaker of the House, with Rep. John Boehner of Ohio expected to step down next year. Now, he'll likely be out of a job - and Mr. Boehner may be stuck with his.

Opponents labeled Mr. Cantor as a Washington insider who'd grown out of touch with his nearby district. His support for a compromise on immigration reform, though widely seen as necessary for the party, may have cost him at home.

Sen. Roberts' campaign says that's not him. After 18 years in the Senate and 16 before that in the House, representing the 1st District of western Kansas, they say he hasn't forgotten who sent him to Washington. He's opposed any "amnesty" for illegal immigrants, played to his conservative base and has support from groups such as the Kansas State Rifle Association and Right to Life.

He has solid backing from farm groups after years of helping craft the "Farm Bill" and serving as chair of the House Agriculture Committee and, later, the Senate Intelligence Oversight Committee.

Dr. Wolf has been running since October, however. He attacks Sen. Roberts for owning a home in Virginia while listing a rented room in Dodge City as his residence for voting purposes. The challenger claims Roberts really lives in the Washington area and seldom comes "home." In fact, he's worked in Washington since 1967, when he became an aide to Sen. Frank Carlson, later serving Rep. Keith Sebelius of Norton.

A solid record, yes, but there are many who may vote for Mr. Wolf. We've heard more than one person say on the streets of (western Kansas) that Mr. Roberts has been there "long enough." His visits out here have not been that frequent.

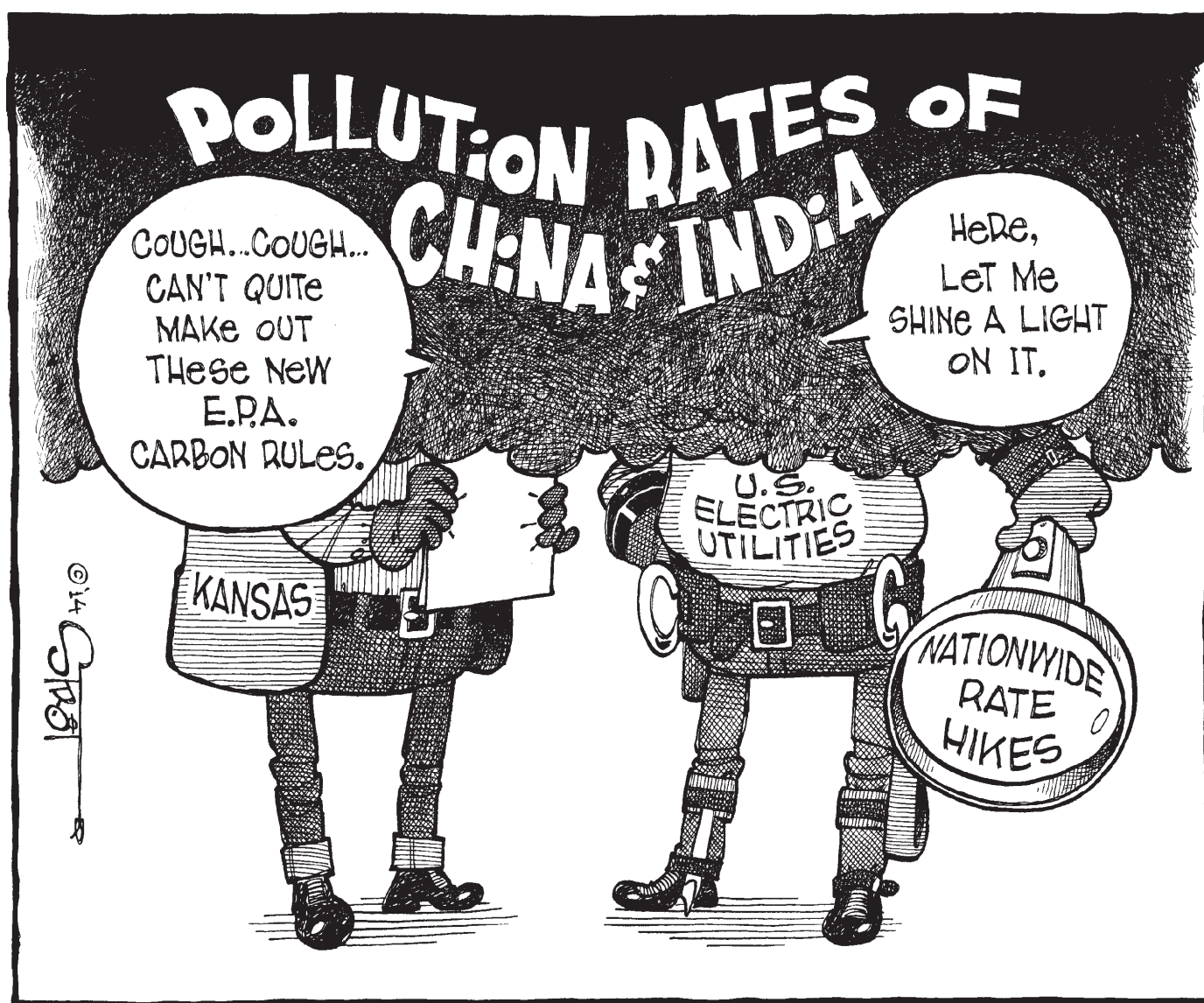
If money means anything, Sen. Roberts should have a big edge. The AP reported he has \$2.25 million to spend compared to \$278,000 for Dr. Wolf. Money meant little in Virginia, but observers point out that only 65,000 people voted in that race and five times as many are expected in Kansas, maybe more, making it harder for a determined minority to score a coup.

The senator says he's never taken his race for granted. "In the first place, I'm not Cantor," he told the Associated Press. "This is not going to happen in Kansas."

In fact, he says he's pumped by the prospect of Republicans taking back control of the Senate.

The night of Aug. 5, we expect the veteran will come out on top, in line for a committee chairmanship, but he'll get a scare. However, at this point, anything's possible.

- Steve Haynes



War or not to war, that is the question

In 1990, former President George H. W. Bush joined with 34 United Nations assembled countries to remove Iraq from Kuwait. The decision was made to stop just short of removing Iraq's president, Saddam Hussein. Bush knew it was important to retain the balance of power in the region.

After 9-11, President Bush's son, George W., proclaimed a war on terror and went in search of those responsible for the attack on the World Trade Center. The actions in Afghanistan coupled with our lack of understanding of the Taliban led Bush to believe we had won the war, a briefly held belief. In 2003, Bush wanted to invade Iraq, believing Saddam Hussein held weapons of mass destruction, and topple the leader. The United Nations did not support President Bush's 2003 invasion of Iraq and few of our Allies took part.

In fact in 2004, the Secretary General of the United Nations Kofi Annan declared, "I have indicated it was not in conformity with the UN Charter. From

Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



what it had said was one of the key goals of the Iraq War to destroy: a safe haven for al Qaeda in the heart of the Arab world."

This set the stage for the advancement of an extreme Muslim faction called ISIS, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. ISIS has thus far killed mostly Muslims as they view any, but what they deem as the most pure, to be unworthy. To say they pose a threat to all they view as Christian, is an understatement.

If the U.S. sends in air power, how long and how far do we go? The problems we face are in part because of poor choices the U.S. has made by every president in recent years. But let's not forget this has been a warring area for over two thousand years. Is it in our power to control, let alone destroy a group with these interwoven connections? There is no good answer. mkwoodyard@ruraltel.net

our point of view, from the charter point of view, it was illegal."

This record setting lengthy war was the first war where taxes were not raised to fund the action, consequently the U.S. sustained massive debts. That pales when one considers the lives lost and those soldiers marred forever. In 2011, Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki made it clear he no longer wanted a U.S. presence in Iraq. So the U.S. withdrew their troops from Iraq while continuing the war in Afghanistan.

As noted by CNN commentator Peter Bergen, "The Bush administration had presided over the rise of precisely

And then there was music, beautiful music

Daughter Elizabeth and I were visiting on the phone one day. Our conversation was interrupted by her internet provider. A representative was going door-to-door, attempting to get customers to upgrade.

Elizabeth is a tough sell. For seven years before she was married she had no cable at all. Brandon was also cableless. After their wedding they decided they were ready for the big plunge: a flat screen television, and an antenna!

I could hear her deftly fend off each of the salesman's claims. He seemed to be under the impression that ESPN and 24 hour sports coverage was the secret to eternal happiness.

Finally she said, ever so sweetly, "We are musicians!"

As if that explained everything! Perhaps it does. They have their own world. This past weekend Brandon conducted a workshop on shredding and it doesn't have anything to do with cabbage.

Elizabeth is at our house for a while. One night we watched the Tony's. It's enjoyable watching this sort of thing with her because she has insights. She knows of the actors, where they went to school. What else they performed in; if they won for other roles.

During the show a performer began the "Rock Island" song from The Music Man. It occurred to me: that is a rap song. The words were barely out of my mouth when a group of rappers came onstage to finish the song.

Elizabeth agreed, "That is not the

This Too Shall Pass Nancy Hagman



only one from that show. There is also 'Pick a Little, Talk a Little'."

After years of development Meredith Wilson's masterpiece The Music Man opened on Broadway in 1957. It contained rap music!

Amazing! Elizabeth has just completed training for at risk students (I don't think they shredded anything). They are approaching teaching using traditional poetry.

Poetry: because it has consistent rules.

Rhythm and verse formation = math. Rhyme: bringing words out of chaos into beauty.

What these teachers are attempting to impart to kids is in order to have meaning life must have structure. Without structure, children cannot feel secure. If they are not secure they cannot learn.

There are children who have never heard a nursery rhyme or a lullaby. It is fashionable to say that it is up to each family or group to make their own traditions, to tell their stories in the own way.

While true, using traditional po-

etry or music does not displace what is taught at home. It fills the void for those who have no frame of reference whatsoever. It enriches those who do.

Diversity is wonderful but society cannot function if its participants do not have a common understanding on some level. The children of those who are busy doing their own thing become lost.

Elizabeth is excited about this concept because it is easy to see where the idea of using poetry leads. As Meredith Wilson wrote "And then there was music!"

I do not listen to much popular music at this stage in my life. Thus I was very surprised to be so entertained by Bruno Mars during the Super Bowl Halftime show this year.

I don't know what type of music he is supposed to represent but to me he seemed 60's R&B. I love it.

Meredith Wilson rapping in the 50's, Mars impersonating the Temptations, as the Bible say, "There is nothing new under the sun!"

In The Book Thief Liesel helps her stepfather, a housepainter, black out windows in their town in advance of air raids.

Her job is to carry Hans' accordion so they might have breaks to lighten the somberness of their days.

"Better that we leave the paint behind," Hans told her, "than ever forget the music."

Music: it explains everything!

Letters to the Editor and Thumbs Up:
e-mail dpaxton@nwkansas.com
or to write 215 S. Kansas Ave.



Thumbs up to Jill Lively for doing so well on getting the new pool up and going. Called in.

Thumbs up to the Norton Fire Department for rescuing the residents who were stuck on the elevator at the Norton Manor on Sunday after the storm. Called in.

Thumbs up to the nice young man who selflessly helped us move our downed tree limbs early on Sunday morning. It is so refreshing to know that a young person would be so kind and volunteer to help someone in need. Brought in.

Remember there is no charge for rendering a Thumbs Up. Thumbs Up are meant to give recognition for a positive person or event in the community. Also remember all Letters to the Editor must be signed.

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