



Kansans need to work on long-term solutions

Call it sustainable government. That's what this country, heck, what all the "developed" nations, including most of Europe and certainly the U.S., need to learn.

Just as we need to learn to live within our energy means, the world needs to learn to live within its income, trimming government spending and "entitlement" programs to fit revenue and sustainable growth.

Most U.S. states could be added to the list, Kansas among them, though Kansas certainly is no California in terms of debt or spending or excess growth.

Still, our state has seen its budget grow far faster than the economy in recent years, driven by those federal "entitlements" that everyone likes to blame things on.

After coming into office with the state treasury literally empty after years of budget cuts and revenue shortages, Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback claims to have turned things around. Under his leadership, the Legislature produced a balanced budget with a \$700 million ending balance, or surplus, giving the state a cushion to fall back on.

That in itself was an accomplishment. However, the governor has more far-reaching ambitions. He wants to make the state more friendly to businesses that could bring in new jobs. A big part of his plan was to lower taxes and eventually, to eliminate the state income tax.

He and the legislature made a big start on that plan this year, eliminating state taxes on most small-business income and slashing tax rates for most Kansans. The Legislature, without a doubt, botched up this plan when it got to the Senate. Senators agreed to pass a version that included all the cuts the governor proposed, but none of the revenue-producing changes he wanted.

The result could be a budget gap of up to \$700 million a year over the next few years, state experts predicted, though that gap keeps shrinking

as the state's economy improves. The governor's enemies were quick to claim the tax cuts would lead to massive cuts in schools and other state programs, and big hikes in local property taxes. That hasn't happened yet, of course, and it might not, but everyone agrees the tax bill passed last year is badly flawed.

The governor launched a campaign this week to re-establish some balance in the revenue picture, where he had proposed ending some popular deductions, including the one on home mortgage interest, to offset his tax cuts.

Another alternative is to keep a "temporary" sales-tax increase passed a few years ago in place of the higher income tax. Many argue that this would hurt low-income Kansans, but another argument is that a sales tax actually hits the wealthy hardest because they buy a lot more than the rest of us. There are ways to get out of the income tax if you're rich, but the sales tax applies to everyone.

There'll be opposition to any solution. The very conservative will oppose any tax or revenue increase, hoping to slash government even more. But the state does need good schools, colleges, roads and services, and it must have prisons, regulations and the like. While the administration promises to root out excess spending, there's only so much you can cut or save.

In the end, we need a solid compromise that makes the state run the way people want it to. That's critical to the governor if he wants to run for higher office again - and many believe he still wants to be president. To do that, he needs to make a success of his fiscal program. Budget Director Steve Anderson says he believes it could be a model for other states, and it might, but only if it works.

A solution is important to the rest of us, too. And as in Washington, a reasonable approach that will work is what we need in Topeka.

- Steve Haynes

Many American prefer welfare checks instead of paychecks

Dear Editor,

Is traditional America gone? Romney was right when he said he wouldn't get the votes of the 47 percent of people who don't pay federal income taxes. They prefer a welfare check instead of a paycheck. There were \$600 billion spent on entitlement for over 50 percent of Americans. Obama phones and minutes were given out to people to ensure their vote. It's hard to vote against Santa Claus! Will America turn into Greece if we go over the fiscal cliff and result in violent protests?

Big labor unions have a lot of power and donate a big share of their dues to get President Obama elected. They take credit carrying the swing states and never stopped their ground work to get votes, since 2008.

The president's back door amnesty let thousands of illegals vote providing them with voter IDs. It was reported that 18 voted from the same address, a vacant lot in Ohio.

Many of our military men and women overseas were denied their freedom to vote because they never received their ballots in time. A deliberate effort to suppress the military vote. Now that is a disgrace!

American women were misled-60 percent of single women voted for Obama. No one was trying to tell them what to do with

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their bodies. Churches and Christians were against the government mandate that forced them to pay for contraceptives, abortions which is against the very core of their religious beliefs. War against Christians, what's next - war against gun owners in America?

The mainstream media has been for Obama - a 100 percent the last two elections. How can anyone win an election against those odds? The Libya attack in Benghazi is a good example. It was known for the first hour it was a well planned Islamic attack brought on by the 9/11 anniversary. It came out of Obama's white house that it was a spontaneous protest caused by a YouTube video. It was on all of the Sunday talk shows and the president mentioned the video six times in his United Nations speech. Hillary Clinton and Presi-

dent Obama spent \$70 billion on a message sent to the Middle East apologizing for the video on the Internet and television.

We later learned that our embassy was attacked several times before and our Ambassador begged for more security which was denied. The president could have called our military in Italy to go over and help save our Ambassador and three other brave Americans but did nothing. Obama's Middle East policy was unraveling. Bin Laden is dead, but the terrorists are stronger than ever. Was it a White House cover up to keep the truth from the American people because of the election? Was it politics at any price?

Pray for America,
Marilyn Frisbie
McDonald

GOD SAYS

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Matthew 11:28



Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick
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Last week, on Dec. 7, marked the 71st anniversary of the Japanese bombing of the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor. As one of the most historic events in this nation's past it deserves a little reflection.

The attack was planned for a Sunday morning as it would be the time to most likely catch the Americans off guard. Of the 2,390 service men and 49 civilians who died in the attack, nearly half were members of the U.S.S. Arizona's crew.

Aboard the battleship that still lies in 40 feet of water, 1,177 either remain entombed or were buried.

The ship exploded when a bomb reached the forward magazine and set off the explosives stored there.

These numbers are well documented, but what most may not know is that there were many relatives among the Arizona's crew. 37 pairs, or trios, of brothers were serving that day. Of the 77 men, 62 were killed, including 23 sets of brothers.

Only one full set survived; Kenneth and Russell Warriner. Kenneth was in San Diego attending flight school. Russell, although severely injured, recovered from his wounds.

Also, there was a father and son aboard. Thomas Augusta Free and his boy, William Thomas Free, both perished.

It was not uncommon for relatives to serve together in the Navy. After Pearl Harbor the military tried to deter the practice, but it was not until the sinking of the U.S.S. Juneau and the loss of the five Sullivan brothers in Nov. 1942 that it was officially forbidden.

Hangin' With Marge

By Margaret Bucholtz
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Pay Back Time

I am sure that every mother out there has either uttered the words "I hope when you get kids they will act just like you." Surely I am not the only mother that wanted my children to get paid back for all those embarrassing moments.

The other day my son, Darrin called and he told me a cute story about what his youngest son had did.

Dina had gone over to her aunt's place to carve pumpkins for Halloween. Since Porter is not in

school yet he went with his mom.

After getting the carving done they all went into the living room and sat down to visit. Dina and Porter were sitting on a very pretty couch. As she was talking to her Aunt Porter was just squirming around a little but was still being a very mannerly four years old.

Aunt Shelly went into the kitchen to get some tea for them all to drink. As soon as she left the room Porter tapped his mom on her arm and said, "Are you think-

ing what I'm thinking?" Puzzled Dina quietly asks him what he was thinking. Porter replied, "I'm thinking this couch would be fun to do back flips off of."

I'm sure poor Dina had to keep a somber face as she answered "No, we don't do that."

When Darrin told me he said, "Mom, I think your wish is coming true. We have one just like me."

Photo Policy

The Saint Francis Herald and Bird City Times wants to emphasize photos of people doing things in the community. If you know of an event or new happening that we should attend, please call 332-3162.

Please be sure to allow a couple of days' notice so we can be there.

Space in the paper is limited and so is the time of our staff, so we may not be able to get to every event. Because space is so limited, we cannot

run team or group photos, any pictures of people lined up or of people passing checks, certificates and the like. (We will always try to make room for a story about any of these events, however.)

We do run wedding and engagement pictures and "mug" shots with stories and obituaries, when they are provided to us. Please remember that we need a clear, sharp picture. Dark or fuzzy prints will not work.

We cannot return photos unless you submit a self-addressed, stamped envelope with clear instructions for return. Other photos submitted may be picked up at our office within two weeks. After that, they will be disposed of.

Laser prints of photos which have run in The Herald or Times are available, first come, first served. Special-order laser prints of photos will be available at \$3 each.

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