

Legislative session was contentious

By Kevin Bottrell
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Much like last year, the 2013 Kansas Legislative Session proved contentious, with deadlocks and rejected proposals pushing the session nine days past its 90-day schedule. This time, however, the issue wasn't congressional redistricting, it was the state budget.

Now back at his St. Francis home after the session, Rep. Ward Cassidy said he is in the process of writing a column looking back on how the session went.

"There were some things I liked and some things I didn't," Cassidy said.

Cassidy said his major accomplishment for the session was helping to reverse a budget cut for community and technical colleges. Higher education was set to get a 1.5 percent across-the-board cut.

Cassidy said he did not like that four-year colleges — especially Fort Hays State University — still got cut.

"When you vote for a budget you do it because there are things in it you like," he said. "There are also things you don't like."

Primary and secondary education did not get cut this year, he said, and may be in line for a \$10 to \$12 base aid increase next year, depending on how a lawsuit against the state turns out. That lawsuit, which was brought by a collection of school districts against the state, alleges that the state has failed to fund schools as guaranteed under the Kansas Constitution.

"I don't agree with that lawsuit," Cassidy said.

If the courts find in favor of the districts, he said, the Legislature may have a special session to decide how to increase funding.

"I think the schools will win that," he said. "Then the question is: 'how much money and where do we get it?' It certainly doesn't fit into the governor's tax plan."

The bottom line on the tax plan, Cassidy said, is that the state sales tax rate will drop from 6.3 percent to 6.15, the result of a compromise between the House and Senate. The five-year tax plan reduces the state income tax each year until it is zeroed out.

The tax plan was the whole key to the session, Cassidy said, and the Legislature had to come up with about \$200 million in cuts to make it work. The cut to higher education was part of that, but Cassidy said he and an group of other Legislators fought to keep community and technical colleges out of that.

Cassidy said he liked that the Legislature was able to keep

charitable deductions at 100 percent of their value, and that they were able to expand the Rural Opportunity Zone to include more counties. The tax incentives make those counties attractive to new businesses, he said.

There were other new laws that might affect northwest Kansas:

- Cassidy said one of the issues on which he gets the most feedback is gun legislation.

"We passed some good gun legislation," he said. "Essentially reaffirming to the federal government that they can't mess with us."

The state also passed law which recognizes the concealed carry permits of other states, allowing anyone with a permit to carry their weapon in Kansas. Cassidy said there are still some questions on the new concealed carry law that the attorney general's office will need to work out before the law can be fully implemented. He said the differences in concealed carry requirements across the various states are not any danger to Kansans.

- Cassidy said there was also money added to the Kansas Highway Patrol and Stockton Prison budgets, though cuts in the corrections department remain a concern. The Kansas Department of Transportation, whose budget is often diverted to other departments, largely escaped intact this year.

"They were going to take away money," Cassidy said. "We fought to get it back. Some of it was still swept out to pay for buses for schools."

Liquor laws did not change this year, despite a renewed push for allowing hard alcohol sale at grocery stores. Cassidy said someday it will happen, and advised small liquor stores to prepare for that. He said he had asked several liquor stores in Nebraska about their similar law. The stores said they make as much or more money after the adjustment period.

- Care for developmentally disabled people will be under KanCare starting Jan. 1. Cassidy said he was wanting to wait another year for KanCare to establish itself, but after meeting with the three managed care companies, he is confident that any problems that arise can be addressed.

- Also passed this year was a law allowing for drug testing of anyone receiving a government check. Cassidy said this includes everyone from legislators and the governor to those receiving welfare checks.

"The goal was to help the unemployed or those on welfare not to go down a bad path," he said.

- Judicial selection for the Kansas Court of Appeals was changed this year. Appeals judges will be appointed by the governor and subject to confirmation by the Senate, similar to the federal model. Cassidy said he voted in favor of the change, adding that there was discussion of expanding it to include the Kansas Supreme Court, but that was not done this year.

- In education this year was a new program: "Innovative School Districts." Cassidy said 10 school districts will be chosen to participate in the program, which will free them up from a lot of state regulations. Cassidy said it gives administrators more freedom to be creative in how they provide education. The things they come up with might be shared with other districts.



ERVAGENE DEARAGON reads the letter that came with the pink flamingos to see how to make them go away.
Herald staff photo by Tim Burr

Flamingos make their appearance

By Karen Krien

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The pink flamingos are back! This is a project to raise money for the Cheyenne County Relay for Life cancer walk and to help find a cure for cancer.

The flamingo flock was late this year because of the cool spring season, said Susie Walz, one of the keepers of the birds.

Every morning for the next month, somebody is going to wake up to find a flock of pink flamingos in their yard. Mrs. Walz directs the flocks with the help of nieces, nephews, other relatives and other volunteers. The birds are put in the yard after dark and they disappear before 8 a.m. the following day (they remain in the yard for at least a day).

To help the birds take flight, the resident donates \$10 by taking it to the Cheyenne County Hospital.

"If you would like to share

the birds with someone special," said Susie Walz, one of the coordinators, "donate \$15 and have them placed in someone else's yard."

People can also donate \$20 and they will not be placed in their yard again that year. There has been some confusion, Mrs. Walz said. People think that if they donate \$20 they will never come back to their yard.

"This is not true," she said. "It is only this year that there is a guarantee that they will not return."

The pink flamingos are a fun way of raising money as well as helping raise money to help fight cancer through the Relay for Life.

Anyone wanting more information about the pink flamingos can call the hospital, 785-332-2104, or call Mrs. Walz at 332-8507.

Association welcomes alumni to St. Francis

The KU Alumni Association welcomes alumni and university enthusiasts of all walks to enjoy dinner with members of the KU Alumni Association staff June 20 at the Diamond R Bar and Grill at 118 W Washington Street in St. Francis. The dinner will take place at 5:30 p.m. and light snacks and soft drinks will be provided.

The dinner is one of more than

100 events the association will sponsor across Kansas and around the country during the annual 'Hawk Days of Summer tour. The 90-day series of events results from a determination to make the most of the summer months.

"We wanted to connect with Jayhawks in all kinds of settings, from breakfast, lunch or dinner in the smallest Kansas town, to large

events in the cities that are our national strongholds," says Kevin Corbett, association president.

'Hawk Days of Summer began in 2011, when a 12-member team of association staff members, along with local volunteers, hosted 143 events that welcomed more than 8,000 Jayhawks. The following year featured 150 events with more than 10,000 alumni,

fans and friends in attendance.

This year's edition of 'Hawk Days kicked off May 20, and includes receptions, happy hours, picnics, baseball games, museum tours, boat cruises and more. For more information about events in your area, visit www.kualumni.org/hawkdays.

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MAST ANTIQUE AUCTION
Sat., June 22, 2013
Sale Time 10:00 a.m. Central Time
PREVIEW: FRI., JUNE 21st from 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM
113 West 4th St., Bird City, Kansas
(American Legion Hall)

AUCTIONEER'S NOTE: The Masts have lived in Bird City for many years and have collected antiques for many years. Dorothy Mast is one of the area's finest historians. Many of these items date back four generations. There will be a lot of old farm primitives and we will also be selling part of Beverly Higgins's antique collection. Two rings will run part of the day. Many boxes were packed at listing.
LUNCH WILL BE SERVED BY AUXILIARY LADIES.

GUNS & MILITARY: (sell at Noon) Savage Mod 99 32 ca. lever action rifle; Win Mod 41 32 ca. lever action rifle; Marlin 22 ca. rifle w/scope; Iver Johnson 16 ga. shotgun; Bridge Gun Co. 12 ga. Black Prince shotgun; Remington 44 ca. black powder revolver; Remington 30 ca. rifle; Win mod 06 22 rifle; J. Stevens A & T Co 22 ca. lever action rifle; Western Field 16 ga. shotgun; WWII bolt action Jap rifle w/bayonet; Hamilton #27 22 rifle, no stock; D-35 defective gas billy; sev. knives; sev boxes of ammo; lg. amt. of WWII & WWI helmets, gear, military, gear of all kinds; Navy uniform; black jacks; bayonets; antique fishing rods & reels. **ANTIQUÉ FURNITURE:** (sells at 2:00) fantastic quarter sawn round oak dining table w/claw ft. & 4 scroll back chairs; settee & rocker; 2 oak library tables; 4 drawer oak dresser; Victorian dresser w/mirror; 4 pc. 1920's bedroom set; Victorian walnut marble top parlor table; 2 oak claw ft. parlor tables; fainting couch; 2 chiffarobes; oak rockers; antique chairs; Singer treadle sewing machine. **CROCKS:** 30 gal. Western crock; Pittsburg chicken waterer; 1 gal. White Hall crock; crock jars; crow; bowls; 4 gal. Western; 5 gal. Ruckels; 6 gal. Redwing. **BOAT & MOTORS:** 16' John boat; Scotts Alwater boat motor; Wards antique boat motor. **ANTIQUES & COLLECTIBLES:** Edison oak cylinder record player; 40 cylinder records; Victrola; Nat'l brass cash register; portable artpophone; sev. wood crates & boxes; Coors wooden beer box; old typewriters; old wood screen doors; stereoscope w/cards; old glass lamps; barn lanterns; tobacco tins & cigar boxes; old marbles; sev. tied quilts; nail aprons; Louise Tickett mirror w/Bird City advtg.; antique mirrors; boilers; sev. advtg. milk bottles; coffee & lard tins; oak coat rack; old dome top Philco radio; antique scales; sad irons; Stanley wood planes; antique tools; wood corn planter; wood carpenter's caddy; butter mold; glass butter churns; oil tins; Dutch oven; enamelware; 15 deer racks; 1940's Furro magazines; old Christmas deco.; linens & fancywork; old cameras; high back saddle; cream cans; traps; coffee jars; antique blue jars; cast iron pot belly stove; elk horns; washboards; old wringer washer; sev. iron wheels; old horse drawn cultivator; sev. nice framed antique prints; old saws; metal tractor seats; antique dolls; egg crates; 4 antique trunks; carved Indian bust; lg. amt. Victorian clothing. **TOOLS:** Wedge riding mower; mowers; lg. amt. of rakes, forks, shovels; tap & die set; toolboxes; lg. amt. of hand tools of all kinds; table saw; sev. sets of scaffolding; Mall chain saw; trap cages; lg. dog kennel; oxyacetylene welder on trailer. **GLASSWARE:** carnival glass pitcher & glasses; 2 bride's bowls; plates; assorted antique glass; Black Mammy cookie jar. **MISCELLANEOUS & CRAFT ITEMS:** very lg. amt. of heirloom craft supplies; cookbooks; lots of misc. household & decor.
Go to the auctions page at www.uslandoffice.net for more details and pictures.

DOROTHY MAST, OWNER
Beverly Higgins, Guest Consignor

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