# Opinion



### **A Kansas Viewpoint**

## Voter ID may not be a good idea

From The Wichita Eagle

A recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling gives a green light to states, including Kansas, bent on passing voter ID laws. But neither the court majority nor the backers of the Kansas legislation have shown much evidence that voter identification fraud is a problem in need of a solution.

Justice John Paul Stevens, writing for the majority, could produce only scant and anecdotal evidence of in-person voter fraud. He cited two cases in 140 years, which doesn't exactly add up to

There's ample reason to worry that this issue is driven by partisan politics. GOP backers support the law, say critics, mainly to suppress turnout among (likely Democratic) low-income, elderly and minority voters.

The 2005 Indiana law at issue requires voters to present government-issued ID, in most cases either a driver's license or passport.

In his dissent, Justice David Souter noted that 43,000 Indiana residents lacked the right ID card.

In Kansas, proponents of an ID law raise fears of illegal immigrants voting. But it is more likely that the new law would discourage U.S. citizens from voting. ...

If Kansas lawmakers are intent on passing a voter ID law, they should retain features in a House version of the bill that would provide photo IDs to low-income Kansans — and they should phase in enforcement over several years to give voters time to adjust. It's reassuring that disabled residents and those age 65 and over

are exempt in the bill. Another good compromise is a provision to allow a broader scope of documents, such as student cards and employee badges, to meet the ID requirement.

Still, Gov. Kathleen Sebelius should veto any voter ID bill that discourages the most vulnerable members of our society from exercising their rights at the ballot box.

That's also election fraud.

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Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. 202/224-6521 U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran, 2202 Rayburn House Of-

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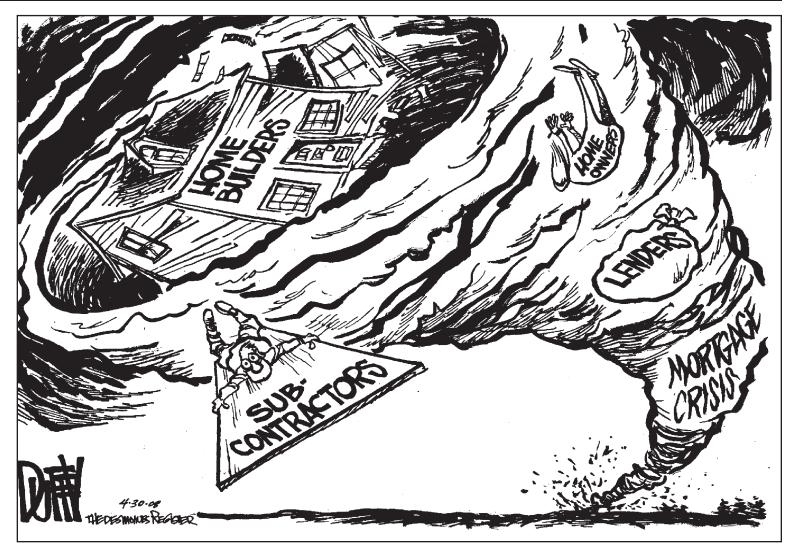
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### Wonder what more we can do?

Congratulations to the Prairie Museum of Art and History for having the Cooper barn nominated for one of the eight architecture wonders in Kansas. (For more about the contest, go online to www.kansassampler.org)

I remember the first time I saw the barn, on a summer day in 1995, during a daytrip to Colby. The barn is as impressive now as it was when I saw it and when it was finished.

I've got to give credit for the people behind the 8 Wonders of Kansas promotion. It started earlier this year, with sites and places across the state as candidates. A local one was the Arikaree Breaks, north of Saint Francis and just south of the Nebraska border. Ralph Fischer, who leads the Colby Visitor's Center, said the breaks is a combination of the Grand Canyon in Arizona and the Badlands in South Dakota — just on a smaller scale.

The 8 Wonders contest will continue using other elements of our state. Stay tuned.

Leilani Thomas of the Colby Visitors and Convention Bureau made an interesting point about the contest Tuesday at Colby Rotary. She said with increasing gasoline costs, the 8 Wonders promotions may motivate Kansas people to vacation within Kansas this summer. People won't spend as much, compared to driving to Chicago, for example, and learn a little more about the Sunflower State.

I highly doubt the people behind the 8 Wonders promotion have it on their schedule, but it would be interesting to see what people think the best eight towns in Kansas are. I know, that would be hard to define what makes a great



#### John **V**an Nostrand

 Line in the Dust

town. Some people may automatically think of Wichita or Topeka purely based on all that is offered in those cities. Yet others would think of places like Colby and Quinter - smaller towns and easier paced.

In one town where I used to live, the man who drove the town's garbage truck had a great story to tell about how much he appreciated that town. Before taking away people's garbage, he was sort of in a garbage pile of his own. Down on his luck and he had no place left to go. He ended up in this town, found a job and a future thanks to some residents.

A couple of winters ago, when a nasty snowstorm shut down Interstate 70, a church in Vona, Colo., asked its members to provide food and a place to stay to travelers who got stuck in Vona at the time the road was closed. Since then, some people who were grateful for Vona's hospitality, are still sending cash donations to the church as a thank you and as a way to motivate the church to continue that outreach in the future, when needed. Similar stuck on U.S. Highway 83.

Those kinds of situations should not be stereotyped in small towns. I hope there are neighborhoods in the cities that can tell similar stories of generosity.

It's moments like that we all should like to hear about where we live.

I'm sure there are more.

I've been impressed by the actions of some Colby people in the two-plus years I've been here. Just look at the churches. A couple of years ago, College Drive Assembly of God church found a way to house a needy family. Colby Wesleyan Church offered some school supplies to several families before the start of the current school year. (Word on the street is the Berean church is working on doing something similar). We've been told the First Baptist Church's remote-control car fans are grow-

Genesis, Thomas County's food bank, is incredible. I still catch myself daydreaming over the amount of food, donors and volunteer help they had to fill food boxes for Christmas last

Even the Colby Visitor's Center has resources for people in need passing through town. If you really want to make a difference, volunteer at the center.

We all need to do our part to make Colby and the other towns in Thomas County the best they can be. You never know who might need

— John Van Nostrand is publisher of the situations happened in Rexford with people Colby Free Press.

## Your turn

## Remember child care providers

By Tanya Koehn Infant/Toddler Specialist

Northwest Kansas Child Care Resource and

Referral Agency

Child care organizations and parents across the globe are joining together Friday, May 9, to celebrate Provider Appreciation Day. It is estimated that nearly 12 million children under age 5 in the United States are in some type of child care every week.

Every day, child care providers care for an estimated 383,981 children under the age of 8 in Kansas. The children and parents of Kansas depend on our child care providers. May 9 is the day to recognize the hard work and dedication of providers, and to acknowledge their contributions to high-quality care."

"By applauding the dedication of child care providers, we remind our communities of the importance of high-quality child care, and let providers everywhere know that we recognize

sociation of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, the lead sponsor of Provider Appreciation Day.

"It is important that the care a child receives during the first five years of life be of highquality because 90 percent of brain development occurs during those years."

In recent years, local governments across the U.S. have joined many governors in proclaiming this day of recognition.

Around the globe, Department of Defense installations celebrate Provider Appreciation Day by recognizing those who care for the children of military parents living both at home and abroad. The celebrations this year promise to carry on and strengthen Provider Appreciation Day. Efforts are underway to ask child care organizations, public officials, and parents to honor their child care provid-

and value their important work," said Linda K. ers for their hard work and commitment to Smith, Executive Director of the National As- children through events such as luncheons, parades, dedications, and other recognition celebrations.

Locally, Northwest Kansas Child Care Resource Referral Agency is leading this effort. We would like to encourage all families with young children in childcare or preschool to take time to thank their providers for the hard work they do everyday. It takes a special person to work in the child care field and these individuals are often unrecognized. This day offers an opportunity for parents to show their child care providers their appreciation."

To learn more about Provider Appreciation Day or for ideas on how you can thank your child care provider, contact me at Northwest Kansas Child Care Resource and Referral Agency, (785) 460-5482, or e-mail

tanya@colbycc.edu

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