

Volume 122, Number 16 Friday, January 28, 2011



Free Press Viewpoint

Initial census data is good for Kansas

Data is beginning to trickle in from the 2010 Census, and it's mostly encouraging, unless you live in Michigan or Puerto Rico.

Michigan is the only state to see a population decline from 2000 to 2010. Its population dropped by .6 percent. Puerto Rico was the only territory included in the data set; it lost 2.2 percent of its population.

All the other state gained population. Kansas' population increased by 6.1 percent from 2.69 million to 2.85 million people. Kansas hasn't lost population since the 1940 census, when it shrunk to 1.8 million.

However, because of research done by the Free Press and other area newspapers, we know that even though there are more Kansans than ever, the population has been shifting over time out of the rural areas and into the cities. State and county level data hasn't been released yet, but we know from past census data as well as Census Bureau estimates that almost every county in northwest Kansas is declining in population and will continue to do so. Thomas County is fortunate to be one of the few declining by less than 10 percent.

The really interesting thing in this data set is apportionment, or the number of congressional representatives each state gets. It's different each census because of changing population. Some states go up more than others, while some go down. The total number of House members stays the same every time, it's just a matter of how big everyone's slice of the pie is.

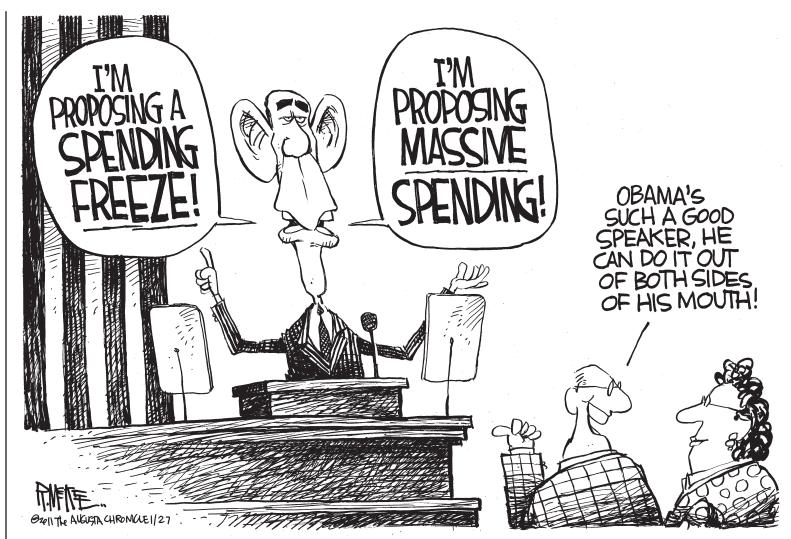
This time, Kansas held onto its four seats. This is good news for us. The 1st District already has 69 counties. It takes a major, months-long effort for candidates and representatives to visit all 69 (the gas bill alone probably makes campaign managers cry). More than one candidate remarked on this during the last election. One predicted that because of the population shift out of rural areas, the 1st District might get area added to it, but it would only be a few counties.

Kansas actually began the century with six seats; lost one in 1940 and again in 1990.

This year, 12 seats were reassigned. Iowa, Missouri, Louisiana, Illinois, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and New Jersey each lost one; New York and Ohio lost two; Washington, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, Georgia and South Carolina gained one; Florida gained two; and Texas gained four.

We'll have to wait to find out more detailed population statistics for Kansas, but this initial data is good news. More people pay more taxes, which will might help our budget crisis. Gov. Sam Brownback always talks about his goal of growing Kansas; looks like its already been trending that way. We just hope the good news will continue to roll in as the data gets more specific.

Oh, and to answer the most basic and often overlooked question of the census: there are 308,745,538 people living in the United States. – Kevin Bottrell



You just can't please some people

Sometimes good deeds go unappreciated. I found that out about 25 years ago when I was visiting my mother and step-father in Kennewick. Washington.

It was right after they had a bad auto accident in which my mother severely injured her leg and for a time was unable to walk. She needed assistance around the house and with her daily care and exercises, so I went to Washington to stay with her for about a month to help her out.

Bob Richards, my stepfather, was working as a mobile home salesman at that time. However, for many years before that he had worked as a chef in several restaurants and he and my mom had even owned a restaurant at one time. Therefore, he did a lot of the cooking at home.

When I first arrived, I noticed a very dirty electric skillet sitting on the kitchen cabinet. I asked my mother why it hadn't been washed. She said that the stainless steel skillet belonged to Bob and that he never washed it. She added that he only wiped it out with a paper towel while it was still hot each time he finished cooking something in it. She went on to say that Bob did that because that routine kept things from sticking to the skillet.



Well, I had a stainless steel electric skillet at home that I often used and always washed. I never had trouble with the food sticking to it. So that's when I started my routine.

From that day on, every time I washed dishes, I washed that dirty skillet. I didn't just wash it; I used an SOS soap pad on it. I could see from the first washing that it was going to take a while, so I hid the skillet in the cabinet after each washing so Bob couldn't see what was going on. That skillet was not only packed with burnt-on grease inside the pan, it was also burnt on the outside.

Bob had no idea what I was doing to his pan, because I was preparing all of the meals and cleaning up afterwards by myself. He was thoroughly enjoying having me there to do the things he would have had to do after he worked all day at the trailer lot. He never even

noticed that the skillet was no longer sitting on the cabinet.

I continued to work on the skillet until I could see my reflection on the inside of that shining, stainless steel pan. It actually looked like a brand-new appliance. I knew I was ready to unveil the results of my labor to Bob that evening.

I waited until after dinner, after I had cleared the table, and after Bob was comfortably seated in front of the TV. Then, with a big smile on my face, I brought out the pan and held it up in front of him.

At first he just set there with a blank look on his face. Then he asked, "You bought a new frying pan?"

I grinned with pride and said, "No. This is your frying pan. I cleaned it."

Bob's reply was, "Well, I guess that's alright, but it used to be Teflon lined."

I understand that Bob didn't often use that pan after that, he said it had a tendency to make food stick.

Marj Brown has lived in Colby for over 62 years and has spent a good deal of that time writing about people and places here. She says it's one of her favorite things to do.

Thanks for a good game

Write us

۲

The Colby Free Press encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of general interest. Letters should be brief, clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise. Nor do we run form letters.

COLBY FREE PRESS (USPS 120-920)

155 W. Fifth St. Colby, Kan. 67701

(785) 462-3963 fax (785) 462-7749

Send news to: colby.editor @ nwkansas.com

State award-winning newspaper, General Excellence, Design & Layout, Columns, Editorial Writing, Sports Columns, News, Photography. Official newspaper of Thomas County, Colby, Brewster and Rexford.

> Steve Haynes - Publisher s.haynes @ nwkansas.com

NEWS

Kevin Bottrell - News Editor bottrell @ nwkansas.com

Andy Heintz - Sports Reporter aheintz @ nwkansas.com

Marian Ballard - Copy Editor mballard @ nwkansa

Vera Sloan - Society Editor

Shelby Pulkrabek - Society Reporter colby.society @ nwkansas.co

ADVERTISING

Andrea Bowers, Kathryn Ballard, Tammy Withers

Advertising Representatives abowers @ nwkansas.com s @ nwkansas.com

> Kylee Hunter - Graphic Design khunter @ nwkansas.com

BUSINESS OFFICE Robin Tubbs - Office Manager

rtubbs @ nwkansas.com

Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator support @ nwkansas.con

NOR'WEST PRESS

Richard Westfahl - General Manager Lana Westfahl, Jim Jackson, Betty Morris, Jim Bowker, Judy McKnight, Kris McCool

THE COLBY FREE PRESS (USPS 120-920) is published every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, except the days observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, by Nor'West Newspaper 155 W. Fifth St., Colby, Kan., 67701.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE paid at Colby, Kan. 67701, and at additional mailing offices POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth St., Colby, Kan., 6770⁻

THE BUSINESS OFFICE at 155 W. Fifth is open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday, closed Saturday and Sunday. MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, which is exclusively entitled to the use for publication of all news herein. Member Kansas Press Association and National Newspaper Association.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: In Colby, Thomas County and Oakley: three months \$35, one year \$85. By mail to ZIP Codes beginning with 676 and 677: three months \$39, one year \$95. Elsewhere in the U.S., mailed once per week: three months \$39, one year \$95 Student rate, nine months, in Colby, Thomas County and Oakley, \$64; mailed once per eek elsewhere in the U.S. \$72

To the Editor:

On Jan. 13, the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce hosted the Harlem Ambassadors professional show basketball team for a night of high-flying slam dunks, hilarious comedy and feel-good family entertainment.

The Ambassadors would like to extend a special thanks to event organizers Holly Whitaker and Lottie McLemore, who planned and promoted the game. The Chamber Challengers proved to be an energetic and enthusiastic challenging team, and we thank all of the players for their good sportsmanship.

The event would not have been possible without the support and generosity of community sponsors, the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce members, and event volunteers.

The Harlem Ambassadors thank the community for its warm hospitality and look forward to returning to Colby in the future!

Dale Moss. president Harlem Ambassadors Fort Collins, Colo.

License plate is beautiful

To the publisher:

Bruce

Tinsley

I disagree with you wholeheartedly about not being able to read this tag (the "In God We Trust" license plate). I have had more comments around our state since I purchased this tag, from people of Kansas and other states, that I have never ever had comments before.

Personally, I think it is the most attractive tag ever, that any state or county has ever had. The people that have commented to me agree, without question, and wish they could have it also in their county or state.

Thought you should know! I disagree with you and I'm sure everyone that has it agrees.

Lifetime in Thomas County, Larry Chambers

Publisher's Note: It's beautiful. It just turned out to be unreadable on the road, as op-



posed to in a parking lot. - Steve Haynes

Speak up for the First

To the Editor:

More than 25 years ago my Dad used this phrase: "We are not 'we the sheeple,' we are We The People." I have heard that phrase quite often in the last few months and finally, in November, the American people woke up to try and change the course of this nation at the ballot. I think Dad would be proud. America's people have been asleep for too long and now have a glimmer of hope to right the course of the last 100 years.

On that note, how many realize our First Amendment rights are under attack? The freedom to speak and think and gather are under attack. There are congressmen that want to introduce a bill to make our speech "civil."

As members of the human race, I think 85 to 90 percent of us are civil. There are some on both sides of the aisle, and even standing in the center of the aisle, that want us to bow to Washington, D.C., just to get along.

Can you imagine speaking to your kids, family, friends, co-workers, even strangers and having to curb enthusiasm about such card games as War or Black Jack, Shooting Craps or the craps table? How about the games of Cops and Robbers or Cowboys and Indians? Kids couldn't make a pretend gun with their fingers and hand, for fear it might kill someone! Kids couldn't drink tropical punch.

Hunters couldn't speak of having a target in

the crosshairs or a shot in the dark. Could people still kick start a motorcycle? Could military veterans use the phrase "we got caught in the crossfire"? Would there be any more top guns flying for the military?

Farmers could not use the phrase ground kill. People in the martial arts could not refer to a punching bag or kicks of any kind.

Kids couldn't play kick the can or crack the whip. Kids couldn't even use the phrase "liar, liar, pants on fire." You couldn't hit the nail on head, you couldn't use a hatchet to chop down a nuisance bush, because that could be termed a hatchet job. There would be no bully pulpits, kid gloves, barbed comments, backhanded compliments; no smashes in tennis.

Meteorologists couldn't compare hail to bullets. No shooting ranges for target practice. There would be no crack shots, crack pots, no gunslingers of the Old West, no drawing a bead on a target. No lock and load.

You couldn't use the phrase "kill the lights" in stage productions; kids couldn't talk about music groups such as Guns and Roses. How about the classic "Hooked on A Feelin" by B.J. Thomas?

The Gun and Coin Show couldn't advertise because they have "shotguns" "antique guns" and "antiques" (antiques are anything over 25 years old). Moms couldn't say 'my kid has a 'loaded diaper' and I need to change him."

What about deadlines at the paper? Shooters from a bartender, being punch drunk, the punch line of a joke? How about movies like "Killshot," "Speed," "Top Gun"? Astronauts can't shoot for the moon. No tickle fights, or job-killing bill.

Do you see where I'm going with this? I don't know about you, but I'm not going to kick the bucket before I have a knock down, drag out in honor of my country. We The People cannot let them pass a bill to curb our free speech! It is a God-given right that I will not surrender!

Jari Skiles, Colby

WHILE POUS SHOW WE AT MSNEC THINK THE TERM THAT MOST AMERICANS Mallard "CHEAP SHOT SAY THEY DON'T LIKE Fillmore 15 INCENDIARY POLITICIANS USING TIMES RGHT-WING OF TRAGEDY tO TAKE QQ CHEAP SHOTS AT RHETORIC ... THEIR OPPONENTS ... Theley1.28 ۲