

# commentary

from other pens...

## Dems change primaries; Kansas will lose again

**The Wichita Eagle on primary system:**  
Presidential primaries were a sore enough point in the Sunflower State after April 2000, when the George W. Bush campaign declared its man the victor of a Kansas primary that had been canceled weeks before. Had lawmakers not wisely saved the state the \$1.5 million cost of holding a primary that year, it would have been a mere formality: Mr. Bush and Al Gore had sewn up the needed convention delegates in March.  
Now the Democratic National Committee has made matters worse — if that’s possible — by voting this month to allow states to hold their Democratic presidential primaries in 2004 even earlier than the past.  
The DNC’s action almost ensures that more states — wanting attention from contenders and a role in the picking — will hold their primaries as soon as possible after the traditional kickoff battles in Iowa and New Hampshire in January. Both Democrats and Republicans could have future nominees anointed as early as February. And if Kansas wanted to count at all, it would need to hold its primary as part of that early-bird pack.  
Sadly, the front-loading also means all presidential campaigns will need to start earlier — again, if that’s possible. ...  
Having held presidential primaries in only 1980 and 1992, the Sunflower State is hardly committed to the concept of helping select presidential nominees at the polls. The state Republican and Democratic parties usually pick their convention delegates, largely out of public view.  
But some of us were hoping Kansas could have more influence on presidential politics in the future, rather than less. Fat chance.

**The Hays Daily News on research centers:**  
The \$100 million proposal for establishing research centers at three Kansas state universities represents thinking big.  
And, so, it represents the challenge in Kansas to believe we can compete in technology and know-how with the biggest boys, states with far more resources. It also represents the struggle over the role and size of government, a debate that seems especially amplified in the current budgetary environment. ...  
The plan would be to establish three research centers: life sciences at the University of Kansas, food safety at Kansas State University and aviation at Wichita State University. ...  
Kansas has talked about wanting to be on the cutting edge. It has talked about having its higher educational system in the upper tier, at least among public universities. It has talked about stopping the “brain drain” and building our intellectual capital. It has talked about economic development, and investing in education is all about economic development.  
Now comes a tangible plan that could take Kansas there. ...  
Too many legislators look only at taxes. That is the only issue. This year’s state budget is an issue that seems irrelevant when one considers the payoff to the state economy by this type of activity. Economic growth of this magnitude could quickly erase such a budget deficit. ...  
Kansans should think big. Our universities are showing us how.

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## There is something unique about a small town

I don’t know about you, but I’ve been working pretty hard on my columns’ lately.  
I even got a little irate in one of them. So this week I’m slowing down and taking it easy.  
In fact, I’ll just share someone else’s composition. This is by Charles Collins:  
**YOU KNOW YOU’RE IN A SMALL TOWN WHEN....**  
There are more preachers than police. ... the clock on the bank has hands. ... you know where the dog that nipped you lives. ... the Post Office is in the corner of the grocery store. ... the best view is from the top of the grain elevator.  
Sometimes the attending “physician” at the football game is the veterinarian. ... there are more pickup trucks than cars parked at the football game, the church, and the volunteer fire department. ... the mayor is a part-time politician and a full-time

**lorna g. t.**  
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station operator (grocer, housewife, insurance/real estate agent).  
The speed limit does not decrease through town. ... little kids are fenced in; dogs are not. ... the garage doesn’t work on foreign cars. ... the school bus driver is related to a third of her passengers.  
You can rent videos the same place you get your hair fixed. ... most people in the barber shop are not there to get a hair cut. ... when the alarm sounds, the first one reaching the firehouse gets to drive the truck. ... the football coach is better known than the

school superintendent or principal; or the coach is the principal. ... the largest billboard advertises the State Championship High School Football Team (on basketball).  
When snow removal is a farmer with a tractor and blade. ... people will think you are upset if you don’t wave. ... you have your own coffee mug at the café. ... you and your child had the same second grade teacher. ... some stranger wants to buy the gas pump at the filling station to put in his den. ... a weed-eater is an old ewe. ... you can read in the newspaper about where you went for Sunday dinner and what you had to eat. ... conference phone calls do not require special equipment.  
You’ll have to decide whether or not you live in a small town.  
Frankly, I’m glad I do!  
Email Lorna at <[lornagt@nwkansas.com](mailto:lornagt@nwkansas.com)>.

## Remember the ‘gas crisis’ of the 70s?

Another thing I was thinking while remembering the late Colorado Governor Love last week was he left the state just before the gas crisis of the early 70s, and resigned as the Energy Czar in the middle of the gas crisis.  
This was quite an event in my life with problems finding an open gas station and long lines at the open gas stations.

**tom betz**  
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tion cuts won’t hit the American market until summer.  
I found it surprising over the weekend when gas prices in Lamar, Colo. were as low as those in Goodland, especially considering Colorado has a higher state gas tax than Kansas. Usually gas prices in Colorado are between 5¢ and 10¢ higher than in Kansas. Without the gas tax that would mean the gas price to the west is actually lower than here.  
This is part of the ever continuing saga of whether the American petroleum companies are truly responding to market forces of supply and demand, or simply to their demand for higher profits. I am certain the 10¢ raise did not result in a large raise for the local gas station operators.

There was even a night when I ran out of gas at the corner of Broadway and Colfax in downtown Denver. With help from a couple of Denver Police officers I was able to get enough gas to make it to an open station, and then on to my home in Boulder. Every time I drive through that intersection I check my gas gauge.  
It was quite a pleasant shock in December to buy a gallon of gas for \$1 or under. What a far cry from the nearly \$2 we were paying through the summer and after the attacks of Sept. 11.  
The dip in price did not last long. When the oil exporting nations decided to cut their production in early January the price of gas jumped by 10 cents almost overnight — despite the fact the oil produc-

## The Bush-Ashcroft-Dinh global effect

At the Justice Department, Attorney General John Ashcroft’s right-hand man is Viet Dinh, assistant attorney for legal policy. A former Georgetown University law professor, Dinh has justified and helped implement nearly every move the attorney general has made, in conjunction with the president, on the war on terrorism.  
“Our job here,” Viet Dinh tells Legal Times, “is to defend freedom.” There are those, however, including this columnist, who believe Dinh, Ashcroft and Bush have been seriously eroding the American freedoms they fiercely believe they are defending.  
A critic of the job Ashcroft and his colleagues are doing is Richard Goldston of South Africa’s Constitutional Courts. Goldston is internationally respected for the firmness and fairness of the way he did his job as chief prosecutor for the International Commission for Rwanda and Bosnia.  
December, at the University of San Diego, Goldston participated in a conference at the opening of the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice.  
Joining the American civil libertarian criticism of the Bush-Ashcroft-Dinh team, Goldston, as reported in the National Catholic Reporter, said that although American polls strongly support the administration’s anti-terrorism policies, one result is that “young democracies in other countries are being endangered” as they see the United States discount core liberties in its own Constitution.  
“The institutions democracy is required to maintain,” Goldston emphasized, “are costly. And when the United States, which is regarded as one of the bastions of democracy, goes back on its own values, it imperils and makes more difficult the creation of a human rights culture in young democracies.”  
Recent presidential restrictions on American civil liberties, said the chief former prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunal, “can only encourage undemocratic processes in non-democracies” trying to learn how to be democratic.  
Also at the University of San Diego conference was former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, who made the corollary point: “We Americans are citizens of an unchallenged superpower. If we continue to expound shortcuts in the administration

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of justice, there is a global effect set in motion.  
“It is going to be difficult in the future,” the former president continued, “to condemn another country — China for instance — which might have a secret military tribunal and convict an American accused of, say, spying.”  
Even with revisions in our military tribunals, serious civil liberties problems remain.  
One of the frequently intoned arguments of the supporters of the Bush-Ashcroft-Dinh way of securing our freedom is that the Constitution is not a suicide pact. Keeping in mind the ruthless Sept. 11 murders of Americans on this very land by members of the worldwide, shadowy conspiracy with some of their “sleepers” waiting to strike again at us here at home, they say, it is essential to limit some of our civil liberties to save them.  
One of the sources of the quotation that our Constitution is not a suicide pact was former Supreme Justice Arthur Goldberg. However, on the floor of the Senate, as the Bush-Ashcroft-Dinh U.S. Patriot Act was being debated, Sen. Russell Feingold of Wisconsin — the only senator to eventually vote against that anti-terrorism bill — vainly reminded his colleagues of how Arthur Goldberg elaborated on that statement in the Kennedy v. Mendoza-Martinez case, which was about draft evasion:  
“It is fundamental that the great powers of Congress to declare war and to regulate the Nation’s foreign relations are subject to constitutional requirements of due process. The imperative necessary for safeguarding these rights to procedural due process under the gravest of emergencies has existed throughout our constitutional history — for it is then, under the pressing exigencies of crisis, that there is the greatest temptation to dispense with fundamental constitutional guarantees which, it is feared, will inhibit governmental action.” This is

also true of the executive branch.  
Goldberg then quoted from ex parte Milligan (1866), when the Supreme Court declared Abraham Lincoln’s suppression of dissent through military courts during the Civil War unconstitutional: “The Constitution of the United States is a law for rulers and people, equally in war and peace, and covers with the shield of its protection all classes of men, at all times, and under all circumstances ... In no other way can we transmit to posterity unimpaired the blessings of liberty, consecrated by the sacrifices of the Revolution.”  
Contrary to the attorney general, the job of those of us who dissent from the Bush-Ashcroft-Dinh curtailing of the Constitution is to defend freedom.  
Nat Hentoff is a nationally renowned authority on the First Amendment and the Bill of Rights.

### berry’s world



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... AND, AS A PART-TIME WORKER, YOU WILL FIND THAT YOU’LL HAVE MORE OF SOME THINGS AND LESS OTHERS. LIKE — LESS INCOME AND MORE ANXIETY.”