

from our viewpoint...

Gore may turn prize into new campaign

If this showdown becomes reality, we want front row seats! If possible, we'd like to sit in the ring. Watching every move, every political punch. The fight of the decade. Rumors are running wild that former Vice President Al Gore will enter the Democratic presidential race with the Nobel Peace Prize in hand.

Should he emerge as a candidate, his target would be the front-runner Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton. It's no secret there's bad blood between the Clintons and Gores.

Political gossip centers in the country say a Gore entry won't materialize. They say he is content with winning an Oscar and now the Nobel Peace Prize. They argue he is at the top of his game and has no interest in seeking the office he lost to President George Bush in 2000. Despite winning the popular vote, that election took all kinds of twists and turns, eventually ending up in the lap of the U.S. Supreme Court, thus becoming the biggest political pretzel of all time.

Other voices say Gore has not lost his desire to become president. If he should enter, and that's a big IF, the rest of the Democratic field might as well fold up their tents because it'll become a Hillary-Al fight. And the media will really feast on that!

How will this change the Democratic face? Sen. Clinton will, no doubt, lose her edge. There are a lot of Democrats not totally satisfied with the current field and a Gore entry would give them one more option.

Both Clinton and Gore have eight years experience in the White House. He, in an elected role; she in an appointed capacity. Comparing the two in terms of experience, knowledge and electability, Gore wins. Sen. Clinton upset a lot of folks after husband Bill was elected president, by saying as first lady she wasn't going to waste her time staying home and baking cookies. Her first real challenge as first lady was pushing a national health care plan. That was a disaster, and she would have been better served baking cookies.

There's another issue that's hiding in the background, seldom mentioned, but could play a role if Clinton should win the party's nomination for president. It's the Bush-Clinton dominance of the presidency. If she is elected in 2008 and subsequently re-elected four years later, the Bush-Clinton families will have run this country for more than a quarter century — 28 years to be exact. The elder George Bush served four years, Bill Clinton eight years and the younger George Bush is closing out his eight years.

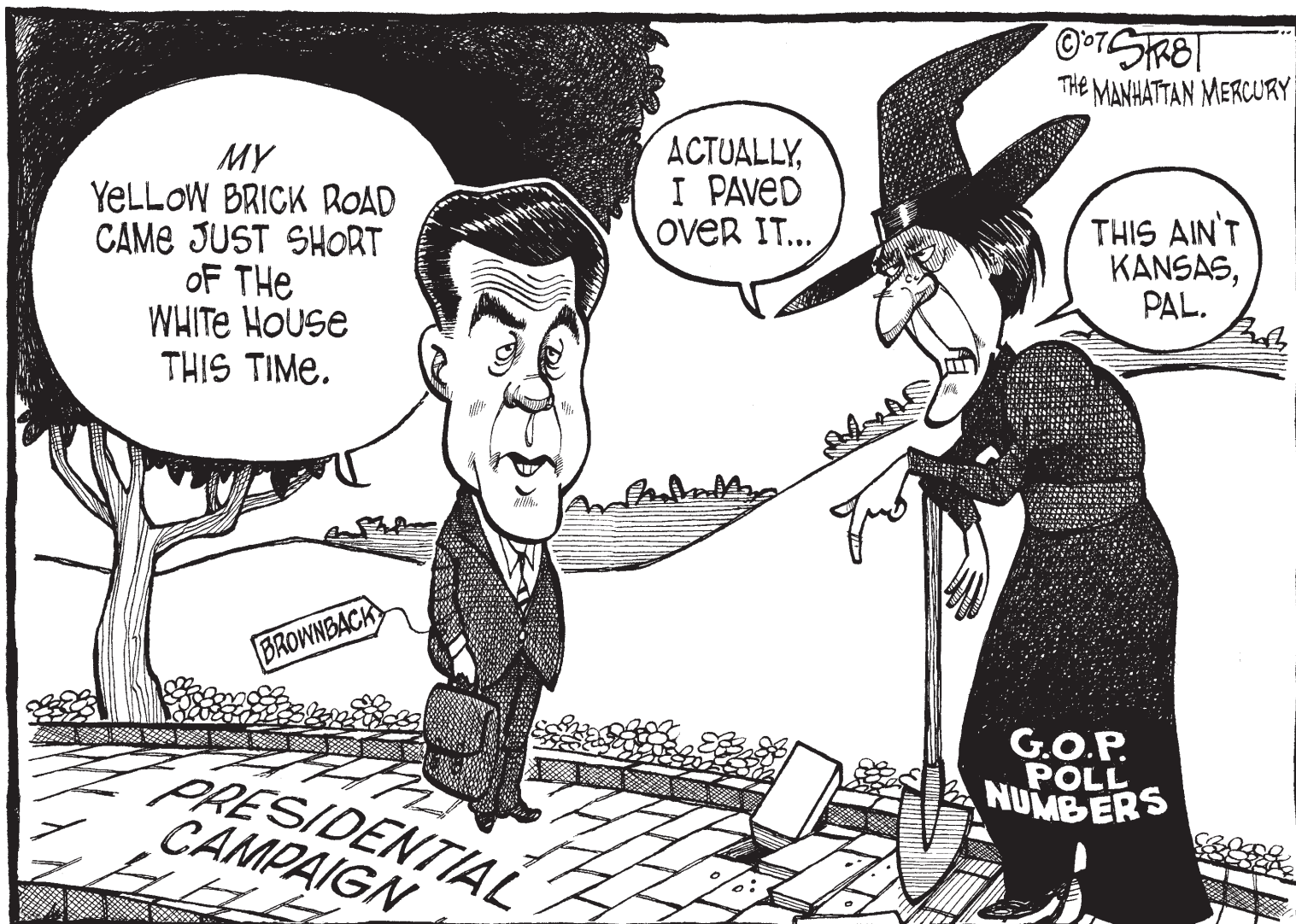
When is enough enough?

That should be answered in 2008 — with or without Al Gore. But then again, maybe voters don't have a problem with the Bush-Clinton trade off.

And by the way, we aren't making plans to be ringside. We side in with those who don't see Gore jumping into this thing.

He's got better things to do, like endorsing a candidate for the nomination, and then actively campaigning for success.

— Tom Dreiling, *The Norton Telegram*



State heading for budget crisis

It's not hard to see that Kansas is heading for yet another budget crisis, with spending expected to outstrip state expenses by \$532 million this year and \$252 million next time.

Kansas has been living on the state's savings — and on increased revenue brought in by economic good times — every since the Legislature promised an extra \$1 billion a year for schools.

Other costs, especially the Medicaid program, which covers medical bills for welfare clients and other low-income citizens, are on the increase. The governor and Legislature pushed selective tax cuts to make the state more competitive when attracting businesses. Colleges and universities want money to fix crumbling buildings.

The result: while the state finished the 2007 fiscal year on June 30 with more than \$900 million in reserves, after two years of heavy deficit spending, that "bank account" should be down to \$150 million or less by June 30, 2008.

In a rising economy, that might support current state spending. Might.

But state spending never stays current. It goes up 5 to 7 percent a year, every year, far



steve haynes

• along the sappa

faster than your paycheck.

In the next couple of years, the state has to write a new transportation program. Prospects are not good. The first two highway plans brought the state road system up to standard, but that included borrowing hundreds of millions. Those bonds have to be paid now, and they'll eat a huge portion of the transportation budget.

Sustaining good roads, building new ones and paying the loans will require money, lots of it, and the state already is spending more than it takes in.

Good times feed more spending, but good times never last.

The last couple of years, state revenue has exceeded budget estimates by millions. When the economy turns around, so will the state's income.

And that's liable to happen about the same

time as the highway fund runs out. The state is coming to the end of a 10-year road program formulated under Gov. Bill Graves. Something has to be done, or the progress won under the first two programs will be lost.

Associated Press Topeka correspondent John Hanna laid out the details of the state's deficit spending in a Monday feature more than a week ago. While not technically illegal — the state has the cash in its reserves — the practice is shaky. The picture is sunny today only because the state is prosperous.

History shows state revenue runs in cycles, and this uptick may be about over.

State spending never declines, though. It has two forward speeds. In good times, the governor and Legislature, driven by incessant demand, spend lots. In tough times, they spend only a little less.

So be prepared. When demand for state spending hits the wall, the spenders will come looking for more money. They'll be looking in your pocketbook, even though in a downturn, there won't be much there.

The state won't cut its spending. And that spells a Tax Increase for you.

Crime prevention group's goal

To the Editor:

October was designated Crime Prevention Month in 1984 by the National Crime Prevention Council. Every year since then government agencies, civic organizations, youth groups, schools, and businesses have reached out to educate the public, showcase their accomplishments, and explore new partnerships.

October has become the official month for recognizing and celebrating the practice of crime prevention, while promoting awareness of important issues such as victimization, home security, reporting suspicious activity and creating safer, more caring communities.

The month-long celebration spotlights successful crime prevention efforts on the local, state, and national levels which throughout the month generate enthusiasm for prevention so it can grow stronger and become more widespread.

Sherman county residents can celebrate crime prevention efforts demonstrated recently by two Kanorado men Rod Boyce and Donald Daub in their heroic rescue attempts and accurate reporting calls to 911. It took extreme courage to get involved in saving this fearful and battered woman in her dangerous attempt to escape her abductor.

Rod and Donald's awareness and quick response to her desperate plea for help is what saved her life. We are very proud of these two men. Thank you Rod and Donald for your bravery and compassion demonstrated with her rescue.

There is much to be said about the dedication and commitment of our law enforcement agencies. Thank you officers, for putting yourselves out there day after day safeguarding the lives and property of the people you serve in this county. Whether it is the sheriff's department or the police department they are always striving to reduce the incidence of crime and enhance public safety.

Both of these agencies have taken a strong stand against the use of illegal drugs in our county. It is reassuring to know Quad County Drug Task Force will continue to assist with the extremely difficult and complicated drug cases when our man power and resources are limited.

We are a city and county of partnerships and we must strive to unite responsibilities between our citizens and law enforcement. Only then can we expect to see a reduction of crime and improve the safety and quality of life in Sherman County.

We have a strong spirit of community and we would encourage all residents to utilize the



from our readers

• to the editor

best crime prevention device around: being a good neighbor and continue to look out for one another.

Neighborhood Watch Committee of Sherman County
Judy McKee

To the Editor:

I am a fly speck on a piece of paper, but I want my voice heard.

When are we going to get stripes painted on old U.S. 24 between Goodland and Kanorado?

On black oil and rain it is very dangerous. You drop off the side on a soft shoulder and lose control.

Is Sherman County so broke we can't buy paint?

It's already cost one life. How many more? Or do we get transferred to I-70 out of your way.

Edna Bishop
Kanorado

To the Editor:

I recently witnessed a very cruel, unjust act toward a 92-year-old Senior citizen. This person was taken to the emergency room of the hospital because of hemorrhaging from the nose.

She had previously done this earlier within the past three weeks and required two units of blood. No, it wasn't a simple nosebleed and no medical answers have yet been established.

By the time she arrived at the hospital, the bleeding had stopped. Because the medical staff, again, could find nothing wrong, she was denied admittance for overnight observation because Medicare would not pay for it.

I am not accusing the hospital or medical staff of neglect; they have to follow the rules. I am blaming our 'great' United States of America for abusing and neglecting our senior citizens. These are the very same persons who sacrificed physically and emotionally to keep this 'great' United States together in times of war and depression so we can have the freedom and rights we so desire today.

The only best way to acknowledge our gratefulness to them is to take care of them physically at their greatest hour of need. Shame on

us for not giving to them the honor and respect they deserve.

I have learned that our so-called 'underprivileged' neighbors in other lands receive medical care even though they don't have to pay for health insurance. Seems these countries care more about their elderly than our U.S. of A. does, even after our elderly have paid into the system for over 60 years.

Our 'over privileged' nation is neglecting the very source of its' wealth because of greed. Shame On Us!

Our Seniors gave of themselves totally to this great nation; not only physically, but, financially and emotionally as well. Why aren't they receiving the honor and respect they so rightly deserve?

The United States of America's greed for power, authority and wealth has destroyed the basic principles of kindness and caring for our fellowman that our country was founded on. Shame On Us!

This is a great country! We are sadly neglectful in extending the hand of kindness to those very souls who have enabled us to be great.

The one and only true gift we can give back to these Seniors who cared enough to sacrifice their loved ones and livelihoods is to care for them.

Sue Hall
Prineville, Ore.

To the Editor:

As for the article about wind farms, they could be more efficient if the blades on those machines were painted white on one side of the blade and black on the other side of the blade. If the wind wasn't blowing they would be powered by the sun.

Ruth Nichols
Kanorado

Letter Policy

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nwkansas.com

N.T. Betz, Director of Internet Services

(ntbetz@nwkansas.com)

Evan Barnum, Systems Admin.(support@nwkansas.com)

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