

from our viewpoint...

New governor can keep to 'road map'

Even before he takes office next week, new Gov. Sam Brownback is getting a lot of advice from groups and papers that didn't support him.

The gist of all this is that to succeed, what the incoming governor has to do is drop his long standing beliefs and become "more like them," that is, the liberals and so-called moderate Republicans who held sway in Topeka for so long.

But Sen. Brownback won election by a huge majority, 2-1 over his Democratic opponent, state Sen. Tom Holland. He won the Republican primary with 82 percent of the vote after other prominent candidates backed out, recognizing that they had little chance to win.

So in a very real sense, the people have spoken. Now, what does that mean?

First, we think, it means what it says. People liked the governor-elect's message of smaller government, a stronger economy and a better, more livable state. They bought into his "Road Map for Kansas."

In short, the people of Kansas apparently wanted Sam Brownback to be their governor, and since he got 63 percent of the vote, that includes most Republicans, a whole lot of independents and, yes, even a bunch of Democrats.

Second, Mr. Brownback is what he is: a principled conservative. He's never pretended to be anything else, not when he ran for Congress, not when he ran for the Senate, not when he ran for President.

He's a guy who believes in smaller government, a more efficient bureaucracy, a leader state and a less intrusive approach. He'll sign laws making abortions harder to get and requiring voters to show a photo ID at the polls.

Not all of us will agree with him, but he'll be the one with the pen.

The new governor also is a smart and successful politician. He's won all his recent races, emerged from his battles mostly unscathed, his popularity intact. He promised to step down from the Senate after two full terms (and after serving out the final two years of Sen. Bob Dole's last term), and he's done so.

Not many in American politics have built their popularity and strength by giving up one powerful office to take one with more perceived risk. Sam Brownback has done so. People seem to like him.

It may also be that being governor is a more certain path to the presidency. Between John Kennedy and Barack Obama, no senator has been elected president. Lots of governors have. Dick Nixon had to go serve time as governor of California before he got elected. Maybe people just prefer executive experience.

But a presidential race will have to wait. Today, Mr. Brownback faces a state budget deficit for the coming fiscal year approaching \$500 million. How he'll balance the budget without a tax increase remains to be seen. His term will be judged, in large part, by the answer to that question.

Meantime, he's been getting a lot of advice from once-unfriendly places, including the editorial page of *The Kansas City Star* (which endorsed his opponent, by the way). The gist of all this advice is that the governor-elect needs to become more liberal and buy into more taxes, more spending.

Anyone who believes that is going to happen needs to go back and read the election results again. Sam Brownback is about to be governor because he's Sam Brownback, and because people apparently like him just the way he is.

It's going to be an interesting four years. — Steve Haynes

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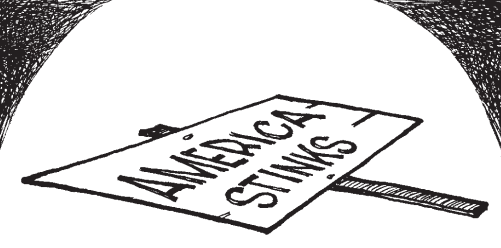
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AFTER THEIR CARS ARE VANDALIZED WITH ANTI-ISLAMIC BUMPER STICKERS.

A couch great place to take nap

I stole my husband's couch Sunday afternoon. I felt so sneaky.

It's not that there's anything written down, or even spoken, but we've just come to accept that the upstairs couch is mine and the downstairs one belongs to Steve.

We try to take the chance on Saturdays and Sundays to grab a nap. One hour on the couch can do wonders for your outlook and makes even a busy, working weekend seem special.

We're lucky to have two couches.

When we only had one, Steve had to take his nap in the bed. Not that there's anything wrong with napping in a bed; it's just that they're too soft and comfortable.

You take a nap in a bed, and an hour can turn into three real easy. And a three-hour nap means you wake up groggy and can't get to sleep that night. It's generally not a good idea.

A couch, however, is perfect for naps. A good couch is long enough and soft enough that when you lie down on it, it's a welcoming friend. Top yourself with a soft throw and grab a pillow and you're good for about an hour.



cynthia haynes

• open season

After an hour, though, the couch starts to turn against you. Where it was soft and welcoming just a short time ago, it starts to develop lumps, bumps and hard spots. It knows that you need to get up — and it makes sure you do.

Steve's couch is an antique. It belonged to his grandmother and his mother remembered it being recovered when she was in high school. Since his mother was in high school before the War, that couch has been around a few decades.

We had the couch recovered after several generations of cats made it look its age. It's a great couch, and after getting the upholstery bill, we vowed never to have another cat with claws in our house. We've kept that vow, and the couch looks as good as it did 25 years

ago.

It gives a great nap.

My couch is actually a studio and makes out into a bed. We seldom use the bed part, but the couch is popular for naps and as a folding table on laundry days.

That's why I usually have to move clothes before taking my nap: Socks, underwear, T-shirts and jeans go onto a chair or the floor while I inhabit the couch for a blissful hour.

The upstairs couch is a little harder than the one downstairs, and it's in the same room as the police radio, which gives broadcasts from fire, police, road crews, emergency medical services, trains and a few ham radio operators. Sometimes, the upstairs isn't the quietest place on the planet.

So after the snowstorm, the road crews were out, Steve was out of town and I took over the downstairs couch for some quiet nap time.

I was doing pretty well, too, until the phone rang.

It was Steve. How did he know?

The Kansas way of life

Kansas is a great place. In Kansas, we know our neighbors and look after them. We teach our children to be moral, responsible citizens. And we work hard to provide for our families and build a better future.

The pioneering spirit of those Kansans years ago who settled our state and tamed the West lives on in us today. We are independent people who want to make a difference.

I appreciate you allowing me the opportunity to make a difference during my years of service in the U.S. House of Representatives.

On Wednesday, I began a new journey and now have the honor of representing all Kansans in the U.S. Senate. We lead a special way of life in Kansas, one that is worth fighting to preserve for the next generation. That fight has been and will continue to be my focus.

As a senior member of the House Agriculture Committee, I worked on legislation that will help Kansas farms and ranches remain viable, so they can be passed on to the next generation. This included fighting for estate tax reform, working to open markets overseas, writing farm bills and preserving the viability of crop insurance.

These things are important regardless of your job or where you live in Kansas because agriculture matters. It is a mainstay of our economy and when agriculture is successful, Kansas is successful.

Improving the quality of life for the nearly 250,000 veterans living in our state has been a top priority. As a member of the House



jerry moran

• in Congress

Veterans Affairs Committee, I was a staunch advocate for veterans who had trouble getting the health care they needed because the VA hospital or health clinic was too far away.

During my tenure, I oversaw the development of five new VA outpatient clinics in western and central Kansas that have brought care closer to home. I have been a part of ongoing efforts to allow rural veterans to obtain health care from their local physician or hospital.

Kansas ranks fourth in the nation in total highway miles with over 134,500 miles of public roads and highways. Our state's aviation industry accounts for about 20 percent of our manufacturing employment and employs tens of thousands of Kansans. During my time on the House Transportation Committee, I authored legislation to improve highways and railways in Kansas, while also protecting and promoting the growth of the aviation industry in our state.

In rural Kansas communities, access to quality health care is essential to the prosperity and survival of the towns we call home. As Co-Chairman of the House Rural Health Care Coalition, I led the fight to save rural

hospitals, sponsored legislation to bring more physicians to underserved areas and worked to restore Medicare funding for small hospitals. As co-founder of the Congressional Community Pharmacy Coalition, I worked to make sure that Kansans have access to a pharmacist within their own communities.

Since first coming to Congress in 1997, I have made it a priority to stay connected to the Kansans I represent, so I have returned home each weekend, and have held annual town hall meetings in each of the 69 counties I represented in Congress. In the years ahead, I will continue to return home and travel throughout all 105 counties in our state to hear from Kansans directly. Most importantly, I will not forget where I came from and the Kansans who helped me along the way.

My generation has a responsibility to the next generation of Americans, to be good stewards of what we have been given. As I begin this new journey, I remain committed to do what is necessary today, so our children and grandchildren can enjoy the same freedoms and opportunities we have in Kansas and in this great country.

Senator Jerry Moran was sworn in as a Kansas Senator on Wednesday in Washington as the 112th Congress opened the session. Moran, from Hays was the First District Congressman before being elected to replace out-going Senator Sam Brownback who is the Kansas Governor-elect.

Mentoring Month recognizes volunteers

To the Editor:

January is National Mentoring Month. Big Brothers Big Sisters has been the leader in one-to-one youth services for over 100 years with proven success in creating positive friendships that benefit children, volunteers, families, schools, neighborhoods and the community.

Recent studies have shown children who were mentored through Big Brothers Big Sisters are positively influenced throughout their lives. Seventy-seven percent reported doing better in school because of their mentors. Eighty-six percent reported their mentors helped them make better life choices. Teachers report when students have a school-based mentor they have better attendance and academic performance, increased self-confidence, and an improved attitude toward school.

Volunteer mentors spend time with their "Little" 2 to 3 hours a week, 3 or 4 times per month doing normal, everyday activities such as playing basketball, making dinner, going to



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a movie or playing in the park.

Unlike other mentoring programs in Kansas, BBBS provides case management support to coach and guide the mentor. Mentors are screened and monitored throughout the match with their "Little."

During National Mentoring Month we hope to recruit and match caring volunteers to the children on our waiting list and recognize the 16 "Biggs" we currently have in Sherman County matched with "Littles." Their dedication and commitment as a Big Brother or Big Sister is greatly appreciated and is making a difference. A reception in honor of National Mentoring Month will be held from 5 to 6:30

p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 18 at the First Baptist Church.

To qualify to be a mentor, you don't have to have all the answers, be an expert with kids or be a parent. No experience is necessary to befriend an at-risk child in our community.

"Littles" benefit greatly from simply getting to know and having fun with a caring adult. Everyone has something to offer a "Little." Being yourself will make all the difference in the life of a child.

It only takes a few hours a week and it will make a difference for you as well. Contact Big Brothers Big Sisters of Sherman County at 890-3665 to become a volunteer mentor.

Cris Wilson, Board Member
Sherman County BBBS
Goodland