

Sen.-elect Moran stops at Hoxie on tour

By Kevin Bottrell, Steve Haynes

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In his last tour as a U.S. representative after 14 years, Sen.-elect Jerry Moran stopped by the Hoxie Rotary Club at the end of December to continue his annual listening tour of the 1st District.

Moran said he is heading back to Washington early next week to be sworn in to the Senate, but because of how offices are chosen, he and his staff may be working out of a few desks in the basement until April.

The veteran legislator took questions from the Rotarians, many of whom he knew by name. Including several citizens who arrived after lunch, about 32 people jammed the back room at Trish's Steak House.

Banker Harry Joe Pratt asked Moran what he thought about term limits.

"I don't want to sound hypocritical about this," Moran replied. "I voted for 12-year term limits, but I've been in the House 14 years."

A bigger problem, perhaps, he said, is many members serve their terms trying to avoid offending anyone who might hire or support them as a lobbyist after they "retire."

When he retires, he added, it'll be to Kansas. Coming home to his family in Kansas each week, rather than living in Washington, gives him "a dose of reality," the senator-elect said.

People in Kansas are more polite, he said, but what he hears when he goes to the store or the post office or his church in Hays is, "What on

earth are you idiots in Washington doing?"

Feedlot manager Scott Foote asked the congressman about the role of government in business, using subsidies that help companies build broadband Internet systems in rural areas as an example.

Foote said the subsidies, which come from a tax levied on all land-line and mobile phone bills, may promote competition, which will be good for people out here. Moran said he had supported that law, noting it originally was intended to help build systems which lacked high-speed Internet service. Now, he said, it's being used to subsidize competition for existing systems.

The problem, Foote said, is government often limits competition. Laws favor bigger businesses and anti-trust regulations aren't enforced enough.

The senator-elect agreed anti-trust enforcement was lacking.

"If you're too big to fail," Moran said, "you shouldn't be in business. Anti-trust matters."

"We don't enforce our anti-trust laws in a sufficient way to promote competition."

"Animal rights" groups are emerging as a threat to the livestock industry, Moran said, replacing environmental groups as a problem for stockmen. Moran joked about raising money for the local Humane Society in Hays, then getting "hate mail" asking why he supported an extreme animal rights group.

"That was the local dog shelter, not the national group," he said.

A woman asked Moran where he thought the health-care situation was heading. Moran said he continues to oppose many of the provisions in the health-care laws, but it is unlikely the whole thing will be repealed.

"Any bill that repeals Health Care Reform is not going to be signed by President Obama," he said.

Moran said the new laws, especially the provision which requires business, to file Internal Revenue Service 1099 forms for all vendors, are just adding billions in expense and wasted time.

"How many people at the hospital work at filling out government forms?" Moran asked Hospital Administrator Steve Granzow.

"Most of them," Granzow replied.

Moran said he would like to make sure people with pre-existing conditions are covered and that cost and risk in insurance are spread out.

"If we were going to start over, I don't think we'd ever tie insurance to employment," he added. "I don't know how you'd (change) it today, but there are some things we can do."

Moran said he is fearful the new laws are driving costs up, not down. Those increasing costs, he said, could force cuts to programs like Medicare, which would hurt rural hospitals. Many rural hospitals, like Sheridan County's, depend on Medicare reimbursements, he noted.

Moran said he wanted to protect rural critical access hospitals and



Sen.-elect Jerry Moran addressed a crowd at a Hoxie Rotary Club meeting in December at Trish's Steakhouse. Moran was in western Kansas for his annual listening tour before heading back to Washington next week.

Photo by Steve Haynes/The Goodland Star-News

make sure they are not eliminated.

"I worry that just like it's been with schools in Topeka, it's going to be hospitals in Washington," he said. "I think they may look at hospitals and say, 'Why do you need a hospital in Hoxie when you have one in Colby—or Hays.'"

Another man asked Moran if he

would support bailouts for states in bad financial shape, similar to the bank bailouts for companies like insurance giant AIG. Moran said he opposed the AIG bailout and continued to oppose any bailouts.

"I can't imagine a circumstance where I would vote to use taxpayer money to bail out the taxpayers of

California," he said.

Because Americans are allowed to choose what state they live in, he said, each state's residents should ultimately be responsible for their state government.

Educators compare notes



College President Dr. Ed Mills and Goodland Superintendent Shelly Angelos had a few minutes to talk about how things are going for their educational program before halftime of the Cowboys basketball game on Tuesday at Max Jones Fieldhouse. At halftime representatives from Frontier Ag presented Dr. Mills and Angelos with large checks for \$5,000 each. Josh Dechant said the money was the proceeds of the Fourth Annual Frontier Ag Chili-Cook off held during the Fall Flatlander Festival in September. Both Angelos and Dr. Mills thanks the Frontier Ag people for handling the organizing and putting on the special event, and thanked all the sponsors and those who contributed money. The money will be used in the Northwest Technical College and the Goodland School District.

Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

Blood draws for health fair to start on Monday

The Sherman County Health Fair is planned for Saturday, Jan. 29, from 8 to 11:30 a.m. at the Northwest Kansas Technical College, and blood draws for the fair will be next week from 7-9 a.m. Monday through Friday.

The City is joining with the Sherman County Health Fair to encourage residents to "take charge of their Health and their Energy Consumption" and will kick off the Take Charge Challenge at the health fair and will be handing out information on how Goodland residents can help the city win \$100,000.

Tina Goodwin, hospital director of marketing and volunteer ser-

vices, said all blood draws will be done two weeks prior to the health fair from 7 to 9 a.m. each day of the week of Jan. 10 to 14, at the main entrance to the Goodland Regional Medical Center.

The A1c blood screening for diabetes, will be available for the first time and will cost \$15.

Costs for the blood profiles are: Chemistries, \$30; CBC, \$10; A1c (Diabetes), \$15; PSA (Prostate), \$15; and TSH (Thyroid), \$15.

Fasting for 12 to 14 hours is recommended to assure an accurate cholesterol screening included in the blood chemistry profiles. The professional staff of the Goodland Regional Medical Center labora-

tory will conduct the blood chemistry profiles and no appointments are necessary.

The digital rectal screening combined with the PSA, available at the blood draws prior to the health fair, are the best ways to screen for prostate cancer, Goodwin said.

The profiles will be available the day of the health fair for review with one of the Goodland Family Health Center physicians who will be on hand, Goodwin said, or the results can be mailed by providing a self-addressed and stamped envelope at the time of the blood draw.

corrections

In the birth announcement for Tucker Jamze Davis on Friends Page 2 of the Friday, Dec. 31, edition of The Goodland Star-News the day of his birth should have been Dec. 2, 2010 instead of Dec. 12, 2010. This was due to reporter error.

☆☆☆☆☆
The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to

our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

PUBLIC NOTICE TO ALL RESIDENTS OF SHERMAN COUNTY

The Office of Sherman County Emergency Management along with E-Fm Consulting, LLC will be conducting the 1st Public Meeting for discussion and input on the Sherman County Hazard Mitigation Plan. The County and incorporated areas are developing Local Hazard Mitigation Plans per the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and guidance of the Kansas Division of Emergency Management.

The Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan will guide local activity to reduce risk and prevent loss from natural hazards such as tornadoes, wildfires, floods, hail and severe weather. The intent of the plan is to:

- Identify natural hazards impacting the community;
- Describe risk and vulnerability to the community;
- Describe mitigation actions and goals associated with the prioritized vulnerabilities;
- Describe how the community will maintain its plan in the future

YOU ARE INVITED to learn more, participate, and comment at this public meeting concerning the development of a Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. Members of the Planning Committee and our consultant will be present to answer questions, receive public input and information, and address public commentary.

When complete, the new plan will meet the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. Under this Act and related legislation, states, communities, and tribal governments must complete FEMA-approved plans to be eligible for certain federal assistance programs. These assistance programs provide communities with pre- and post-disaster funds to implement mitigation projects.

After the meeting the current draft plan will be available at the Sherman County Emergency Management Office, and at the Public Library in Goodland.

TIME: 6 p.m.
WHEN: January 19, 2011
WHERE: Goodland City Commission Room
204 W. 11th Street
Goodland, Kansas, 67735

For more information contact Ryan Murray at 785-332-2560 Or E-Fm Consulting at 785-312-9150

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