

from our viewpoint...

Forced prescription punishes citizens

Law enforcement groups are pressing the Kansas Legislature to require a prescription for purchase of the common drug pseudoephedrine, used by allergy sufferers to stop a runny nose, but also a key ingredient in making the illegal drug methamphetamine.

This is not a good idea. It amounts to punishing the state's pharmacists and allergy patients in the name of a problem that's largely solved.

Kansas already restricts sale of pseudoephedrine, often known by the brand name Sudafed. Stores are required to keep it behind the counter and buyers must sign a log.

Someone with the sniffles can buy 3.6 grams, more than 100 pills, at one time, or up to 9 grams a month. That's enough for most patients, but getting even that is cumbersome and unwieldy.

Though many law-enforcement officials say the problem of meth labs in Kansas has been largely solved, some groups still are pushing for tighter laws. Drug dealers will send out teams of people to buy Sudafed, a practice known as "smurfing."

Pharmacists and clerks often spot these efforts and many will call police. It's already illegal, but still, the dealers are bound to try.

The fact is, the number of meth labs in the state today — once a rampant problem — has dropped to almost nothing. In Salina, for instance, police say the city once had more than 100 illegal meth operations and now has only a handful.

Why, then, do we need to further inconvenience allergy patients and druggists?

The price of this "progress," by the way, has been a takeover of the meth trade by Mexican cartels, resulting in violence across that once-peaceful country and upwards of 30,000 deaths. Meth-making, once a cottage industry, has become a big money-maker for organized crime.

Putting these important allergy drugs on the prescription list will drive up the cost to legitimate users and drug stores alike, reducing availability and legal use, while having almost no benefit to society.

This bill is a turkey, and the Legislature needs to say "no."

Not everything that might sound like a good idea turns out to be one, and this bill is a good example. — *Steve Haynes*

where to write

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U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran, Russell Senate Office Building RM C-4, Washington, D.C. 20002. (202) 224-6521;

U.S. Rep. Tim Huelskamp, 1st Congressional District, 126 Cannon House Office Building, Washington D.C., 20575-1601. (202-225-2715)

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Challenging residents of Sherman County

To the Editor:

There has been much talk of what the School Board should do with Grant Junior High and the historical value of school. As a past President of the Sherman County Historical Society and one of the committee members on the latest book published by the Sherman County Historical Society, "They Came to Stay, Volume IV," I can appreciate the historical value of the school. Grant School is not and has never been listed on the National Historic Register.

One of the options presented and budgeted for in the bond is to tear the building down. Another option would be to donate the building to the museum or any other entity who could handle the expense of the up keep of such a grand historical building.

As a lifelong resident, fourth generation farm family and a 1987 graduate of Goodland High School, I have a vested interest in the future of our schools and our community. I have two children attending school in the district, my youngest attending Grant Junior High. I would like to challenge the readers of this article to do research on our school facilities prior to making a decision on the bond issue that will be on the April 5 ballot.

Challenge No. 1: Travel to the other schools in Sherman County that have been closed. The drive may take a few hours but it would be worth your trip. Start by traveling to Kano-

G your schools, community
 • guest column

rado, then to Ruleton and on to Edson. Take a moment to see what Grant could look like if the building is not torn down. While each one of the schools mentioned was the community center and foundation for their city along with providing education for many residents of Sherman County, today the schools are weathered, worn down and vandalized.

Challenge No. 2: Visit the Grant Junior High for lunch. You will see what was once the gym, which housed the band in the balcony, is now the gym and lunch room all in one with storage in the balcony. For lunch, students carry their trays from the kitchen, which does not have a built in refrigerator/cooler, halfway across the building to the gym to eat. On any given day, you will see areas not intended for instruction (i.e. the workroom, a storage closet and the library) regularly serve as instructional settings.

Challenge No. 3: I would like to challenge each reader to visit the Grant Junior High at the beginning or end of the school year when the temperatures are 90 degrees or above. Imagine the air quality in the building with 20 plus kids

in each classroom and no air-conditioning. The airflow and temperature fluctuations are difficult to deal with. Besides the high temperatures in August, September and May, the cold weather is a problem as well. The boiler units are not efficient or consistent and the classroom temperatures are difficult to regulate. Teachers are trying desperately to stay caught up with increasing performance expectations from the national, state and local level, but when they are dealing with uncomfortable temperature conditions it is difficult to get optimum results.

Challenge No. 4: My final challenge to each person reading this letter is to attend the meeting which will be held on Monday, Feb. 28, to learn more about the facilities project and the financial side of the bond issue. Take the time to be informed about what you will be voting on April 5. (Goodland School District) USD 352 has been awarded a \$5 million bond, which is interest free, towards the \$14.9 million project to go from five schools down to two. If this bond does not pass and we continue on with our current buildings, the cost will be \$18 million to upgrade our existing buildings.

We all remember the buildings we once went to school in our Glory Days differently than they are being seen today.

Gennifer Golden House
 Goodland

National anthem singer needs help

I think we need to call a halt to the apparent contest raging in our country over how to sing our national anthem. There's really only one way, the way the composer put it down on paper. For unknown reasons the past few years we have heard singers try to hit notes few, if any, can reach in an attempt to answer the roar of many in the stands. Boo to them, too!

We were speechless at the outset of Super Bowl 45 in Dallas on Sunday to have a "super" singer get her tongue tied up and her screaming vocals going nowhere as words were repeated before a shocked crowd of 100,000 and 100 million watching on television. I don't know how they pick the singer but this one sure bombed. Our nation's beloved, "The Star Spangled Banner," should never be subjected to the torture it received Sunday.

As the television cameras scanned the crowd, it looked, unfortunately, like there were more people not holding their hands over their hearts, but instead holding their breath to see if this singer could outdo all the others in reaching beyond the reachable. She couldn't. Sadly, her body language and scream-ability reminded me of sounds coming from places where birth is about to take place.

Our national anthem is more of a hymn, performed to audiences who show their respect by standing at attention with their right hand over their heart. This was absent Sunday and absent on most occasions anymore. Maybe we need to start from scratch, kindergarten, to teach our little ones what the national anthem is all about and have them carry it forward.

Thank goodness Super Bowl 45 provided greatness on the football field, because the halftime show wasn't anything to write home about either. And the owner of that massive indoor arena, Jerry Jones, didn't make many friends among the thousands who watched the game on large television screens outside the stadium in the parking lot, but who had tickets to enter only to learn there were no seats for them. Well, there were seats but in a place in the structure deemed dangerous.

Everything is bigger in Texas, so Texans



tom dreiling

• time out with td

say, so it goes without saying the biggest Super Bowl blunders ever (game not included) occurred in, where else, Texas!

I think I have it figured out. House Speaker John Boehner isn't crying, as many of us suspect he is. He is reacting to his smoking. Smoke gets in your eyes and they tear up and turn red, and smoke gets in your nose and it runs and you need a tissue to keep it under control. I know, I quit smoking the evening before Ash Wednesday in 1969. I haven't touched a cigarette since, but I can recall some of the reactions to smoking that are very similar to Speaker Boehner's. Wow, 42 years! I still have a pack of cigarettes on a counter display as you enter my place filled with things I've received from readers, family, friends, etc. That unopened pack of Camel's serves as a reminder of my commitment to kick the habit. It wasn't easy; it's never easy to quit smoking. But if you consider the alternative....

Responses

Mike Barkley, of San Diego, Calif., formerly of Goodland, writes: "I hope you print all of these out (columns) and put them in a notebook for your grandkids to find and read someday."

WillaJean Schulte of Hays writes: "That is quite interesting (column on Misawa, Japan). If your children are not already aware of how much you got around, they will some day be grateful to know. I speak from experience, regretting not asking my Dad more questions ... I did get Mom to write her memories and she did in longhand ... My brother Jim put it on the computer for which we are most grateful."

Mary and Jack Harvey of Norton write, in part: "Thank you for that wonderful story!

(Misawa, Japan). We laughed until we had tears rolling down our cheeks. You are a superb storyteller. What a "jewel" of a life experience." (Mrs. Harvey then related some experiences she had during a trip to Peru in the early 1980s.) She added in closing, "We are looking forward to you sharing more adventures. I'm glad I inspired you on one of those stories."

More comments coming up in the next column!

My late wife Jeannie made the best tasting mashed potatoes of anyone. They were special, they were outstanding, deee-licious, they were the talk of the town, so to say. I used to tease her when we were with our social circle her mashed potatoes were better than making love. I don't know what she put in them but the taste was hard to describe. I couldn't get enough of them

Anyway, every time I brought this topic up, and it was often, she would just smile; she had the prettiest smile. She wouldn't say anything. One evening when we arrived home from a dinner and dance at a local club in our community we were both tired so we readied for bed. She was first to be done so as she came out of the bathroom I went in. When I came out I noticed the bedroom was dark. She said she switched off both lights on the bedside tables after opening the window on my side of the room because it was so warm and muggy (this was in July). So I hopped in bed, stretched around a minute or two and then took off my watch to lay on the table. As I did my hand touched something I never before felt. I mumbled, "What in the world is this?" So I switched on the light and there is was: a bowl of mashed potatoes! Jeannie rolled over, looked at me, chuckled, and said simply, "Enjoy yourself, dear!" She then rolled back over to her side of the bed and drifted off to dreamland.

There were no more mentions of her mashed potatoes.

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