

from our viewpoint...

## Budget deadlock puts off savings

A tussle between the conservative Kansas House and the more moderate (but hardly liberal this year) Kansas Senate over how to handle a bill making cuts to the current state budget is deadlocked, putting off an agreement on savings.

That is not good. The bill needs to pass this week, because every day counts. A month's delay, threatened by the dispute between houses, will cost the state a month's savings. That could amount to millions.

House members want to cut right way. Some claim the total should be closer to \$50 million or \$55 million rather than the \$35 million sought by Gov. Sam Brownback.

Senate members are worried about losing federal money for special education. They want to lock in an extra \$25 million to guarantee the federal government won't punish the state for not providing enough.

The governor has suggested passing the \$35 million in cuts now and dealing with special education later, when the budget situation is more clear and the state knows how much is needed. Some suspect it could be a bit more than the \$25 million.

We say cut now while the budget stroke can be as broad and deep as possible. A month or two months from now, any given level of cuts will produce fewer savings. And everyone knows the state faces a shortfall in this year's budget.

Any deficit left undealt with will just come out of the ending balance the state has to begin next year's budget July 1, meaning even deeper cuts next year. It will hurt less to cut a little more a little sooner.

And as the governor suggests, the time to deal with special education will be when the figures needed to make an intelligent decision are in. Not while holding up the entire show in Topeka.

It's an issue that needs to be dealt with, but as part of the bigger puzzle of how much the state can afford to spend on schools.

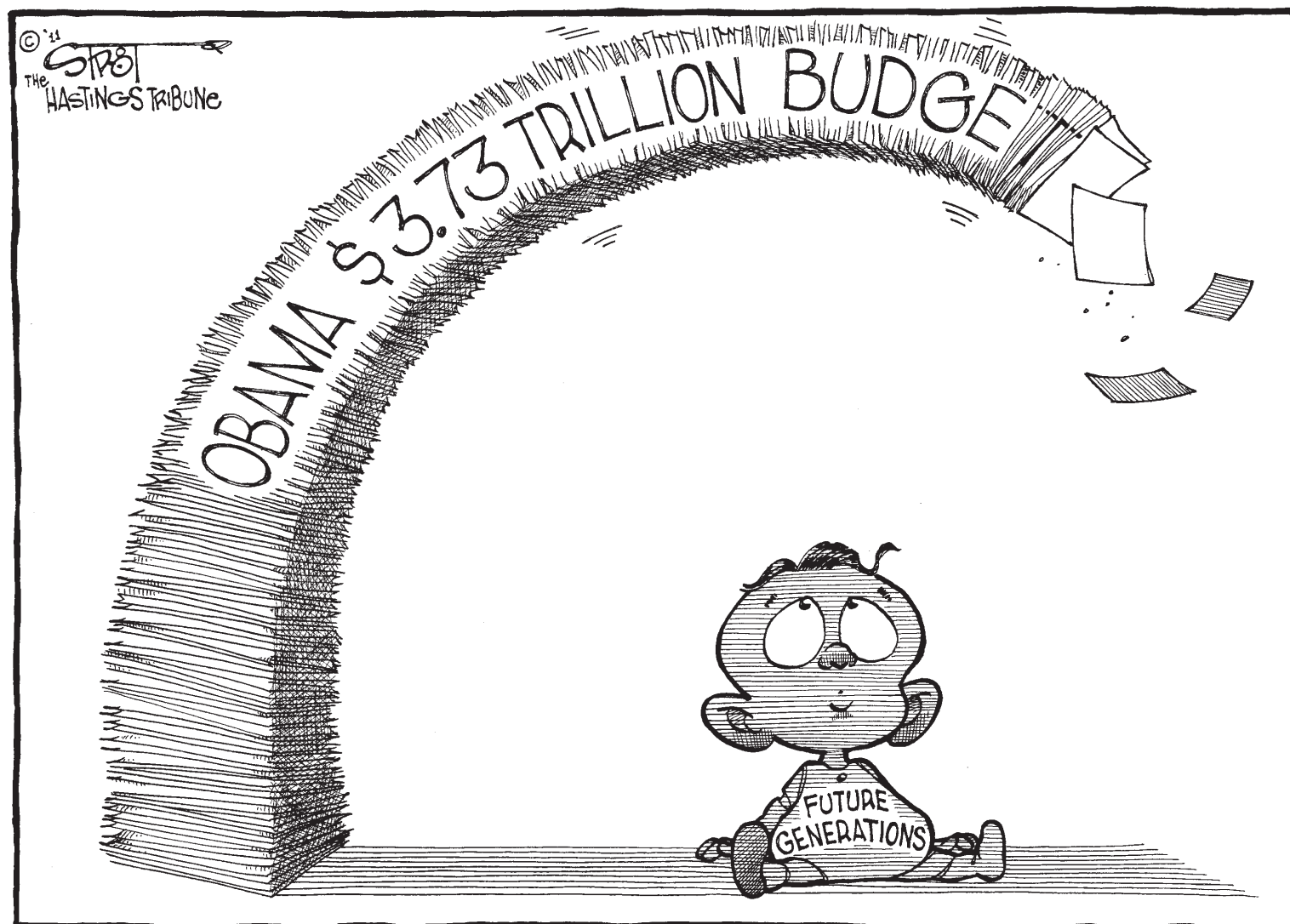
Public education, kindergarten through high school, already gets more than half the budget. Teachers and administrators want more, of course. Some have suggested raising the sales tax yet again to raise money, but voters have spoken on that subject: they said, "no," electing more conservatives to the House and to state office.

Despite the cries of teachers and others, the state will spend more on education next year than last. The problem is, the increase is going to teacher pensions and other programs, not to classrooms. That's too bad, but teachers are not offering to take pension cuts, either.

Gov. Brownback lamented that situation, which forced him to cut the budget for teaching kids once again, even after a tax increase last year.

But people have said the state must start living within its means. In this case, a "suitable" budget for education will be one the state can pay for, and in the end, that should be something we all can live with.

With another tax increase out of the question, this issue needs to be settled quickly so the state can start saving, and the Legislature can move on to figuring out next year's budget. — Steve Haynes



## 'Pride,' Goodland should go hand-in-hand

To the Editor:

I am not your typical letter-to-the-editor kind of guy but felt there were a few things I would like to say.

Do we have our fair share of problems in Sherman County? Absolutely! However, I can't think of a better place in the country to raise my children. So I would like to thank the people of Sherman County for making this a community I am very proud to be a part of.

I would like the words "Pride" and "Goodland" to continue to go hand-in-hand. This concept can and will be carried on by our children. Therefore, the education of our children is one of the most important challenges we face. I firmly believe anything we can do to improve the education process is well worth the money it will cost each and everyone of us.

My wife, Shari and I are proud to be 1982 graduates of Goodland High School. We have two boys. Ryan who graduated in 2009 is attending K-State and Garrett is a freshman at GHS right now. The new facilities and renovations in the bond issue probably won't affect my children much, but in time it may help in the education of my grandchildren.

Not only is pride and education a huge factor in this decision, but the economics of it make for an easy business like decision. The old saying, "you must spend money, to make money or save money" has never held more true. I am not going to get into the numbers, but would encourage everyone in the community to check out the information being provided around town.



**your schools, community**

• guest column

The savings alone by having fewer buildings will make for less utilities, administration, cooks, janitors, and maintenance. Plain and simple this will pay for the new school plan over time. With these new renovations many current problems will be solved.

The K-6 facility at North will have a FEMA rated storm shelter with a new gym. Both schools will have new heating and air conditioning as well as new energy efficient windows. The computer labs will have the newest technology, which is probably one of the most important factors in education today. Almost any occupation our children may be interested in will be technology driven in some manner.

Goodland School District (USD 352) has been provided with a great opportunity with the \$5.4 million, 20 year interest free money from the state to make this happen. A significant amount of funds may be granted from FEMA for the tornado rated shelter and multipurpose room at North.

Sherman County, however, must have their Multi-Jurisdictional Mitigation, better known as their countywide emergency plan, approved which was hopefully done last week. Once this plan is approved by the state and the feds, the district will be eligible to apply for the FEMA

funding for the tornado shelter. Seventy-five percent of the costs of the shelter could then potentially be covered in addition to the above \$5.4 million.

Education, hard work and discipline are the backbone of anything trying to be accomplished in life. We as parents and mentors must do everything we can to help our children become successful. Huge budget cuts are coming! It is just a matter of how much and when these cuts will take place. Passing the bond issue will be the first step in solving this problem. All of us at home spend money upgrading our homes, cars and personal items, why should our schools be any different?

The number one question young families ask when moving to a new community is – What are the schools like? We want to be proud to say we have one of the best. This will inspire existing and new educators looking at our community.

If we are going to improve our school system, we need to do it right so it will be a good decision 20, 30 and even 40 years down the road. The Max Jones Fieldhouse is a perfect example of this as it is one of the best 3A athletic facilities in the state even after 45 years.

This project or any like it will never get any cheaper, so why not now? I would encourage everyone to vote YES on the school bond issue and be proud to be a part of the Goodland community.

Terry Taylor  
Goodland

## The Goodland Star-News

(USPS No. 222-460. ISSN 0893-0562)

Member: Kansas Press Association

Inland Press Association Colorado Press Association

National Newspaper Association

e-mail: [star.news@nwkansas.com](mailto:star.news@nwkansas.com)

Steve Haynes, President  
Tom Betz, Editor  
Pat Schiefen, Society Editor



Jessica Corbin, Josh Harenberg, Anne Selfridge  
Advertising Department

Sheila Smith, Office Manager

### Nor'west Press

Richard Westfahl, General Manager

Jim Bowker, Betty Morris, James Jackson,

Lana Westfahl, Kris McCool, Stacy Brashear, Tracy Traxel,

Gary Meyer, Judy McKnight



[nwkansas.com](http://nwkansas.com)

N.T. Betz, Director of Internet Services  
([nt.betz@nwkansas.com](mailto:nt.betz@nwkansas.com))

Evan Barnum, Systems Admin. ([support@nwkansas.com](mailto:support@nwkansas.com))

Published every Tuesday and Friday except the days observed for New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas Day, at 1205 Main Ave., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

Periodicals postage paid at Goodland, Kan. 67735; entered at the Goodland, Kan. Post Office under the Act of Congress of March 8, 1878.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Goodland Star-News, 1205 Main Ave., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

TELEPHONE: (785) 899-2338. Editorial e-mail: [star-news@nwkansas.com](mailto:star-news@nwkansas.com). Advertising questions can be sent to: [goodlandads@nwkansas.com](mailto:goodlandads@nwkansas.com)

The Goodland Star-News assumes no liability for mistakes or omissions in advertising or failure to publish beyond the actual cost of the ad.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: In Sherman County and adjacent counties: three months, \$29; six months, \$46; 12 months, \$81. Out of area, weekly mailing of two issues: three months, \$39; six months, \$54; 12 months, \$89 (All tax included). Mailed individually each day: (call for a price).

Incorporating:

### The Goodland Daily News

1932-2003

### The Sherman County Herald

Founded by Thomas McCants  
1935-1989

### THE SHERMAN COUNTY STAR

Founded by Eric and Roxie Yonkey  
1994-2001

### Nor'West Newspapers

Haynes Publishing Company

## Family asks for understanding about death

To the Editor:

The family of Brian Black wishes to relate some of the extenuating circumstances surrounding his death.

Since college Brian has suffered with the gradually increasing debilitating effects of cluster migraines happening multiple times a year and lasting as long as a full month.

Often times resulting in uncontrollable severe depression and an inability to cope with the ongoing effects of the migraine symptoms.

In recent months the medication that was the most effective for Brian's symptoms was discontinued with no adequate alternatives offered as of this time.

The family ask that the community take this information into consideration as you seek to understand Brian's actions.

Your outpouring of love, sympathy and compassion has truly been spectacular and is greatly appreciated.

May God's grace and mercy rest upon us all as we seek to process what has transpired in the life of our dear departed friend and family member.

We thank you for your consideration and support.

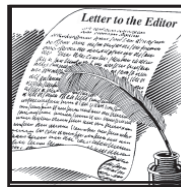
Tamara, Ethan, Danielle, Dean, Linda Black, Verlan and LaDonna Snyder  
Goodland

To the Editor:

The Goodland Arts Council would like to give a big thank you to all those who helped make the Tailgate Party, held Saturday, Feb. 4, such a success!

We especially would like to thank the musical groups Pieces of Eight, Double Shot and Crooked Creek for donating their time and talents for the event.

Those who attended the benefit enjoyed a fun evening of dancing and listening to great music. Other arts organizations contributed to the evening's events as well. Jacquelyn Gulley, representing the Goodland High School Art Club, drew caricatures for those wanting a sou-



**from our readers**

• to the editor

venir of the party. Decals were sold to help raise money for the NWKTC Graphic Arts class. The idea of a benefit for the Arts Council was suggested to us by Richard and Marie Johnson, who learned of the problems the Arts Center was experiencing due to cutbacks.

Arts organizations statewide have felt the effects of economic cutbacks. The Kansas Arts Commission, a financial grantor of such arts organizations as the Goodland Arts Council, has had to decrease the amount of annual grant funding since 2008. Gov. Brownback's budget completely eliminates the Arts Commission as a state organization by July 1. The budget cuts about \$800,000 in state spending and provides \$200,000 to the State Historical Society to help transition the Arts Commission into a private organization – losing \$778,300 in direct funding from the National Endowment of the Arts and \$437,767 in grants and services from the Mid-America Arts Alliance.

The Goodland Arts Council, responsible for the operations of the Carnegie Arts Center, receives its support from a number of sources: memberships (30 percent), fundraisers (20 percent), business sponsorships (10 percent), City/County support (11 percent), and state grant (8-10 percent). The balance of revenue is generated by mini-grants, workshops, individual/business contributions and rental of our facility. Even small variances of contributions can make quite an impact on our budget. Many rural communities are unable to raise enough private dollars to sustain art programs without the support of the state.

To reduce state funding for the arts will result in undercutting the tourism, economic development and revitalization of our community, our region and our state. A cultural community beautifies cities, provides employment, attracts residents and tourists, complements

businesses, enhances property values, expands the tax base and contributes to a creative and innovative environment.

Each artist who displays and sells their artwork is a small taxable business. Currently, the Carnegie Arts Center has over 50 artists displaying their artwork at our facility; therefore, the Arts Center is currently growing over 50 taxable businesses in our community. We are one of only a handful of gift shops, open 7 days a week, in our region.

Studies show students who participate in the arts demonstrate improved academic performance and have lower dropout rates. Without elementary art classes in the Goodland school curriculum, the Carnegie Arts Center offers year-round classes for students. New this year are monthly children's exhibits at the Center.

In 2001, Kansas ranked 45th in the country with per capita funding of the arts. We spent 63 cents per person each year on the arts. Ten years later, the state currently spends 29 cents per capita on the arts. If the Governor's order, impacting the arts, is not rescinded, we will be spending 7 cents per person, far less than any state in the nation.

The questions that need to be asked are what effect will losing funding have on rural Kansas? Can we be as competitive in tourism, economic development and community revitalization as other states that have received far more funding for the arts?

Kay Younger, Director  
Goodland Arts Council

### Letter Policy

The Goodland Star-News encourages and welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be typewritten, and must include a telephone number and a signature. Unsigned letters will not be published. Form letters will be rejected, as will letters deemed to be of no public interest or considered offensive. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and good taste. We encourage letters, with address and phone numbers, by e-mail to: [star.news@nwkansas.com](mailto:star.news@nwkansas.com).