

from our viewpoint...

Raising speed limit one of worst bills

One of the worst bills to come up in the current session of the Kansas Legislature is one to raise the speed limit on four-lane divided highways to 75 mph.

This may sound like a feel-good exercise in freedom, allowing people to drive just a little faster, but it is a dagger aimed at the heart of our rural towns.

While it may be appealing to be able to get to Hays a few minutes faster, the net result will be to divert even more traffic off of two-lane highways, where the state has excess capacity out here, and concentrate it on the freeways. And those can get pretty crowded in some areas.

Less traffic on the two-lane roads means less business in our towns. And the towns on the Interstate already have most of the business as is.

On a trip to Kansas City, driving 75 mph rather than 70 might save 15 to 20 minutes. The change could cost rural Kansas towns millions in lost sales over the next decade. We doubt the time saving is worth the pain, but unfortunately, little consideration has been given to rural needs in this debate.

The 70 mph speed limit on Kansas freeways and expressways was carefully thought out back in 1996, after the government finally allowed states to raise their limits. Sen. Stan Clark, who represented this area at the time, and other rural legislators crafted a 5 mph differential to keep some traffic on the two-lane roads.

Now that agreement is about to be undone by a bill that seemingly appeared out of nowhere. Most legislators voting today may never have heard of the agreement created back then, or the reasoning behind it.

Worse yet, the bill would effectively establish an 85 mph limit on our freeways. One provision would establish the "grace" allowance for speeders at 10 mph, rather than the 5 mph often used by officers today.

The combined result would be a 15 mph increasing in the allowable speed on our Interstates and four-lane state routes. That's way too much.

We'd all be better off – and safer – if we just leave things the way they are.

Rural towns have taken enough hits without this added insult. Leave the speed limit alone, please. – *Steve Haynes*

where to write

- U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts**, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774; web address — roberts.senate.gov
- U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran**, Russell Senate Office Building, Courtyard 4, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521; Fax (202) 228-6966.
- U.S. Rep. Tim Huelskamp**, 1st Congressional District, 126 Cannon House Office Building, Washington D.C., 20575-1601. (202-225-2715)
- State Rep. Rick Billinger**, Docking State Office Building Rm 724, Topeka, KS 66612. Phone (785) 296-7659, cell (785) 899-4770, home (785) 899-5824. E-mail rick.billinger@house.ks.gov.
- State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer**, State Capitol Building, Rm. 225-E, 300 SW 10th, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785-296-7399; e-mail address — ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us
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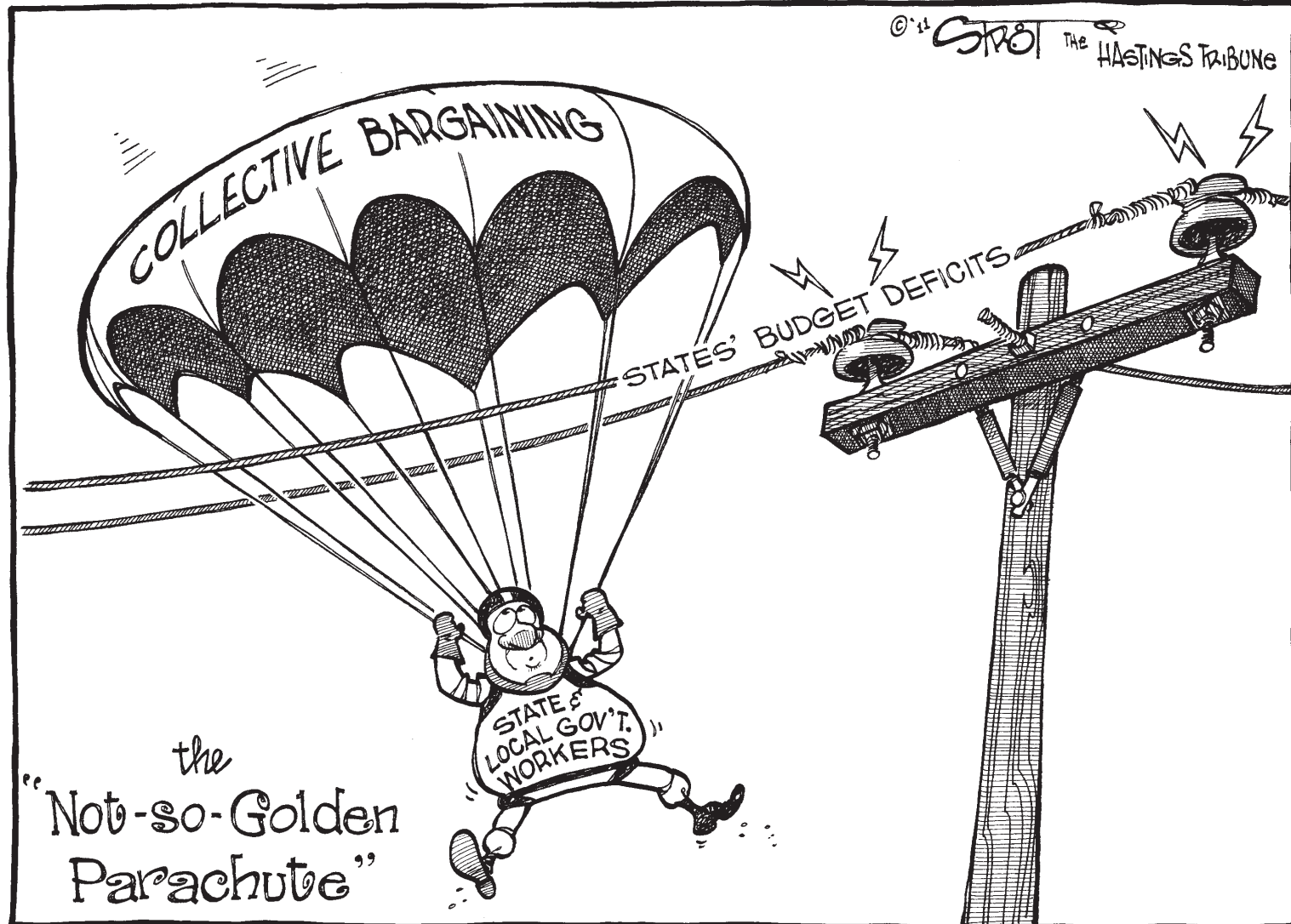
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Future of our schools now in our hands

To the Editor:

What an opportunity we have! We have an opportunity to take our education system into our hands and make a decision.

This doesn't happen very often, but when it does it is our duty as U.S. citizens to become informed and do the right thing. I encourage everyone to attend the community meetings to get the facts, ask questions, and form an opinion.

The next public meeting is being tentatively planned for Monday, March 21.

I am not a native to Goodland. Our jobs brought us to Goodland and we were very fearful of the school system here and its size. We encouraged our three children with the activities that were available to them, without the commute we had experienced for the last three years. A move was planned and we crossed our fingers hoping the school was better on the inside than the out!

Let me give you a little more history. Five years prior we were looking to make Western Kansas our home. Goodland was the first town we looked at. After driving down Main Street, seeing Central school and being told



Your schools, community

• guest column

there were two other elementary schools in the school district, we settled for another town with an upgraded school that housed all the grades together. The school system was our deciding factor.

Since we have been here with our elementary school children, we found quality teachers, caring staff and excellent administrators. As my children have attended the different elementary schools, I realized the numbers were not as big as we believed, and the buildings were in worse shape than what the exterior lead on to. We now have had children in every school in the district except the high school and I still question why we have so few children in so many different buildings.

The closing of North was not flawless, however the school board has done their homework and the faculty and staff worked hard to make

that transition work. We must reward them with the building they deserve, our kids deserve and best reflects our community.

My family judged this community by the exterior of its schools and I'm sure there are other families who are doing the same. Even if you don't personally have a child in the school district it is important you see how much this affects our community and the people it attracts.

If we want more quality doctors, teachers, and new growth, it starts with up to date schools in quality structures. We are not just investing in the future of our children but we are investing in the future of our community.

I challenge the entire community to come to a meeting and become informed. You must have the facts and develop your own opinion. The bond issue is our chance to take the fate of our school district and the fate of our community and do what is right for them both. Vote yes for our schools, our population and our town!

Sarah King
Goodland

Need to think long, hard about bond issue

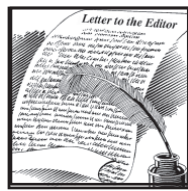
To the Editor:

I would like to commend Amy Sederstrom for providing the citizens of Sherman County with the facts filled article in the Feb. 24 edition of our local newspaper concerning the April 5 School Bond Issue.

My wife Peggy and I are Sherman Community High School 1952 and 1954 graduates that is now GHS. We have been very active supporters of our three children's and nine grandchildren's education, athletic activities and their many school activities over many years in the Goodland School system, so we would like the district facilities to be in good repair and adequate for good education of our young children.

I am like most other folks in Sherman County and would like my property taxes to be no more for capital expenditures than is absolutely necessary. We all would like to be able to have new facilities and equipment, but it has to be economically feasible and the bill has to be paid.

With these thoughts, I would like to mention some facts. In the year 2010 the Goodland area was the garden spot of Kansas weather wise, which allowed us to have a record wheat crop as well as record fall crops. That has provided the Goodland area with some unusual positive economy, but any one who has farmed in this



from our readers

• to the editor

area for the past 50 years as I have, knows that kind of weather will not continue for the 20 year duration of the Bond Issue term as we are now considered to be in moderate drought.

Will our county economy continue as it is now? I sure can not say. Another thought, is that our nation without some drastic change can be on the brink of financial disaster. Our state has a \$500 million deficit and it must have a balanced budget so that means large cuts must be made. With 60 percent of the state budget devoted to education and a \$500 million state budget deficit how much will our school district budget be hit with less state funds available?

When we consider the enormous debt and financial problems facing our nation and the severe state budget deficit, do we want to add to those problems with more debt locally?

With all of these thoughts, I would encourage all of us Sherman County Voters to think long and hard whether this proposed \$14.9 million Bond Proposal with the \$21.3 million

total debt payment is absolutely necessary for the education of our children or are there other ways to accomplish that goal without going into such a large amount of debt?

Wilmer Bahe
Goodland

To the Editor:
To Governor and legislators, compulsory insurance, violates premise innocent till proven guilty!

Doth anybody know what is cost of subsidizing the insurance companies by using tax paid officials to force sell insurance?

Insurance is a gamble... The client bets on his own misfortune! The company on his good fortune. If insurance won't sell on merit.... the insured is not protected from the uninsured... What good is it? :It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man." Ps 118:8

Frank Sowers
Benkelman, Neb.

PS: In Texas a man burnt to a crisp tied in by a seat belt...near Goodland, gal with no seat belt lived... same car a gal died, with seat belt!

PPS: I oppose any legislation to change publication of legals from newspapers to internet.

Abolish retirement (\$) for every elected official!

The question of banking by computer

Banking by computer saves time and money – usually.

My husband keeps telling me that I should put the business banking on the computer and issue electronic checks for my accounts payable.

That sounds like a good idea. If I could buy fewer checks, fewer stamps and fewer envelopes, I should save time. Not having to take the said checks to the post office will save more time, and not having to worry about whether the payments get there on time would relieve stress.

Get there on time is my biggest stress with check writing.

How long will it take to get the gas payment to Hays? Will a week do for the AT&T bills?

What about credit card payments? Those are the trickiest. If your gas or telephone payment is late, you get a note warning you that it is late and a late payment fee. If your credit card



cynthia haynes

• open season

payment is late or for the wrong amount – less than the minimum – they send you a nasty note and raise your interest rate to something that would make a loan shark blush.

So I tried. However, my bank and my computer software are not compatible.

Don't you just hate that?

My only choice is to do everything to set up a bill-payment system on my personal computer and then transfer everything by hand over to my business computer.

Doing everything twice does not sound like a savings of time or money to me. However, I might think about it for the credit card com-

panies. Having a system that automatically pays them a minimum amount might be worth the trouble. I could still send a hand check when I get their bill so that I pay more than minimum and that way I wouldn't miss a payment either because their bill didn't arrive, or ended up lost on my desk or in the mail.

Of course, electronic banking has its drawbacks, too.

Last Monday, Steve put one too many zeros at the end of his check and overpaid a local business by \$2,200. Luckily it wasn't to a credit card since we, like most people, can't afford to pay and extra \$2,200 to anyone.

The bank covered the check. The business refunded the money. I was a supportive wife and didn't give him any grief.

I never said I wouldn't tell.