

from our viewpoint...

Legislators stall, Gov. takes action

With the Legislature deadlocked and the state desperate to pay for increased case loads in human and health services, what we used to call welfare, Gov. Sam Brownback has ordered cuts to balance the current budget.

That's not an option. It's required by Kansas law, which prohibits the state from running a deficit.

In making \$56.5 million in cuts, the governor had to take \$50 million from schools to keep the social welfare operation going. That's not going to be popular, and it leaves a lot of budget problems hanging.

The Legislature could have solved this problem, and should have, but the still-liberal Senate refused to compromise in a battle over money for special-education programs. As with other decisions, the state would have been better off if the Legislature had done its job.

We suffered when the Legislature abdicated authority over the school budget several years ago, cramming an additional \$1 billion a year in to satisfy the state Supreme Court. Then over the last few years, everyone from schools to taxpayers had to pay for that decision as ever-declining state revenues required the state to take all of it back – and more.

Gov. Brownback has found, as did Gov. Mark Parkinson before him, that expecting the Legislature to make tough decisions is a waste of time. Gov. Parkinson was forced to make dozens of painful cuts last year, despite a 1-cent increase in the state sales taxes he pushed through, when the Legislature refused to act on the deficit.

Now Gov. Brownback, who rode a large majority into office on the promise of building the state's economy by growing private business and jobs, finds he, too, must be the adult.

Many senators apparently do not realize the new era requires some sacrifice. They are fighting to save school budgets from the axe and even want to save the state Arts Commission from a well-deserved fate. They seem oblivious to the fact the state is flat broke, we've had to cut schools back to 1992 levels and still may not be able to balance the budget.

(And right here, let's just say our Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer is not part of the problem in the Senate. He's pushed for fiscal integrity when the liberal block back east has not.)

There's not much left to cut but the sacred cows, so we might as well get to it. And every program is someone's sacred cow, believe us.

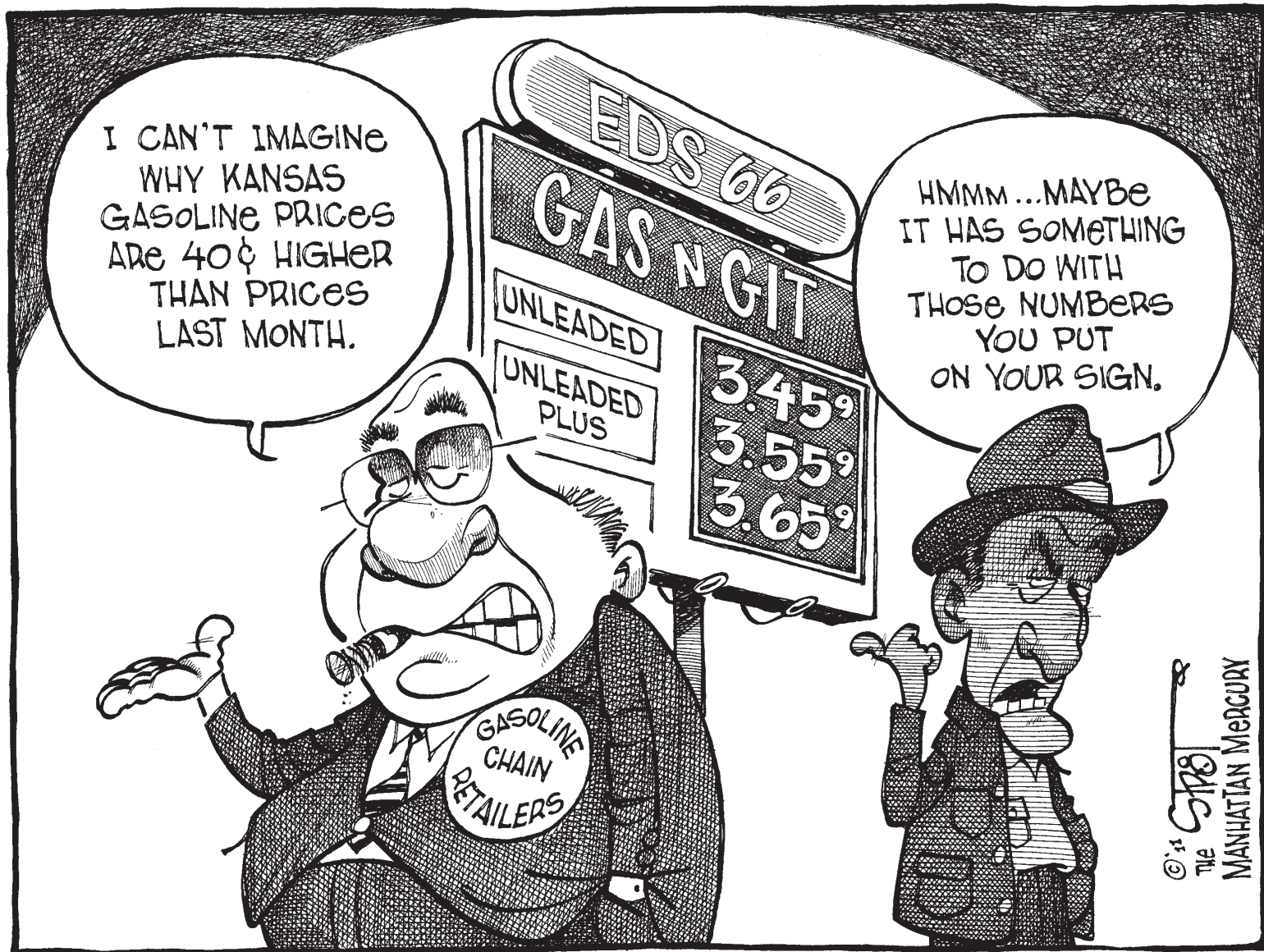
The governor points out the recision bill he proposed at the start of this year's session would have solved the state's current budget crisis and left the state with a few million to play with as next year's budget goes into effect July 1.

Rep. Ward Cassidy points out had the recision bill passed, the state would have \$37 million in its ending balance June 30, rather than nothing under the current plan. That is the price of delay, and it is more than enough money to solve the special education problem.

It won't happen, though, thanks to a stubborn and intransigent few.

The Senate needs to stop defending the tax-and-spend policies of yore and get with today's program, which requires responsible spending, living within the state's income.

That's what Kansas taxpayers voted for last fall, and that's what they expect now. — Steve Haynes



Voters have chance to vote on bond issue

To the Editor:

Our elected school board voted to allow the voters of Sherman County to have the opportunity to "vote" on the bond issue on Tuesday, April 5.

First, I encourage all to register and to vote on April 5. If you are not registered, I encourage you to contact the Sherman County Clerk's office either in person or by telephone to get registered. Monday is the last day to register. If you will be unable to vote on April 5, again, please contact their office to obtain an advance ballot.

I believe each of us has had an opportunity to participate in discussions within the community to determine the future of education for Sherman County. The discussions began, not just this past year, but with a task force, all volunteers. Those volunteers spent many hours discussing what should be considered for the future of our educational opportunities. Our school board then decided to pursue discussions with architects. Again, opportunities to share concerns and ideas opportunities were available. All were invited to participate in those discussions, not just a few selected individuals of our county.

None of us will ever agree on all the needs



your schools,
community

• guest column

and wants or improvement to the bond/building issue before us. I believe we need to consider the opportunities afforded to us and those current students of Goodland School District (USD 352). Learning is a life-long opportunity each of us pursues in an ever-changing world.

Our current high school was built during tough economic times in 1939. Our current junior high school was built before that in 1927. Central was built in 1950. Our newest buildings, North and West were built in 1969. How many of us still depend on vehicles and technology from 1920, 1930, 1950 that have not been updated? I would agree that newer is not always better, but changes and updates are necessary.

Private and post secondary educational facilities have endowments and other funding to construct and maintain buildings and renovations that we do not have.

When we struggle to change to meet the needs of an ever changing world, we fail our children and our future. Maintaining the status quo is not maintaining.

Newton's law of physics, I believe, says it best; a body in motion tends to stay in motion, a body at rest tends to stay at rest. We have made little progress with any of our buildings since they were originally built.

Although the buildings in question all have electricity, indoor plumbing and heating, they must be maintained. We have not been extravagant in making repairs or modifications in them. Some of these, in my opinion, have needed updating prior to 1972 and are still waiting to be done some 39 years later.

Some are saying the project is "extravagant." Expressions of "extravagant" or "adequate" are too broad to mean much other than saying "I don't like the plan or care enough to make any difference at all."

Please say you care and want to make a difference for education in Sherman County. Ask questions, seek answers to your questions, register and then vote on April 5.

Gordon Pettibone
Goodland

Fun visiting south in early springtime

Grab your rotten tomatoes. You're going to want to toss them at us.

We just returned from almost two weeks in the South. It was sunny and mostly warm and we missed the last two snow storms.

Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah.

Seriously, it was nice down there, but early spring not so warm you want to wear shorts, though we did see lots of those on campus.

We started out heading through Wichita and Oklahoma and on to Russellville, Ark., where we had a late supper with a cousin of mine at the only restaurant still open at 9 p.m. — Ihop. After a supper of eggs and bacon, we continued on to North Little Rock for the night. The Holiday Inn was brand new, and all the chemicals in the carpets and the glues they use set Steve's allergies off something fierce.

The next day, we headed for Oxford, Miss., home of the University of Mississippi. Our friend Will Norton, once the dean of the Nebraska School of Journalism, is now the head of that school at Ole Miss. He had invited us to stop by next time we drove through the South, and we took him up on it.

It was spring in Mississippi. The co-eds were wearing shorts and the pear and plum trees were in bloom. Daffodils sprouted everywhere, in yards, on campus, by the roads and highways.

Back home, my daffodils were covered under a blanket of snow that day.



cynthia
haynes

• open season

Dean Norton showed us the campus and took us all over town, showing us where William Faulkner had lived and written and out to the cemetery, where he and his wife are buried.

At the grave, there was a couple of empty bottles of Jack Daniels. Apparently, its the custom down here to polish off most of a bottle and pour the rest on ol' William's grave, since he was the town's most famous writer and drunk.

From Mississippi, we went on to our destination — Augusta, Ga., — the home of Taylor Morgan Blake, our one and only grandchild. Oh, and our two daughters.

We spent a week with our children, enjoying the early spring weather and just a little rain before heading out again for home.

This time we stopped for supper in Birmingham, Ala., where a friend took us to her favorite little Italian place. Our friend, Jennifer Stevenson, was the last American to win an Olympic gold medal in diving.

After supper, we hit the road for Tupelo, Miss., the boyhood home of Elvis Presley, for the night.

We missed seeing either the King's boyhood home or the statue of him at age 13 in Tupelo, and didn't bother with a side trip to Graceland. We both like Elvis well enough, but aren't ardent fans. Besides, we were getting tired of traveling and wanted to get home to our cats and dog.

When we hit Memphis the second morning, we still had a long way to go.

The last night on the road was spent at Clinton, Mo.

Before we got to Missouri, however, we stopped at Mammoth Springs, Ark., to stretch our legs, get a map and view the springs, said to be the 10th largest in the world.

It's a neat little state park. The spring isn't really that spectacular. It just looks like a pond with a water flow. The only thing is, nothing flows in and a complete river flows out.

The last day on the road, we had lunch with our son in Kansas City — barbecue, naturally — and listening to the Jayhawks clinch the Big 12 Tournament title.

It was a successful trip, but even if the weather is better and there are flowers in bloom down south, we're really glad to be in our own bed, in our own house with our own cats and dog.

And, like the children the week before, they all seem to be glad to see us.

where to write

U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774; E-mail address — <http://roberts.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=EmailPat>

U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran, Russell Senate Office Building, Courtyard 4, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521; Fax (202) 228-6966. E-mail address — <http://moran.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/e-mail-jerry>

U.S. Rep. Tim Huelskamp, 1st Congressional District, 126 Cannon House Office Building, Washington D.C., 20575-1601. (202-225-2715) E-mail address — [https://huel-](https://huel)

skamp.house.gov/contact-me/email-me

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 ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us

Kansas Attorney General, 301 S.W. 10th, Lower Level, Topeka, KS 66612-1597 (785) 296-3751 Fax (785) 291-3699 TTY: (785) 291-3767

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 and letters deemed to be of no public interest or considered offensive will be rejected. 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@nw-kansas.com.

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

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

N.T. Betz, Director of Internet Services

(nt.betz@nwkansas.com)

Evan Barnum, Systems Admin. (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. Advertising questions can be sent to: 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