

## Will Republicans stay divided in November?

One would think that an office seeker who carried his own county impressively and also carried the county of his opponent would have had an easy victory on election night.

But that was not the case for Dan Rasure of Goodland in his quest to win the Republican primary for State Senator/District 40 on the Republican ticket.

Mr. Rasure lost to Ralph Ostmeyer, 8,553-7,385, a shortage of 1,168 votes.

In his loss, Rasure carried Sherman County, his home county, 1,010 to 415. And in Gove County, Ostmeyer's home, he won by 11 votes, 368-357, which, we are sure, was a concern to Ostmeyer.

Although losing at home had no bearing on the outcome, it had to be somewhat of a surprise, maybe even an embarrassment. Maybe, like most of us, it was just a matter of taking the home folks for granted.

Ostmeyer carried 12 counties to Rasure's six.

Dollars figured in this race. Rasure raised considerably more funds than did Ostmeyer and spent considerably more. He needed to. Many people had never heard of him and it was imperative that he get his name around the district.

Ostmeyer didn't face that problem.

And Rasure had to deal with something else: age, experience. Rasure, at 22, was seeking his first political office with little experience, other than working in the offices of Sen. Sam Brownback and Rep. Jerry Moran.

Ostmeyer, on the other hand, is completing his second, two-year term as a member of the Kansas House of Representatives from District No. 118.

Waiting in the wings to challenge Ostmeyer is Democrat Tim Peterson, a Monument farmer. Peterson has a long history of political involvement and is currently serving as chairman of the First District. He's rested up and ready to go, not having had any opposition in the primary.

It will be interesting to see how *united* the Republicans in the 40th District are come Nov. 2. The conservatives and moderates of that party have had their share of fist fights over the years and in a way it showed in the Rasure-Ostmeyer primary.

Will it spill over into the general election? That's a question that can't be answered this soon after the primary wounds were inflicted. Time may heal. *May*.

As a Democrat in a Republican stronghold as is the 40th District, Mr. Peterson can only hope that dissension in the ranks of the opposing party prevails throughout the fall and into the voting booth on Nov. 2. It worked for Gov. Kathleen Sebelius.

But back to Dan Rasure: we haven't heard the last from this young, energetic, now politically tested young man. You can bet on that.

— Tom A. Dreiling

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR: Book is finished thanks to responses

To the Editor:  
I wish to thank the editor of this newspaper who published (a few months ago) my request for responses from those still living veterans who served in the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) during the years of the Great Depression (1930-'41). I had requested their nostalgic memories of their experiences during their enlistment — the good, the bad, the ugly — where they worked, the tools they used; their life under Army supervision; how their \$1 a day pay aided their families; also how many millions of the boys took classes for a trade, which furthered their career later in life; and finally how training under Army regulations primed them

for quick promotions in their military service in World War II, a few years later.

From all the responses that I received, I found all considered that their time spent in the CCC was one of their greatest periods of life — all revered their service and would do it all over again.

I have just completed (from their responses) my documentary, a 160-page book, titled, "The Forgotten Boys of the Civilian Conservation Corps, who enlisted as boys and were Discharged men". The book is now available.

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## Statistics aren't all they appear to be

Someone once said, "figures lie and liars figure." The latest drug to fall victim to the statistician's computer is Vioxx. Throughout the years I have watched as numerous drugs rise and fall in popularity with more frequency than the sun.

Of course they fail to mention the many factors involved in determining a drug's safety.

As one cardiologist said, old people take Vioxx for arthritis and most old people have heart disease. He did say it with a bit more diplomacy, but the reasoning is valid.

I'm not saying Vioxx is safe, I'm saying statisticians aren't.

A few years back they were discussing the benefits of a well-known osteoporosis drug.

They said, if you take the drug you are 50 percent less likely to have a fracture due to osteoporosis. However, when you investigated the numbers it painted a different picture.

### Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



The report went on to state, two out of 100 people over the age of 65 would suffer a fracture due to osteoporosis; if you took the drug the rate dropped to 1 out of 100. Ever wonder what those other 98 people were doing? I do. They weren't taking the drug or breaking bones, but nobody is studying them.

And then there is this bit of information: Doctors visits for osteoporosis jumped from 1.3 million in 1994 to 6.3 million last year. The population in the U.S. age 62 and over at that time jumped 3 million.

Now my mother, at almost 100, and having suffered few broken bones, has

never had a bone density test or taken the "drugs".

But for those who have had the test, you probably know the routine.

You go to the doctor for whatever, a physical, cataracts or a bunion, and then find out the American Medical Association has determined everyone your age and over should have this test every two years.

So you have the test and return to the doctor for the results. Mmmm, wonder how it is we have double the visits for osteoporosis in recent years?

My brother-in-law Dale is a retired university professor, which I think, gives him some credibility.

He defines statistics in the following way: If you shoot in front of the duck once, then behind the duck once, on the average the duck is dead. That just about says it all.

Editor's Note — When I was in pharmacy school, back in the dark ages of the late '60s and early '70s, we said there were lies, damn lies and statistics.

## Suicide is a problem with youths

Suicide ranks as the third leading cause of death for young people ages 15-24. (Auto accidents and homicide are No. 1 and 2). While women attempt suicide more often, men complete at a higher rate, usually because they use more lethal means such as a gun.

Research has shown that the access to and availability of firearms, particularly in the home, is significant in the increase of youth suicide.

The first week of September is National Suicide Prevention Week, intended to expand awareness of the need to increase prevention efforts and effective intervention.

Research has shown that most adolescent suicides occur after school and in the home. Suicide can be difficult to predict in young people due to their impulsivity.

They haven't enough experience to know that it takes time to recover from changes, problems and losses and that the

### High Plains Mental Health Karen Beery

future will be brighter.

Nor do they have the insight to understand the results their act has on parents, family and friends.

Most adolescent suicide attempts are precipitated by relationship conflicts with peers, boy/girlfriends, or family members.

The American Association of Suicideology says many teenagers who are considering suicide display one or more of these signs:

- Communication of thoughts of suicide or death in a context of sadness, boredom, hopelessness or negative feelings.

- Presence of a psychiatric disorder such as depression, behavior disorders or substance abuse.

- Impulsive and aggressive behavior; frequent expressions of rage.

- Exposure to another's suicidal behavior.

- Family instability and/or significant family conflict.

- Recent severe stress such as difficulties in dealing with sexual orientation, unplanned pregnancy or significant real or anticipated loss.

If you have concerns about a young family member or friend, talk with someone who can help, such as your family physician, clergy or a mental health professional.

Mail questions to: High Plains Mental Health Center, Plain Sense, Consultation and Education Department, 208 East 7th, Hays, Kan., 67601 or go to the website at: [www.highplainsmentalhealth.com](http://www.highplainsmentalhealth.com).

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR: Man unhappy about unaccounted money and federal 'pork'

Letter to the Editor:

I am concerned about how inefficient the federal government is with our taxpayer dollars. A recent General Accounting Office audit reported that about \$3 billion of the IRS expenses could not be accounted for. The same audit could not account for billions of dollars in transactions between government agencies. Basically, the government can't even identify its own transactions within its own agencies.

I question how we spend and how we cut taxes.

If we are to give tax cuts to big business, then let's do it for those who create jobs in this country, and not ship them overseas. If the economy is driven mostly by consumption of goods, then why don't we give tax cuts to the incomes and small businesses which consume most of the

goods? In addition, our trade deficit is out of control. As a nation, we basically borrow foreign capital to buy foreign goods.

Our leaders need to be reminded that borrowed money is not prosperity. It is higher deficits and interest on it. Even if one believes that the Bush tax-cuts for the wealthy are a good idea, virtually all non-partisan economists say that any tax cut means nothing to the overall economy without spending cuts.

The 2004 omnibus appropriations package had five times more wasteful spending than a decade ago. I am not talking about defense and homeland security spending. I am talking about over 7,900 different pork spending projects. The government wastes an average of \$375 billion each year on pork projects and mismanagement in existing agencies.

Why doesn't President Bush veto por-

tions of this waste? It appears that President Bush will be the first president since James Garfield in 1881, to never veto one single spending bill.

We need to have some fiscal discipline from Congress to the President. Both parties in Congress need to eliminate wasteful spending practices and put the people of this great nation ahead of their own reelection. John Kennedy once said, "Let us not seek the Republican answer or the Democratic answer; but the right answer."

Damon Freddie Norton

**Editor's Note:** While it would be a good idea for the president to have line item veto power over the budget, he does not. He has the power to accept a bill as presented by Congress or reject it.