

## Kansas voters tell the legislature what they want

What did Kansas voters tell the boys, and girls, in Topeka? For the most part, we think, they seem pretty happy with the way things are going in this state. Except for our neighbors to the east, where the Republicans lost a Senate seat when a cute redistricting ploy backfired, incumbents fared well. So the message, first of all, seems to be, "stay the course."

Most major changes came in the primaries, when a couple of liberal Republicans were beaten by conservative challengers. Conservative groups put thousands of dollars into some races, and they had some successes. If there was any message, it was not a pro-growth, raise-taxes message. There was no demand for a tax increase, for schools or other state programs. It was anti-tax conservative Republicans who made the gains. Democrats and liberals in the GOP lost ground.

The Republican leadership did not fare well in a well-financed drive to unseat young Josh Svaty, a Democrat who took a House seat south of Salina two years ago. Their guy lost badly after a sometimes contentious race marked by dirty tricks. As the state's economy gains steam, there will be a blizzard of requests for more money from nearly every state program. From social services to schools, highways and law enforcement, there is tremendous pent-up demand for more money.

While state income is on the rise again, and exceeding official estimates, there isn't nearly enough to go around. Schools will continue to get priority for money, but colleges and other agencies are positioning themselves with hands out. Everyone has legitimate needs. Every agency has a lobby to support it. Every program thinks it should get the spare change. It will be a long spring as legislators try to sort through the requests and demands. No one knows what the courts will do with a lawsuit over school finance. A district judge estimated that the state should put another \$1 billion into the school budget, but of course, had no suggestions as to where to get the money.

It ought to be clear that the taxpayers whose pockets would be tapped are in no mood to pay. If anyone — school supporters, the judge, school boards or superintendents — thinks otherwise, it'd be interesting to put the issue to a statewide vote. That's not how Kansas works, though. The voters have already spoken, and our guess is their voice will be heard. There'll be no massive tax increase next year, and state programs will have to fight over the scraps that fall to the budget room floor. We will survive, and so will most state programs.

— Steve Haynes



## It's a great day for a potluck dinner

I should write a book. I'll call it, "How to Feed Your Husband, Indefinitely, at Potluck Dinners".

Starting Tuesday night of last week, we ate potluck dinners, or the remains thereof, every day for six days. Tuesday, our singing group performed for a local senior citizens group. All the members brought a dish for the potluck meal, and they invited our group to join them, which we gladly did.

Wednesday night was my annual Liberty Star Thanksgiving meal at Lyle, and we feasted on turkey and dressing, mashed potatoes and gravy and all the fixin's. Due to the bad roads, attendance was low, so we had plenty of leftovers for Thursday. We don't get home until late Friday nights, so leftover salads were all we wanted.

Saturday night was the Pheasant Hunter's Supper at the church in our little town. The ladies of the community fixed turkey, ham loaf, smothered steak and ham.

Sunday found Jim filling the pulpit in a neighboring town. Guess what? Another

### Out Back Carolyn Plotts



potluck. "Could we stay to eat with them?" the congregation asked. Could we? You bet we could. It was another turkey dinner, with everything cooked and served to perfection. We ate so much for dinner, we didn't need anything else that night.

It's like an addiction, though. Everything is so good, you can't get enough. Brookville Corn is one of my favorites. I was able to eat it every day for five days. And I want more.

But, after checking the calendar for this week, it looks like we might be going through withdrawal for a few days. Nary a potluck dinner in sight. Jim will have to settle for plain old home cookin' tonight.

It's a good thing he likes tacos.

—ob—  
Wednesday night we went to Lyle for dinner (see above), and plowed mud all the way. It had rained all day and by the time we were leaving town, snow was mixing with the rain drops. About two miles north of town, on a less-than-perfect graveled road, Jim was all for turning around. He said, "I'm fearless, and this has got me scared."

"We can't go home," I pleaded. "I have the rolls and cranberry salad."

Our friend Veda was riding with us. She said, "Whenever I have to drive on bad roads, I do a lot of talkin' to the Lord."

I'm glad she had a direct pipeline. We made it to Lyle, had a great time and when everyone was ready to leave, Roger and Angie said they would follow us back to the highway in their four-wheel drive. It took about 45 minutes to drive those nine miles, slinging mud all the way.

The next morning when I went to leave for work, my poor car looked like the loser in an off-road mud rally. It took four dollars at the car wash just to tell it was white.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: A little caring seems to go a long way

To the Editor,  
I want to express my appreciation for the refreshments served us veterans after the parade. It warms one like a big hug to know someone cares enough to do something like that. This is what makes

America great — when we love almighty God and our neighbors. I'm sure everyone you served would agree with me when I say thanks, again.

Don and Norma Wegener  
Norton

## Veteran appreciates World War II tribute

To the Editor:  
Congratulations and thanks for the publishing of the tribute to us World War II veterans. It was a job well done. In fact, it was one of the best tributes I remember receiving.

Also, the reception in our honor following the parade was greatly appreciated. Thanks and God Bless each of you.

Eugene Wiltfong  
Norton

## Family stress can be a lot to deal with

The views expressed here are those of the individual writer and should not be considered a replacement for seeking professional help.

Dear PlainSense: My elderly mother lives alone, and I am the only family member close enough to care for her, which takes a lot of my time. Then I don't seem to have enough time at home when my husband and children need me. I feel caught in the middle, and very tired. What can I do?

Worn Out

Dear Worn Out:  
The "sandwich generation" is a term frequently used to describe people in your situation. They often feel overwhelmed trying to respond to the needs of their family, including children, and the demands of their aging parents. They experience a lot of stress trying to juggle everything that needs to be done. And they usually

### High Plains Mental Health

Cora Lee Pfannenstiel

sacrifice their personal time for the sake of everyone else.

The stress of taking responsibility for aging parents, along with one's own family and children can cause a person to feel like they are being "pulled apart".

Often the children don't get the attention and nurturing they need, and the marriage can become strained. Meanwhile, the elderly parent may be unhappy because they are aware of their increased demands, or they, too, may feel neglected and become overly demanding.

As a result of people living longer, there

is already a significant increase in the number of four, and even five, generation families. Thus, as our society ages, the "sandwich generation" will also increase.

Good communication within the family is vital, and it is important to ask for help from your husband and children. Find out about assistance from other sources as well, including social service agencies and aging services such as your local area agency on aging.

It is also important for the sandwich generation to take good care of themselves.

Practice effective stress management; eat healthy and get plenty of exercise. Don't put everything in your life on hold. You will feel better both physically and emotionally, and thus be able to better deal with those extra demands of parent and family.

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### Nor'West Newspapers

Dick and Mary Beth Boyd  
Publishers, 1970-2002  
Incorporating the Norton County Champion  
Marion R. Krehbiel, editor



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR: Norton man angry about content of city council story

To the Editor:  
I attended the Norton City Council meeting to present to the city council the EMC Insurance Co.'s safety dividend in the amount of \$5,084.61. I would like to point out how poorly your article was written. You did not point out who "He" was or why the check was being pre-

sented. Had your reporter listened to Norton radio KQNK she would have gotten the full story.

For your information the Boxler Insurance Agency also presented insurance saving dividends to the cities of Alma, Norcat, Brewster, Herndon and Winona.

Do not be surprised if the subscription of Jon and Bonnie Boxler expires and when your sales representative comes by and does not receive an order for an advertisement.

Yours truly,  
Jon Boxler

### WRITE:

The Norton Telegram encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of public interest. Letters should be brief, clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise.

We do not publish form letters or letters about topics which do not pertain to our area. Thank-yous should be submitted to

the Want Ad desk.

Letters will not be censored, but will be read and edited for form and style, clarity, length and legality. We will not publish attacks on private individuals or businesses which do not pertain to a public issue.