

Governor's budget calls for large cuts

If you are following the political happenings in Kansas, here is a brief breakdown of Gov. Sam Brownback's recommendations:

Increase private sector jobs, cut 2,000 unfilled state jobs, eliminate corporate tax subsidies, allow Kansas businesses to deduct a higher percentage of investment costs, waive state income taxes for individuals relocating to counties with a double-digit percentage population decline in the last 10 years (this includes almost all of the northwest Kansas counties), build the Holcomb power plant, expand wind energy projects, update policies that govern wireless and broadband access, reform the school finance formula, and establish an Office of the Repealer.

Gov. Brownback has the daunting task of dealing with a \$570 million budget shortfall this year, and if everything works this year, we will still be working on cutting \$400 million the following two years.

It is one thing to say state government needs to be smaller, but it is quite another to identify the specific reductions and push for their enactment. The governor's budget calls for another \$750 million in budget cuts. That translates into a 6 percent reduction in state spending.

For public schools, the impact is sizable. Because federal stimulus dollars were used to keep school spending up the past two years, school budgets were not hit as hard as other state programs. This year, the stimulus money is gone, and it won't be made up.

The governor is quick to point out that while base aid to students will drop under his plan, rising costs for teacher pensions and building projects are soaking up the money. State spending for education is larger.

A task given to the Legislature is to define the word "suitability" in education finance. We will get input from many sources, and I would love to hear from the people of northwest Kansas as to their definition.

Areas directly affected by the budget proposal include:

- Community Mental Health Centers – All remaining state aid (\$10.2 million) is eliminated. That money is used to provide services to poor people who have no private insurance or Medicaid.
- Early Head Start – Gone, all funding (\$11.3 million). This money is provided for our poorest young children.
- Kansas Art Commission – eliminated July, 2012 (\$800,000). The governor feels that private groups will pick up these programs outside the state budget.
- Public broadcasting, all state funding eliminated (\$1.7 million).

Several entities will come out OK. In our area, that includes the Department of Corrections. All \$40 million of lost stimulus money will be replaced with state general funds.

The Department of Transportation can handle a \$200 million sweep of highway funds into the state general fund for next year. The overall 10-year plan stays in place.

House Bill 2035 dealing with abortion will be one of the first to hit the floor. I cosigned with several other representatives and feel that it would be beneficial if passed. You can read the full material on the Kansas Legislature website when it gets up and running this year.

The second bill in my Corrections Committee is to make the drug Sudafed available by prescription only. Meth making is still a problem, and law enforcement has requested this law.

As of today, Thursday, Jan. 20, there are 45 new bills started. I find it challenging to stay abreast of all the legislation. I really want to make decisions based on what is best for northwest Kansas and our state.

Ward Cassidy, a St. Francis Republican, is the state representative for the 121st District. Reach him at ward.cassidy@house.ks.gov. The phone number is (785) 296-7696.

News from your legislator
Ward Cassidy



Changes in our families lives

I can keep a secret but, my sister-in-law, Donna, can't.

A kitchen remodel has been on Donna's radar screen for a long, long time. The original idea was to complete the project before Christmas and surprise her kids when they came home for the holiday. But, as is want to happen, things didn't go as planned and the new kitchen didn't materialize. Plans were put on hold till after the first of the year. I guess Donna was about to burst with her news because she ended up telling her kids, grandkids, sisters and friends that a new kitchen was in her future.

Well, the future is here. At this very moment, Jim is demo-ing Donna's old kitchen. The cabinets her father built almost 65 years ago are gone. Perhaps they will find further use in one of my brother, Dick's, work shops. But, they don't owe Donna anything; they served her and, her mother before that, well over the years. Her only request is she wants to watch when Jim pulls out the old sink and counter. She is convinced a pair of prized scissors (and who knows what else) slipped through the crack between the counter top and wall.

A remodel turns a household on its ear. Donna's kitchen has been relocated to the

Out Back
Carolyn Plotts



dining room, hallway, back porch and is encroaching on the living room. Donna has always been a good sport and she will manage to improvise. Even if it means using the microwave on top of the piano and washing dishes in the bathroom sink.

-ob-

My oldest daughter, Halley, is changing jobs next week. She's not changing careers because she will still be involved in real estate but, she will be working on the other end of the business. Of course, I don't totally understand it but, I think she will be working with foreclosures and matching them up with real estate agents located in the area.

More importantly, though, is the fact that she has a week between jobs and she is coming for a short visit. I can hardly wait to see her. We will have so much fun and I'll recruit her to help with a couple

little projects I've started.

-ob-

Mainly, moving furniture. It all started when Jim said, "I think I'd like my recliner over there." Something about glare on the TV screen.

"Over there" was the space occupied by the loveseat. But, I jumped at the chance to move furniture. You see, when Jim designed the living room and built the entertainment center he had one thought in mind - make it so furniture placement could only go one way. Did I mention Jim hates change.

I thought the room was a little crowded with the sofa and loveseat so the sofa is gone. Anyway, his recliner is moved and he seems to like it there.

-ob-

Our church supplies little offering envelopes on the back of the seat in front of you. The envelope has a space for name, address and amount. We reached for one and saw it already had a name and amount on it. Little Katie had filled it out and written \$100,000 on the amount line. I know she would have gladly given it if she had it.

Oh, that we all could have the giving heart of a child.

Tips to having a successful calving season

Calving season has arrived. It is an exciting time filled with stress and hazards. Below are a few tips that will make calving season easier on all involved.

Prior to calving, it is very important that the cows receive adequate nutrition. When cattle have a body condition score of 5 out of 9, they are better prepared to feed the calf in the coming months. Vaccinations are of vital importance, including a scour vaccination, a respiratory anti-abortive vaccination, and a 7-way vaccination. The cow passes antibodies on to her calf keeping the cattle herd healthier and more profitable for the producer. Anti-parasiticide treatment is also incredibly important. Parasites strain the already weakened immune system.

Most cattle go through the calving season uneventfully. But, even the most well managed herd is bound to have problems. All cattle producers should have these obstetrical supplies on hand: a means of restraint (head catch and halter), a bucket for warm water and disinfectant, lubricant, obstetrical chains and handles, obstetrical sleeves, strong iodine, clean

Vet tips
Dr. Aaron White



towels, calf esophageal feeder and feeder bottle, and frozen colostrum and electrolytes. Consult your veterinarian prior to calving on specific medications you may need for your herd.

It is very important that adequate shelter is available for cattle during calving. A good shelter provides protection from the elements. The maternity pens should be comfortable and contain clean bedding and sufficient lighting. There should also be an area available for warming chilled calves.

Professional help is always the best during a dystocia. The sooner your veterinarian can aid the cow, the greater the chance that a live healthy calf will be delivered. The veterinarian should be called immediately: when hard labor

has not progressed after 30 minutes, for any abnormal presentation (normal presentation is nose, 2 front feet, and right side up), and for any unusual behavior (labor starts but does not progress). Early intervention is vital to saving both the calf and cow! As always, handle cows gently and with as little stress as possible. The more stress, the more likely you will have problems with cow-calf bonding.

After calving, check the udder for adequate colostrum, the single most important factor in calf survival after birth! Strip a few drops of colostrum from each teat to check for mastitis and to make it easier for the calf to nurse. The calf should nurse multiple times well during the first 8 hours of life. If the calf is weak consult your veterinarian immediately! After birth, dip the calf's naval in strong iodine to help prevent naval ill (infection).

Follow these guidelines and your calving season should be a great success! And as always, when in doubt, call your veterinarian!

Dear Editor,
Once again, thousands of dogs and cats in Kansas need our help immediately. The governing powers in our state are once more seeking to bury the Kansas Animal Health Department within the vast nether regions of the Ag Department. Within this past year, many thousands of animals were rescued from deplorable conditions by the Animal Health Department. These actions are never taken lightly, and only when animals are in need of immediate attention due to adverse conditions.

The inspectors within the Kansas Animal Health Department are the people that grant Lebreeding and kennel licenses to those persons that have breeding kennels, animal shelters and other related facilities across out state. They conduct regular inspections to ensure a minimum quality of animal care. When facilities do not meet minimum standards, they work with the owners so that certain requirements can be met.

Without such oversight, what will happen to the animals that live in the really awful places? This 'Melding' of departments will surely slow down response time and protocols could be compromised. There are "Good" breeders out there, but concern for animals in horrendous conditions should be paramount. No living creature should have to endure living in filth, existing without love and compassion, being cold, hungry or isolated. Please don't let this happen. Please contact your representative as soon as possible. Let them know that you do not want animals to suffer with no hope that they will be helped by someone.

If Kansas Animal Health Department "Goes away" into a gigantic agency, it will mean that thousands may suffer and die alone. Let then continue to help those with no voice. They need your support right now, today!

Aliease Dougherty, Great Bend Kansas



Thumbs up to the Northern Valley Jr. High girls A-Team for their 1st place finish at the GNEC Tournament and to their 1st place finish for League. Emailed in.

Thumbs up to Dr. Marty Griffey and the Norton County Hospital for the informational seminar regarding hypertension. Keep up the good work and we look forward to the next session. Emailed in.

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