

## Now is the time to defend our liberty

Bit by bit, America drifts and slides toward becoming a high-tech police state.

Bit by bit, freedoms slip away. And it always sounds like a good idea.

There is no enemy on the left – or on the right. The threat comes from the bureaucracy, the security apparatus, from authoritarian thinkers on either side of the aisle.

Think this is silly?

Then why are all the supposedly conservative Republicans in Topeka patting themselves on the back for passing a law forcing all Kansans to show a photo ID card before they can vote? Election fraud's never been a problem here.

What's next?

Roving checkpoints where police ask for our citizenship papers, as in some third-rate communist dictatorship from the Cold War era?

Oh, we call those drunk-driver check points. Hunting license checkpoints. Drug interdiction lanes.

If you think our liberties are not fading, try to get on an airplane without your ID.

If you're stopped for some traffic infraction, notice that the officer is likely to chat you up. He may ask you where you've been or where you're going. If your answer is a little hesitant, he might ask if you'd mind him searching the car.

It's loads of fun, having your car unpacked and dismantled while you sit beside the road.

The other day, Homeland Security agents swept in and took over the train depot in Savannah, Ga. They stopped and searched anyone who entered, whether they intended to board a train or not.

Who knows if the Transportation Security Administration even has that kind of authority. But rail security sounds like a good idea.

Government computers track your movements, your bank accounts, much of your life. And the government can access private computers – at the phone company or the bank or the credit-card company, the airlines, a hundred other firms – and track the rest of your ways.

All of this is done, of course, for the best of reasons. For our own good.

Airport security is vital in the age of terrorism. Transportation Security agents, someone points out, have never caught a terrorist. They have "caught" thousands of people for minor criminal offenses, however.

Isn't election security "vital to democracy?" How did we ever get by without it for two centuries. Still, it sound like "a good idea." Same for "enhanced" border security, with computers tracking not only the comings and goings of foreigners, but of Americans as well.

Your bank is under orders to track your finances, especially any cash you might come across, and report you if you exceed certain limits. You might be a criminal, a drug dealer or a tax evader, after all.

And we all want them caught, right?

But when does "enhanced" security begin to impinge on our rights, especially the right to privacy? When is enough security way too much?

Will we wake up one morning and find out that, instead of the government serving us, with all those computers, cameras, records and files, that we must serve the government?

If that day comes, when it comes, it will be far too late to complain. Records will be made; action taken.

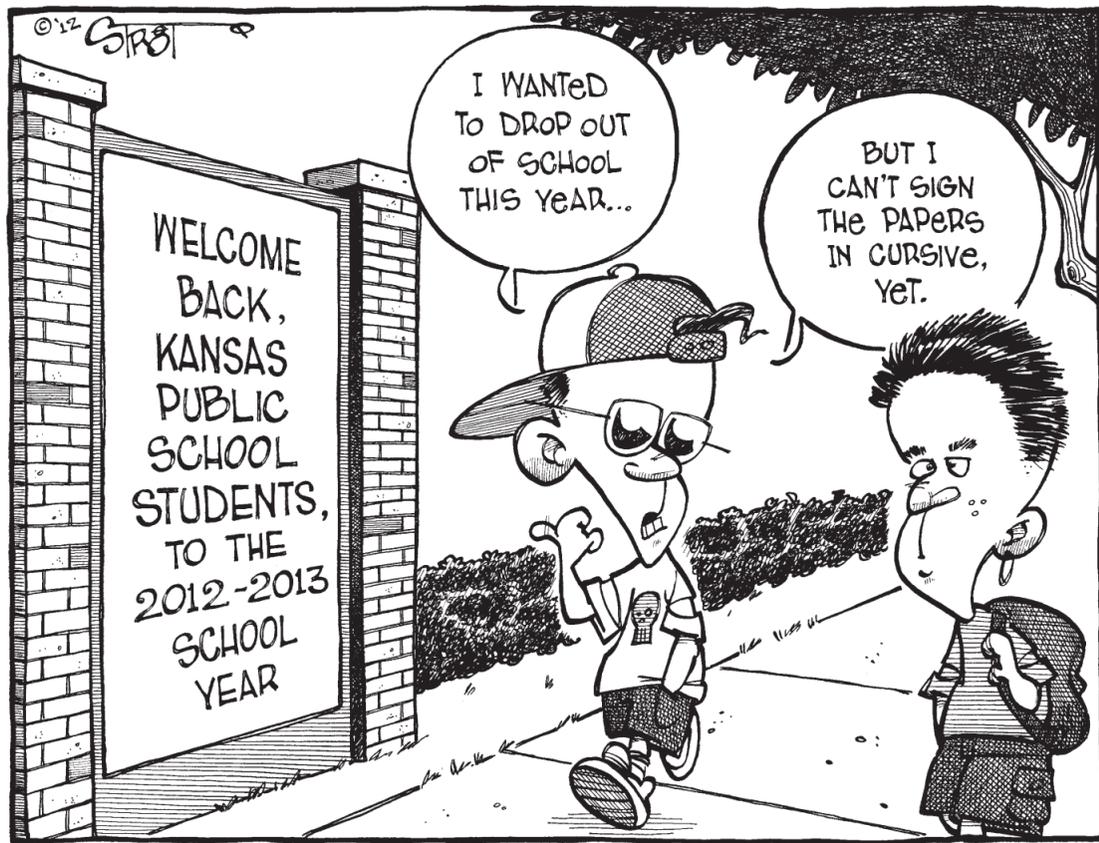
No, the time to defend liberty, as always, is today. Each policy, from the grossly misnamed "Patriot Act," to the latest "voter security" laws, needs to be questioned.

The best level of government involvement in our lives is the least possible. We need to avoid the point where ever-tighter security of all kinds becomes a straightjacket for America.

Ask questions today, not tomorrow.

— Steve Haynes

### On the Prairie Dog Steve Haynes



## The issue of women's health care

"What I think these comments do underscore is why we shouldn't have a bunch of politicians, a majority of whom are men, making health care decisions on behalf of women," he said.

Herein lies one of the primary reasons behind my support of President Barack Obama. I don't hear any republicans out there advocating for all men to get vasectomies and then women wouldn't be impregnated by them in the first place. Can you imagine if women were the majority in the Senate and proposed just such action for men? Talk about a backlash.

What people seem to not want to acknowledge is that anything... anything involved in reproduction is a woman's health care issue. The reproductive system is not just for the enjoyment of men. Whether you are talking pregnancy or menopause or anything in between, it all is a part of female health care. Just as a woman has the right to decide against an abortion she likewise has the right to make the

### Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



determination to have one.

Missouri Representative Todd Akin, a candidate for a Missouri Senate seat, stated this week he opposed abortion in instances of rape. Why? Because, legitimate rape "rarely results in pregnancy." He continued to inform us that women's bodies have a way of shutting down during a legitimate rape thus preventing pregnancy. In his defense he has since apologized and said his facts were incorrect. You think?

The GOP is meeting this week to put together a constitutional amendment to curb abortion rights. At this time, it doesn't appear there will be specific details regarding rape, incest or the

life of the mother. The platform will be voted on Tuesday evening, but the issue is still important even though it will have been decided by the time this article goes to print.

Phrases such as "legitimate rape" or "forcible rape" or "aspirin between her knees" are phrases which have no room in an election in 2012, and yet, they are phrases which have been jockeyed about this past year.

The 2012 election has many critical aspects from economy to health care, but none as critical as the testing of women's rights and freedoms. This is a time for women to reflect on the remarkable advancements their gender has achieved over the lifetime of our country. Now is not the time to take steps backwards, but to stand up and take responsibility for our own health. Men have been deemed responsible to make sound choices regarding their health care, shouldn't it be time that women are credited with the same rights. Mail to: mkwoodyard@ruraltel.net

## Looking in the right place for the answers

Along a stretch of Highway 24 we travel there is an "Answer Plot".

It's near a sign identifying the river as "No Fork Solomon". I chuckle every time I see that sign. What happened to the fork?

This year we need a chuckle when looking at the answer plot or even looking out the window. The answer is clear: we need rain.

It's stressful and we all cope with the stress in different ways.

There is the "Let's Pray" crowd. Ken Root, a columnist in the High Plains Journal, wrote "I don't think it is God's intent for mortals to change things only by our prayers. It seems to me that prayer doesn't change God, it changes us."

Unanswered prayer leads to bitterness and unbelief. If there is a God, why does he let this or that happen, despite all the prayers?

There is the "I cried because I had no shoes until I met a man who had no feet" thing. One particular person always points out how much worse the weather is somewhere else (usually where she lives). Is it a contest? When I'm having a pity party I prefer others nod and agree, "Times are tough!"

I also believe there is something inherently wrong with making yourself

### This Too Shall Pass Nancy Hagman



happy by seeking out the misery of others.

The thing that has lifted my spirits this summer is the Peterson brothers' parody "I'm Sexy and I Know It". If you have not viewed the video; type "I'm Farming and I Grow It" into the search engine on your computer and enjoy.

The day it came to my attention, I was a little late getting dinner on the table; probably because I was messing around on the computer! So I said to the summer help, Caleb and Dillon: come watch this.

It just made me so proud! Of Caleb and Dillon, of my daughters who worked for their dad, of farm kids and farmers everywhere.

The original video shows the typical gangster-type with saggy pants, chains, tats and piercings. No one appears to work. But they do "work out" and hang out. They drive around in a pimped up

ride.

"I'm Farming and I Grow It" shows kids working, naturally fit. Not a tat or piercing in sight. There are combines, semi-trucks, balers, drills; hundreds of thousands of dollars of equipment. These young men are not aimless; they know how to accomplish a task.

In the media, even our President, portrays us from the Heartland as clinging to our Bibles and our guns. We are uneducated, unsophisticated hicks. What we contribute to society is unimportant; you can get food at the grocery store.

Greg Peterson was the brains behind the video. He got a lot of press when the video came out. I saw one live interview on a national news show. Unfortunately he had a bit of a deer in the headlights look. Perhaps he did better on some of the other shows. To really see what he is about, watch the video!

It's dry. We worry. We look for answers, try to cope. If you want to feel better watch the video. Watch both videos. Then decide where you would rather be. Which kids you would be proud to call your own.

I think I know the answer!

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