

## Change will happen so lets get over it

Which way should the Republican Party go?

The answer is pretty simple. If it wants to wither and die, it can continue down the road to becoming a party for xenophobic white men who fear immigrants and want no truck with anyone who's not of direct northern European descent.

If it wants to live, it will have to embrace the future America, which will be a far more diverse, more fragmented and more interesting society.

The demographics of America today, let alone those expected for America tomorrow, won't allow the GOP to remain stuck in the grip of an anti-immigration, anti-immigrant frenzy. It can't focus on the realm of white-faced suits, because it won't be just white Americans running the show.

Debate rages within the party. Some claim change is the only way to survive. Others say allowing even more immigrants just means creating more and more Democrats to vote for the other party.

But that's crazy talk. The immigrants and minorities are here already. Their population is increasing, though many Hispanics are not yet of voting age. A party that bases its appeal in one ethnic group will not survive.

And one more thing: there's nothing wrong with immigration. It's the American way, the vaunted melting pot we all learned about in school. So get over it. Change is here.

This does not mean the party should or can abandon its principles. At its finest, the Republican Party stands for a smaller and more efficient government, more freedom for individuals and core American values, including family and life.

These are things that should be important to Americans of any race or creed. There is no reason for the GOP to abandon even one of its principles to attract voters from any group.

But first we all have to get past the idea that race or ethnic heritage are the major determining factors in selecting a set of political beliefs. That should be far from the truth.

In last year's election, the Associated Press reports, President Obama may have won largely because black Americans, women and other minorities turned out to vote for him while white Americans, uninspired by the GOP ticket, stayed home. Two years earlier, Washington insiders were saying that election was the Republicans to win - if they had a decent candidate. It was apparent even then that Mitt Romney would not rise to the challenge.

The Republicans will have to do better. Someone like the popular Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida, an ethnic Cuban, would do no worse.

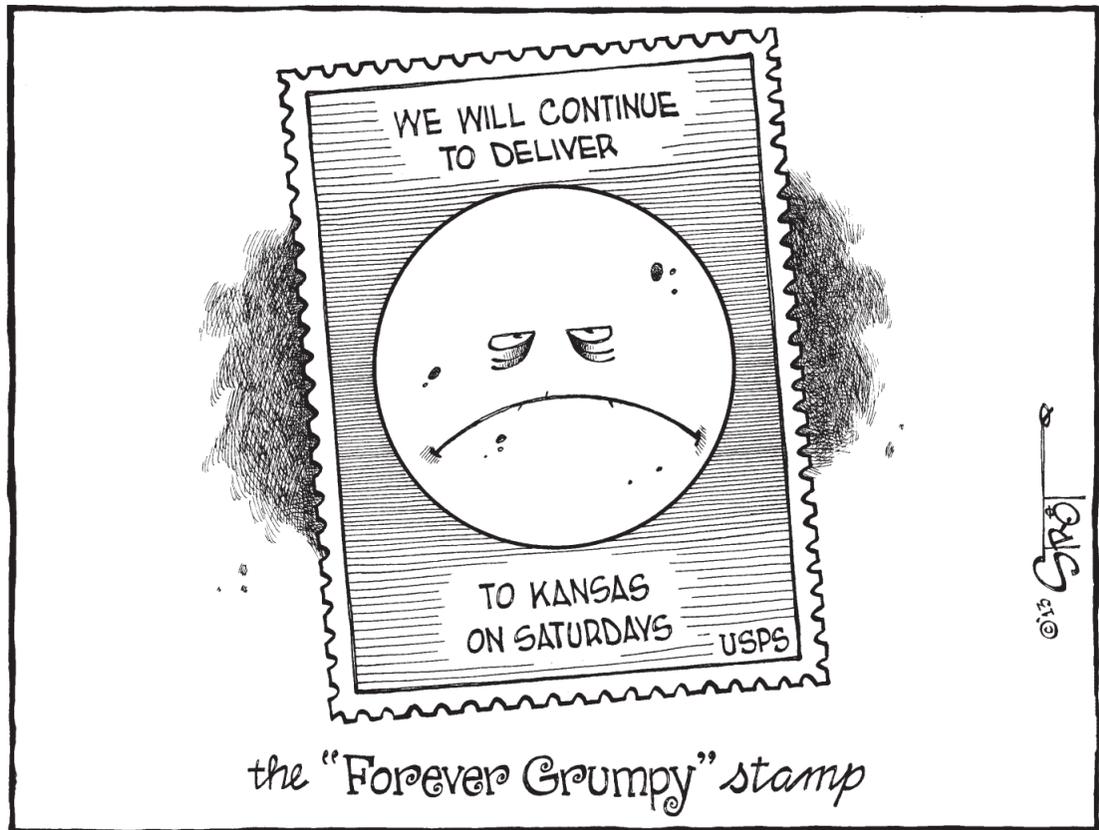
The party can begin by ditching the fear mongers of immigration issues and appealing to everyone, not just one ethnic group. They cannot build bridges to Hispanics by avoiding a common-sense settlement on immigration. They cannot attract minority votes without minority candidates.

The U.S. will be a far different place in this century than the last, but not necessarily a better place if the party fails and falters. Republicans should heed the calls to change and accept the realities of the 21st century.

The opportunity will not come again.



On the  
Prairie Dog  
Steve Haynes



the "Forever Grumpy" stamp

## Compromise is critical to democracy

I had a revelation this week after reading a piece of "fan" mail. The gentleman's letter highlighted his frustration with my views on background checks and proceeded to blast those he found to be at the center of our problems. It was a rather long list, including the President, Vice-President Joe Biden, the "hug a thug" (his words, not mine) liberals and, of course, the media. Although I am certain he had no idea his ramblings would be enlightening to me, they were.

My grandmother used to say, "Even in the worst of men, is a little bit of good." That goes for Democrats, Republicans, Independents, Conservatives, Liberals, etc. I may prefer the agenda of President Obama, but to say all his actions have met with my approval would be a vast overstatement. The same goes for Former President George W. Bush. There were actions he took which I found overstepping his power, but other

### Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



things he did, I endorsed. It isn't the party affiliation which outlines good and bad, but rather in our ability to see and respect each other's view and work to draw the two lines into one.

In today's climate, the loudest, not necessarily the majority, voice belongs to extremists. I'm talking about a Representative who feels justified in shouting "Liar", in the middle of the President's State of the Union address. I trust most Americans were disappointed in our country at that time. Respect is critical to compromise; compromise is critical to democracy.

I remember so well when one of our youngsters, as a pre-teen, made the statement they would never be friends with a Republican. I asked why, and was told because they wouldn't have anything in common with them.

I asked, "What about Pam and Dan?" Our dearest friends from Reno.

Our youngster replied, "They're not Republican."

In awe, I said, "I don't know anyone much more so." Our child was astounded. The important thing isn't that we have the same beliefs, but rather that we respect one another's right to have a belief...and all without name calling.

My "fan" says we should enforce the existing laws instead of passing new ones and with changing times, we probably need to do both. As for having a background check on media, I'm getting in line right now. mkwoodyard@ruraltel.net

## Kansas is a great place to live and retire, says Yahoo

A feature story on Yahoo this week focused on cheap states to retire: Kansas tops them all!

Finally some good news! Of course, detractors of Governor Brownback will not appreciate the main reason Kansas gets high marks: Low Income Taxes!

Ah, well, when it comes to government everyone is a critic! The problem is there are few constructive ideas about what to implement in place of the current system.

We get hung up on one (dumb) idea. Term limits comes to mind. Poll after poll reports that voters resounding support term limits; except when it comes to their own district. Jerry Moran served six terms representing this district in the U.S. House of Representatives before being elected to the U.S. Senate.

He received very little criticism during his time in the House because he represented our interests and was responsive to our concerns. Proving once again: All politics is local. For the vast majority in this district, Jerry Moran could have been appointed to the House for life. He served us well. That is how people feel about their "entrenched" House Members in districts all across the country. When it comes to throwing the bums out we want to throw someone else's out! We'll keep ours, thank you!

### This Too Shall Pass Nancy Hagman



Much as we hate to admit it, sometimes good things come out of what we perceive as boneheaded policies. All across the country retirees, who read Yahoo, are packing their bags for Kansas because the Gov is dedicated to eliminating Income Taxes! Since these are retirees it will not matter that our schools are decimated by lack of funding.

Another reason Kansas is touted as a good place to retire: low housing prices and low nursing home costs. It's probably a good idea to cut back on education because while we want caregivers to be caring; they don't have to be highly educated. In fact the less educated they are the less we have to pay them; keeping nursing home costs down. That worked out didn't it! The more I think about it the more I'm convinced Sam Brownback is a genius!

Please take my comments lightly. I do not agree with much coming out of the Statehouse, but I respect the Governor. He is committed to certain ideals and

has spent his life attempting to see them implemented. A lot of people voted for him so they must agree. As bad as some of it seems to me at the moment, wouldn't it be amazing if it works out???

This is something I struggle with. Even if an outcome is good I often become so focused on something that went awry during the process I cannot step back and enjoy it or give the opposition due credit.

The retirement story named three towns as being outstanding places to retire: Olathe, Lawrence and Manhattan. I don't know much about Olathe but the other two are very nice towns, either would be a nice place to live.

Who determined Kansas is a great place to retire anyway? Every week there is a story on Yahoo about the best place for this or that. Of course, it is all true----because they can't put anything that is not true on the Internet!

Recent gleanings from the Internet: places that are expected to have strong population and job growth in the future include the Oklahoma City area. Lincoln, Nebraska was named the best small city in the nation.

Two out of my three kids are set! Or perhaps they all are: the third lives in Kansas. Despite all its flaws, I like Kansas! I think I'll retire here!

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Thumbs up to Troy Thomson and the Norton County Sheriff's Department for going above and beyond. We think you are awesome. Called in.

Thumbs up to Allen E. Braun for his letter to the editor printed April 30. Emailed In.

Remember there is no charge for rendering a Thumbs Up. Thumbs Up are meant to give recognition for a positive person or event in the community. Also remember all Letters to the Editor must be signed.