

Governor may surprise many state worrywarts

The commentators seem to be quite worried about how Gov.-elect Sam Brownback will be able to balance his campaign promise to focus on jobs and the economy with demands from the religious right for tougher abortion laws, from gun advocates for new laws and from other conservative groups.

John Hanna, the Associated Press' long-time statehouse correspondent, said the big GOP victories could be setting the dominant party up for infighting the likes of which it has seldom seen.

And, to be fair, the party has such big majorities in the House (92-33) and Senate (31-9) — that's nearly three-fourths in both — that some disputes do seem likely. When one party gets that big, it's just natural for it to split into wings. The Kansas GOP has had two distinct, not always harmonious groups, for years.

One reason for this may be that many who might otherwise be Democrats learned early on that they need to be Republicans to get elected in this state. The party is where the action — and the power — are.

Some years, competition between these two groups is more than the limited fight the state's impoverished Democrats can put up. And in politics, maybe it just has to be that way. Too much unity might actually be dangerous, with a happy majority running roughshod over a weak and powerless minority.

Dr. Ed Flentje, a political scientist at Wichita State University, writing in a regular column, says the new governor may find he has little power to reform the state's education establishment, though he wishes him luck.

There's some truth to that, too. In Kansas, while public schools take fully half the state budget, the governor and Legislature have

little say. The elected state Board of Education hires the commissioner, who runs the Department of Education.

And while the Legislature is supposed to set the budget, balancing schools with other needs, in practice, state courts and the power of the education lobby have stripped even that influence away.

Yet we have faith in the new governor. In 14 years in the U.S. Senate and in years as a state legislator and cabinet member, he's proven he can handle himself. Running the state, if that's the right term, should prove to be within his powers. He knows how to work with the Legislature, and his campaign platform apparently resounded with voters.

Sure, as a conservative Republican, Mr. Brownback will have to deal with those who focus on abortion, gun rights, drugs and other issues. He can afford to toss each a bone.

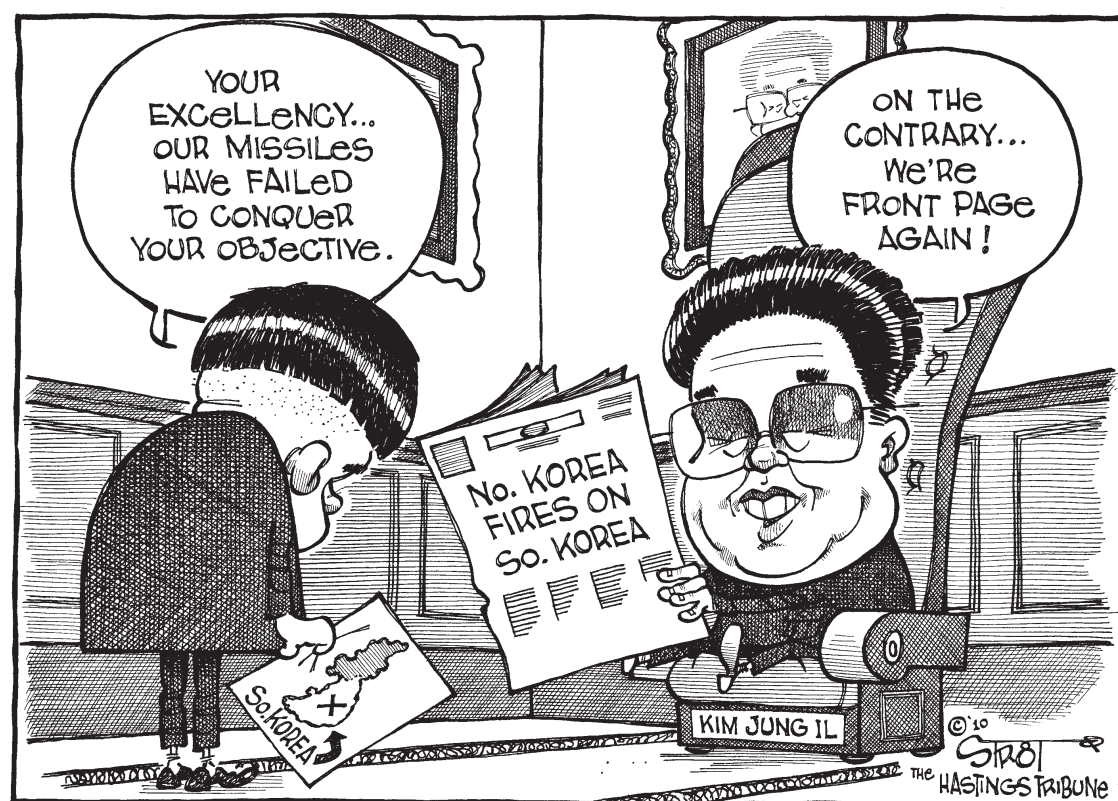
That shouldn't detract from his mission to boost the economy and shrink the government, and in that, he'll be helped by a general upward trend in business and state revenue.

Where for the last three years, the "experts" who project state income consistently ran behind the drop off in taxes, in a recovery, typically, income will run ahead of projections.

The state has to deal with the loss of millions in federal "stimulus" money and in the projected end two years out of the "temporary" 20 percent increase in the state sales tax.

There will be no "extra" money to spend, but as a conservative, the governor-elect should be comfortable with tight budgets. If he seeks to prove his mettle, he'll make the system work with the money the state has.

And we think he'll do just that, surprising the commentators. — *Steve Haynes*



Feast hits road, heads east

I kept thinking of the book, "A Movable Feast," by Ernest Hemingway as we winged our way east last week.

The only similarity between our food and cooking equipment, packed truck and the book about Hemingway's life in Paris was the title, but it kept popping up into my head.

After remembering how we packed the turkey, trimmings and younger children in the car and headed for Wyoming years ago, I started to feel the urge to head for Lawrence to spend the holiday with our son, who would be spending the day without family.

Of course, Thanksgiving dinner in an efficiency apartment with a young man who works nights and sleeps until noon most days would be a challenge.

But neither he nor his father was going to complain about the food, so I wasn't too worried.

I went to the store for a turkey, and found a 14-pounder. I put the roaster I use for giant batches of chili, soup suppers and Thanksgiving turkeys in the back of the truck. In a box, I put the electric carving knife and a large sharp knife, as well as the onion and celery I put in the cavity and the ingredients for the browning sauce.

Without a browning sauce, the turkey will get nicely cooked and



Open Season

By *Cynthia Haynes*
c.haynes@nwkans.com

taste great in a roaster, but it won't brown. The sauce, while purely cosmetic, just makes it more appealing.

Next, I made up the stuffing, the cranberry salad and a cranberry-and-sweet-potato recipe I wanted to try, and put them all in the refrigerator until we pulled out.

Four cans of green beans, potatoes and extra onions went into the box of odds and ends.

When we were ready to hit the road at 5 p.m. Wednesday, I had one cooler packed with the refrigerated items, which included butter and bacon, just in case.

A second cooler contained the frozen leftovers — stuffed peppers, fried chicken, steak soup and green chili — I always take to our bachelor son.

We headed east. At 10:30 p.m. we pulled into his parking lot and unloaded the food into his fridge. We talked for a little while and then headed for our hotel.

At 8 a.m. Thanksgiving Day, I got

up and drove back to the apartment to start the turkey. Both Steve and son were still asleep.

With the turkey on, I put the stuffing and sweet potato casserole in the oven and started to prepare the green beans. I put one can in the pot, two cans in the pot, three cans in the pot. Uh oh, why are there peas in my green beans? Steve hates peas.

First I tried to separate them. That didn't work, so I headed out to find an open grocery.

By the time both the boys were up, the potatoes were ready to mash, the green beans were all beans and the turkey was just about ready to go.

We enjoyed our holiday dinner and all watched a little television. Then it was time to go home. We divided the leftovers and hit the road.

In all we spend about 12 hours on the road and 16 in Lawrence, half of that asleep. But we got to see our son and had a family holiday dinner.

And what more can you ask for than that?

She goes from turkey to cake

We've managed to make Thanksgiving leftovers last through the weekend. Except for tacos one night, I haven't had to cook a meal since Thursday.

You know what I'm thankful for? I'm thankful Jim loves cold turkey sandwiches. And that he doesn't hesitate to make one anytime he's hungry.

-ob-

It's good I didn't have to cook, because we had a wedding to get ready for. Yes, a wedding. Son James and his fiancée Charlotte made some changes to their wedding plans to allow them an extra day for a honeymoon. The change? Move the wedding ahead two weeks.

So, we flowed directly from Thanksgiving into wedding mode. I've always contended that weddings take on a life of their own. And, as simple as they wanted it to be, the wedding kind of "grew."

We did a lot of things ourselves and used accent pieces we already had. James wanted to decorate the cake himself, and with very little help from me, he did a great job. I baked the cake using pans borrowed from my sister-in-law Donna.

After assembling the cake, James took over and painstakingly smoothed the frosting, applied great-looking holly leaves and berries and the topper. He transported it to the reception site and we put it together before we left for the



Out Back

By *Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts*
quality-pro@webtv.net

ceremony.

We needn't have worried about lighting during the ceremony. Charlotte and James were beaming so brightly, they lit up the whole church. She was a beautiful bride and he was a handsome groom.

James wanted his father to be his best man, even after Jim warned him that he cries at weddings. I almost cried, too, but I was the photographer, so I had to stay focused.

It was a beautiful ceremony. One of the ministers asked them to look at each other's hands. She spoke of how those hands will care for each other; work for each other; caress each other; comfort each other. A wonderful message for all couples.

After the wedding, we went to a restaurant where the reception was set up. When I walked in, the manager whispered in my ear that the cake had fallen over. Well, not the whole cake, just the topper. But, the manager and her staff had repaired it so nicely, that no one, except James and I, even knew there had

been a mishap. At this point, it was just funny, a memory of James and Charlotte's special day.

The day after the wedding, Jim and I realized we are grandparents again: a 150-pound bouncing baby boy named, Sean He is Charlotte's 23-year old son and we couldn't be more pleased. We told him he could call us Grandma or Grandpa. Or, if that didn't feel right, Jim and Carolyn would do.

From the Bible

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

St. Matthew 2: 1-2.

Carols still best of Christmas

OK, I've had the Christmas channel on the radio all day.

It's the holidays, so sue me.

Not the "modern" Christmas channel, either — no "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" or "Silent Night" by Elvis. No, the one called "Christmas Traditions" that takes the place of the '40s channel.

So I've been listening to Bing Crosby sing "White Christmas" and "Winter Wonderland" a lot. What a voice.

Then there's Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr., Perry Como singing "Ave Maria" (not really a Christmas song, but it'll do), Frank Sinatra — not my favorite human being, but a decent singer nonetheless. There's plenty of air time for "Frosty, the Snowman," "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer," and "Let It Snow," all secular tunes only vaguely related to the holiday.

Then, of course, there's "Jingle Bells." That's not exactly a Christmas song, but neither is "Silver Bells." And I like them both.

And while we're on the subject, when — and how — did "My Favorite Things" get on this playlist?

It's not even a winter song. Certainly not a Christmas song. Just a nice little show tune from "The Sound of Music."

Oh, well. It has at least as much to do with the holidays as "Frosty," and it's a better song. Even if I do have a bad reaction to "The Sound of Music." Nothing against Rogers



Along the Sappa

By *Steve Haynes*
s.haynes@nwkans.com

and Hammerstein or Julie Andrews. Just say I was working at a theater when the movie came out, and we did continuous showings 9 a.m. to midnight...and I was pushed beyond the breaking point.

I don't like to think about it.

I haven't had the nerve to turn to the contemporary channel yet. It's an odd mix of non-Christmas tunes and rock stars singing carols, some of them very nicely done. If it were all carols, I might listen more.

I'm old fashioned, I guess. A sentimentalist. I like to hear carols. I can listen to Bing Crosby or Elvis sing "Silent Night." I can listen to a choir. It's all good for me.

There are some good contemporary Christmas tunes, though mostly they're not very reverent. One of my favorites is "Merry Christmas From the Family," by Robert Earl Kean Jr., a cowboy singer of sorts. It's not very religious, but cute, in a white-trashy sort of way. Think Spam and spray cheese, fake snow and lights on the trailer.

The best cover I've heard — Robert Earl's — is by folk

singer Jill Sobule. You can find it on YouTube if you want, but there's no shortage of "holiday" tunes.

Changing the subject, did you know there was "Blue Christmas" before Elvis. Yup. Ernest Tubb recorded it in 1948, nine years before the King. Since then, everybody has recorded it. Everybody. One site lists more than 157 versions.

Still, I'd rather hear — or sing — carols. And the best place for that, unless you happen to open the front door and find singers outside, is church on Christmas Eve. It's the one night of the year when the choir director won't dig up something unsingable to try out. Usually.

And if you can sing "Silent Night" and maybe "We Three Kings" (thought that's really for Epiphany) and leave humming "Joy to the World," then you'll have had a good night.

And be in touch with The Reason for the Season, as well.

Alas, there is no Carols Channel on my radio service. I'll have to wait a month.

But it'll be worth it, I'm sure.

Don't invite alcohol to new alley

To the Editor:

I read with great sadness that the City of Oberlin is contemplating allowing sale of alcohol at the new bowling facility.

It seems appropriate to remind everyone of this individual's track record. He was present, even the major cause of, a child being molested. A year doesn't go by where he wasn't sitting in the front seat of the vehicle beside a young person from our area who is killed or maimed in a car wreck.

How many times has the evidence proved that his hand was in control of the steering wheel at the time of the accident? He was there when one of the daughters of someone in northwest Kansas was date-raped last year, last decade and possibly

last night.

You say you didn't know about that happening? We rarely do. He is the one whose fist struck his wife when she tried to get between him and the beating he was giving his child for no reason other than "he had been drinking." He is the reason for billions of dollars of wrecked vehicles, wrecked minds, wrecked bodies and wrecked lives.

He is a man of strong traditions and his traditions are handed down from generation to generation. He is a major supporter of the field of addiction recovery; in fact alcoholism wouldn't exist without him.

He is an expert in the fields of grief, sorrow, regret and death. He will never acknowledge his part in all these things. Denial blinds his friends and supporters to what he is capable of.

We each have to make a personal choice on this matter. My choice is to fight against him and the results of his existence. His name is alcohol.

Please don't force those who have already given money to support this facility to be used to facilitate the use of alcohol.

Chaplain John L. Paulson, Oberlin

THE OBERLIN HERALD

Serving Oberlin and Decatur County since 1879

USPS 401-600

Office hours: 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.

170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749-2243

Phone: (785) 475-2206 Fax (785) 475-2800
E-mail: oberlin.herald@nwkans.com

Published each Wednesday by Haynes Publishing Co., 170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749. Periodicals postage paid at Oberlin, Kan. 67749.

Nor'West Newspapers

STAFF

Steve Haynes editor
Kimberly Davis managing editor
Mary Lou Olson society editor
Carolyn Kelley-Plotts columnist
Joan Betts historian
Cynthia Haynes business manager
Pat Cozad want ads/circulation
Anita Ketterl advertising makeup
Tim Davis advertising representative
Nancy Robinson proofreader

Steve and Cynthia Haynes, publishers
Kimberly Davis, assistant publisher

Official newspaper of Oberlin, Jennings, Norcat, Dresden and Decatur County. Member of the Kansas Press Association, National Newspaper Association, Colorado Press Association, Nebraska Press Association and Inland Press Association.

Subscriptions: One year, \$38 (tax included) in Decatur, Norton, Rawlins, Sheridan, Thomas and Red Willow counties; \$42 (tax included) elsewhere in Kansas; \$48 elsewhere in the U.S. Foreign subscriptions, \$50-\$250 (in U.S. dollars only) extra per year (except APO/FPO). POSTMASTER: Send change of address to 170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749-2243.

