

## Kansans need incentive to move to rural area, too

Gov. Sam Brownback's initiative to lure people to rural Kansas counties by allowing them to skip paying state income tax for five years is an interesting idea, to say the least.

We hope it works. We fear it won't do much, because the program is limited to out-of-state residents. We believe the people most likely to move to rural areas are Kansans with ties to outstate areas who might want to move "home."

The incentives in the governor's program, now passed by both the House and Senate and awaiting his signature, won't apply to those people. If they want to move to rural counties, they'll still have to pay income taxes. The state won't help pay off their student loans.

And frankly, we think the state should include them in this plan. There is little to lose, and potentially, a lot to gain.

If someone living in Wichita or suburban Kansas City, say, decides to move back here, the state could stand to lose several thousand dollars in income taxes. That might smart a little, but only for five years.

After that the state would benefit from having more taxpayers in rural counties instead of less. Plus, it'd have saved the cost of building more highways and providing more services in urban areas.

It'd be years before enough people moved

out to rural counties to require more of these "infrastructure" expenditures. Even if everyone took advantage of a provision where the state and local governments would split the cost of paying down these "settlers'" college loans, the state would hardly notice.

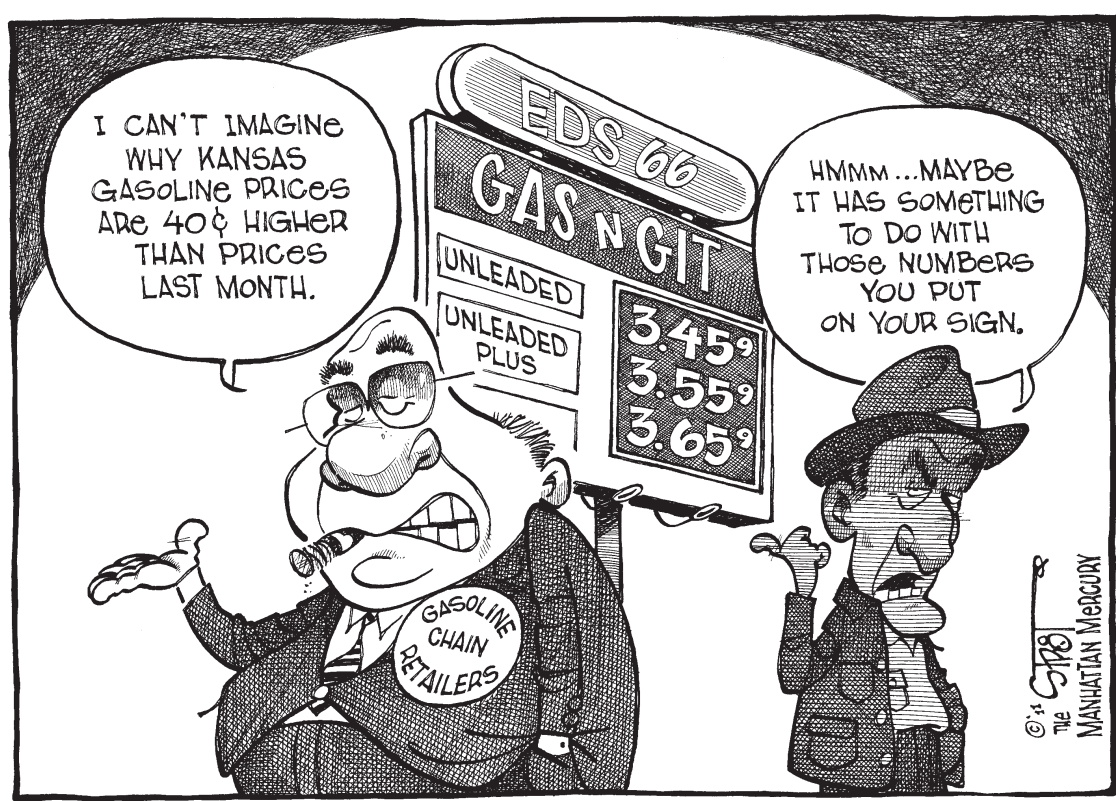
As written, the bill is expected to help rural towns recruit professionals such as doctors, dentists, lawyers and even teachers, many of whom graduate with expensive student loans to pay. That alone could be powerful, and we fully support the bill as passed by the Legislature.

But if we are talking about reversing a century of population decline in rural Kansas, we need to think big. We are going to need a lot of people. And Kansans are the most likely to move out here.

Many either grew up in rural Kansas, or their parents did. Many still have relatives, land or business interests in rural areas. Others know people who live out here, or come to rural Kansas to fish or hunt or look for antiques.

These people, the ones with ties here, are the most likely to help us reverse the population decline. And that is what everyone says needs to happen.

So let's open up this program to Kansas people, and make it work. — Steve Haynes



## Justice gets slap in the face

When it was announced that the Justice Department will no longer defend the Defense of Marriage Act, the president once more demonstrated his desire to cold-shoulder America.

The American people were given a clue about his attitude toward them back in 2008 when he sneered at Americans who "cling" to their guns and religion; now we know exactly what he meant.

The decision not to defend the act is a complete slap in the face to the rule of law in America. The U.S. Constitution establishes a system of checks and balances within our federal government, but such a fact and hundreds of years of precedent have gone ignored. Essentially, the judicial branch will now ignore a law that passed the House and the Senate with bipartisan support and was signed into law by a Democrat president.

Clearly, the enactment of this law showed no political gamesmanship on the part of one party. Even if Obama does not like a law because of his politics, he has a constitutional obligation to defend it. His only other alternative is to seek a change in the law. But in the case of marriage (and on many other issues), the president knows his position is so out of the mainstream that not even the liberal-controlled Senate would vote to repeal the law.

Beyond ignoring the fundamental legal rules that govern our nation, the president has blatantly disregarded the will of the people. First, he snubbed it by telling lawmakers, the direct representatives of the people, that he would ignore the law they passed. Second, he is making



### On the Potomac

By Rep. Tim Huelskamp  
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it easier to upend the constitutional amendments that voters have passed in their states.

In more than half of the states, voters have defined marriage as being between one man and one woman only; 42 states have passed similar laws, and the president's refusal to defend the federal law puts those at risk.

If the president thinks he is on the side of the people, he is sadly mistaken. Numerous states he won in 2008 have enacted constitutional defenses of marriage, including California, Colorado, Michigan, Nevada, Ohio, and Wisconsin—with widespread support across racial and ethnic lines.

I was the author of the Kansas Marriage Amendment. Voter turnout when the Kansas amendment was on the ballot was nearly 40 percent, more than double the traditional turnout for similarly scheduled elections. And even though liberal Republicans and Democrats opposed to traditional marriage have occupied the governor's mansion in the past decade, the amendment passed with 70 percent of the vote in Kansas.

In the past, defenses of the federal law had included, among other reasons, the explanation about the important role that children play in

marriage. In handing down opinions on the matter between 1996 (when the law was originally passed) and 2008, several courts have identified this as the strongest defense of traditional marriage.

More than 40 years of social research makes it absolutely clear that having a married mother and father in the home is by far the best arrangement for children. In the last two years, however, Department of Justice would not include this in its briefs, offering only a half-hearted defense, and clearly avoiding something which has been identified as the most effective means of protecting the existing law.

But there is more than just law and legal strategy to take into consideration. To ignore the role of marriage and family in the vitality of the U.S. undermines our culture. Families are the core units of society, with parents and other adults responsible for passing on the values which have made our way of life so successful throughout our history.

Though the president has disregarded the law in his decision, there is one group he has not overlooked: those who brought him to Washington. His decision to skirt the rule of law has the fingerprints of the Left all over it.

## Hubby gets surprise project

It's hard to pull anything over on my husband, but with the help of son James, I actually surprised him.

Every March, during spring break, we accompany a team of college students from Wisconsin on a mission trip to Mexico. Jim's birthday always falls during that trip, and I really wanted to do something nice for him this year.

Since neither one of us need any more "stuff," I decided to get a project started for him. The fact that I will benefit, too, is merely a bonus.

With whispered phone calls and subversive tactics, I arranged for James to gut the last remaining room in our house to be remodeled so it can become our home office. It had been a small sleeping room, but I had used it as a walk-in closet.

So as not to tip Jim off, I could not prepare the closet for James to work. Instead, I told him, "Just put everything from that room into the dining room".

He did exactly what I said, and that's fine. But we may not be able to eat in there for a month. That's about how long it will take me to pack up everything he carried in there.

Where it all comes from, I don't know.

We can't use it in the basement as well as we did not use it while it was stored in the closet.

During our two week trip to and from Mexico, I told Jim his birthday present was at home and he would just have to wait to get it.

The night we arrived back into our little home town, it was about midnight. As we approached our house, Jim saw the garbage cans sitting streetside, filled to overflowing with the lath James had pulled out of the room.

At first Jim thought James had



### Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts  
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cut down the pampas grass, but on closer inspection, recognized the debris for what it was. Then he knew.

"James cleaned out the office, didn't he?" he asked.

"Yes, he did," I admitted. "Happy Birthday. I hope you like it."

"I love it," he said. "That gutting part was what I dreaded. Now it's done, and I can get busy."

-ob-

We found all our kids and grandkids well and doing fine. Our little great-grandson, Kayden, has already cut two teeth.

He's working on more and is pulling himself up to anything he can grab hold of. He will be walking and talking soon. We'll turn around and he will be in school.

Time flies.

-ob-

My friend Babe took care of our chickens while we were gone. By her own admission, Babe is a city girl, but she thought it would be fun to feed the hens and gather eggs for a couple of weeks.

Her pay, of course, was the eggs the "old girls" produced.

While in Mexico, Jim said, "I just got a voice mail from Babe. You better call her. She said there is an 'issue' with the chickens."

"An issue", I thought.

Did a dog get in the pen and kill them all? Did they escape and scat-

ter all over town? I wondered what I might hear, but called her anyway.

Not to worry. Babe's concern centered around a hen that refused to get off the nest.

I assured her that all was well. The old "biddy" was merely in a setting mood. She wanted to hatch some chicks.

I told my friend to wear a long-sleeved shirt and maybe put on some gloves, then gently lift the hen from her nest and put her on the ground. I told her she might have to do this several days because the urge to "set" is strong, but the hen will get over it.

Tragedy averted. And we won't have to worry about any little chicks.

### From the Bible

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

1 John 18 - 20

# 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

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

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Official newspaper of Oberlin, Jennings, Norcatour, 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.



## Chance meetings lead to love

Late in the evening a little over a week ago, we were in the bar at a South Carolina hotel, talking with friends and sipping beer or coffee—some of us had to drive home—when the topic of how we'd met our mates came up.

Everyone had a pretty good story.

Leslie said she'd actually met Ned before, on a college double date with a friend she knew was two-timing him. Then later, another girlfriend had a date but no ride, and Ned had a car. So she promised to find him a date.

The friend ran into Leslie in the hall and told her she had to go out on a date with this guy, "but you'll never have to see him again in your whole entire life."

The two couples were so broke, she said, they went looking for free entertainment. For dinner, they went to McDonalds and had enough to buy two hamburgers and two bags of fries, which they split.

And while she might not have been required to see Ned again, the rest is, as they say, history.

Cynthia told the table about how we'd been introduced because she needed a date for her sorority formal. We met at a Young Republicans party a week or two before the dance. I guess I passed inspection, at least as an emergency date.

I took her to the Savoy Grill in downtown Kansas City before the dance, and I think she was a little impressed that the waiter knew me by name. (My dad has been eating there since he was a teen.)

When I admitted that I'd won the money I used to buy her corsage and the bubbly in a poker game that afternoon, though, she said she thought I might have been the kind of guy her mother had warned her about.

(And to this day, I'm not sure if that was a good point or a bad.)

I got to tell about how she got cold feet and dumped me the year before her graduation, and how the guys in the back of the newsroom conspired with me to get her back.



### Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes  
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Since she'd made me promise not to call her, we settled on Bob Dye's suggestion that I send her a single red rose with an unsigned card that said simply, "I miss you."

She called right away.

I thought Mark and Liz had the best story, though. Reporters for competing newspapers in New Jersey, both single and 20-something, they met, Liz said, at a murder scene. For months, though, she refused to date him. They hung out with a friend of his, but never on a "date."

Only when he got a job offer in Saudi Arabia did they face the issue. Late into the night they talked, and Mark said, he launched into a long speech. Liz said she cut him off, told him to "just go to Arabia," went into the next room to make coffee. There she realized that he was trying to propose. (Mark admits he's a little long-winded.)

"And here I'd cut him off," she said. "I went back in there and ask him if he could just start over."

More history.

All those were long-lived romances, 30, 35 and 40 years. The next is more a tale of late-blooming young love.

A week later, we were having dinner with Jennifer and heard how she'd met John. She does public relations and projects in Birmingham, Ala.; he runs a small-town newspaper. They met at the state press convention, where else?

She'd been married, but it had not gone well. She said she really wasn't looking to do that again. He was married, but unbeknownst to him, not for long.

John invited her to come down and talk to his Rotary Club. Both are painters, and she took her latest work to show him. He wanted her to meet his goats.

When they went to look at the painting, it fell on him; she had to walk through mud in her heels; and then he managed to tell her he'd gotten divorced and his dog had died over Thanksgiving.

"I was so outta there," she recalled, adding that later, she noticed what a good sense of humor he had. What a nice guy he was. And when he called and asked her to go to lunch, she said yes, even though they live 90 miles apart.

The smile on her face when she tells that story is something to see.

## Honor Roll

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