

Rhetoric getting deep in politics, marriages

The country is astir with the winds of the recent court decision in Massachusetts and the mayor of San Francisco's declaration that the county clerk must allow marriage licenses for gay and lesbian couples.

For a few days anyway, the focus is less on the presidential race and more on the emotional question of same-sex marriages.

In the 50 states, there are 10 (20 percent) that have no laws dealing with the subject (Oregon, Wyoming, Wisconsin, New Mexico, New York, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, New Jersey and Maryland). Vermont recognizes same-sex unions as a civil contract, and two, California and Massachusetts, have registries for same-sex couples.

In the past week, Massachusetts has been wrestling with a constitutional amendment to ban such marriages. A previous law was struck down by the state Supreme Court as being unconstitutional.

In California, the mayor of San Francisco wrote a letter to the county clerk saying under his interpretation of the state Constitution it is discriminatory to refuse to recognize same-sex marriages.

The mayor ordered the county clerk to keep the office open over the weekend to allow lesbians and gay men to apply for wedding licenses. Over 500 couples turned up, and the number is expected to continue rising unless a group from Arizona can convince a judge to issue a restraining order and hear a case to stop the clerk.

For San Francisco, it has meant a few more dollars of income, as it costs about \$100 for each couple to get married.

The action is on both coasts, while the rest of the country — including Kansas and the surrounding states — has existing laws against homosexual marriage.

This is one of those issues — like abortion — which bring out people's emotions. In most cases, it does not matter what is logical or fair; it is a matter of religious fervor or righteous indignation that anything like this would be allowed or even suggested.

Looking at the history of the United States, there are a lot of questions about what the Founding Fathers thinking was on how far the rights granted under the First Amendment could be stretched or ought to be expanded to encompass.

Many of these men were not exactly upstanding and faithful in their days. That does not mean they had any idea how the world would look over 200 years later.

Any time there is a question of being fair or allowing people the constitutional freedom the founding fathers fought for, we believe they should be given the leeway as long as the action does not hurt someone else.

No doubt the rhetoric about same-sex marriages will slowly slide out of the news and the nation can get back to the real question of whether or not President Bush made all his National Guard weekends while campaigning in Alabama about 30 years ago during the Vietnam War.

These are the issues which draw our attention away from the more mundane events, such as the violence in Iraq.

— Tom Betz

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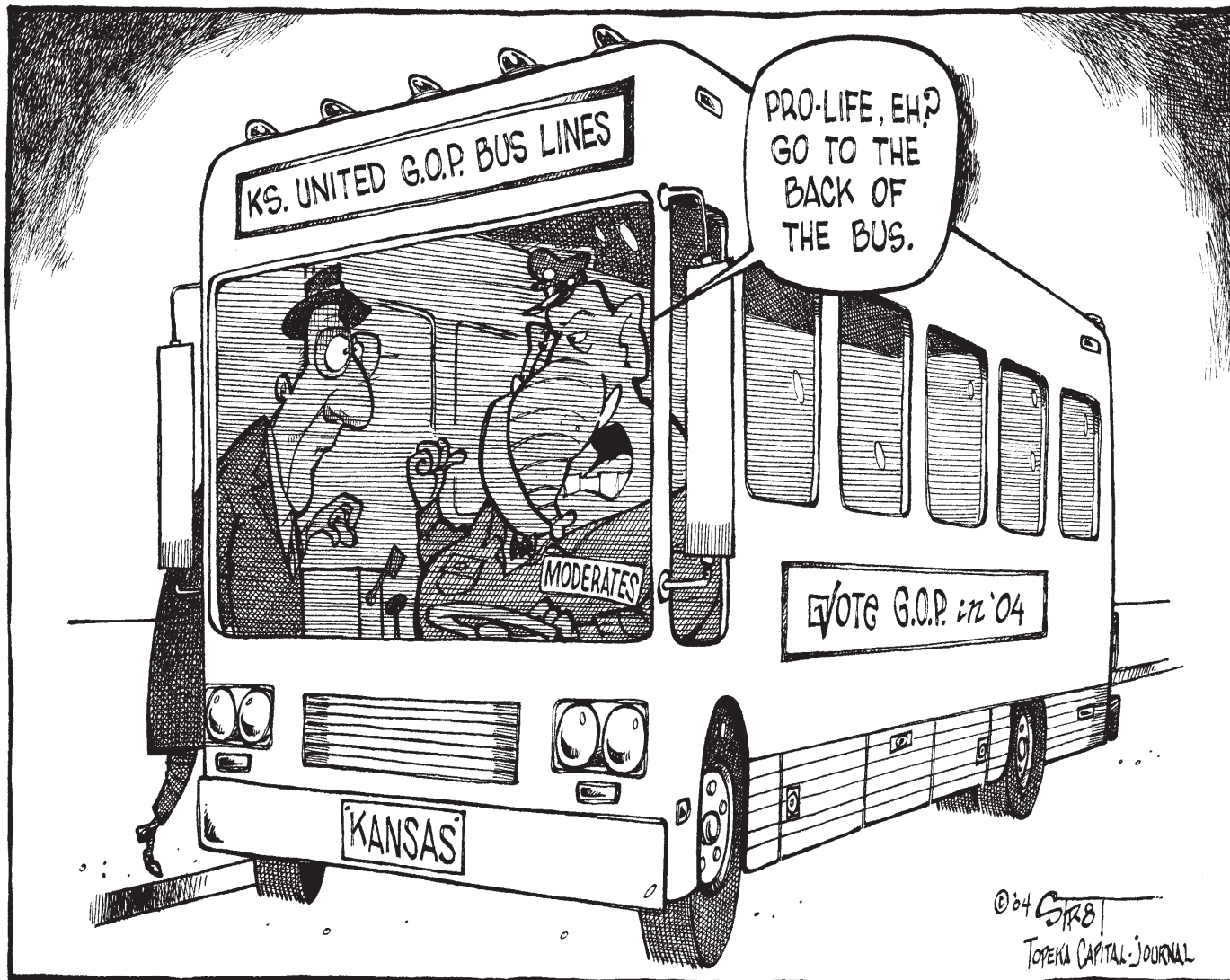
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Memories bring to mind games

My column telling about the games of years ago brought many comments and e-mail from friends. A few calls came from people who had gone to school in other parts of the country and they played the same games.

I thought other would enjoy some of their comments.

Several enjoyed kick-the-can and a more modern version was mentioned by Pat Harper Mielke.

"I still have a scar to prove that I participated in the game which I called kick ball," he said. "Each team tried to get the ball to the other team's goal by kicking it past their players. I took a kick in the front ankle which split wide open, but I loved that game."

Sounds like the game my grandchildren now play and they call it soccer. She went on to say that she loved the equipment on the elementary playground that would be banned today, like the pole that had long chains hanging down with hand grips on the end. The top of the pole rotated around as we grabbed the hand hold with one hand and ran until we could swing up into the air.

She remembers that sometimes we went quite high, "what a thrill, but thinking back, it seems a bit dangerous." Several people mentioned remembering that same piece of equipment.

Several people mentioned the "goat swing" in the park. Ah yes, climbing to the platform, you could straddle a wooden plank which was held from the tree by a single rope, jump off into space — what

Sales taxes get more complicated

Kansas has over 750 sales tax jurisdictions. The community where I live (Oakley) has a population of 2,000, but the city limits cover parts of three counties and the post office delivers mail to four. Until last July all sales to Kansas citizens were charged sales tax based on the location of my business and all out-of-state sales were tax exempt.

I have been the owner of a small photography studio for the past 29 years. When I take pictures of the local high school track team, the running events are in Logan County and the field events are in Thomas County. When I take pictures at a high school alumni reunion, I can have several hundred people order pictures that evening, and I am now supposed to charge sales tax based on where the person lives because I mail their picture.

These orders vary from \$6 to \$10 and the local sales tax amount is never more than 15 cents. Now I am supposed to check each person's address, verify the amount of sales tax and record the amount due in each of the possible 753 Kansas sales tax jurisdictions monthly.

If this "destination sourcing" is allowed nationwide, I will be required to collect sales tax for every sales tax jurisdiction in our country. The potential exists that I will have to write countless checks for less than \$5 monthly or authorize an electronic funds transfer in similar amounts to a number of states. A common example would be photographs at a wedding. Most

Memories

Sonya Montgomery



a thrill and talk about dangerous. I think there are people out there somewhere who ended up with broken bones if they missed. There were other goat swings in the area that swung over a creek.

Everyone had a different name for the game of throwing a ball over the school or a house: Andy, Andy, Over; Annie, Annie, Over; Ante, Ante Over; Handy-Handy-Over; whatever it was called, apparently a lot of people played it and enjoyed it. Part of the difference was the school the person attended.

Then there was a difference of opinion as to what game it was and the exact rules when you got to holler ollie, ollie, outs in free. It was some kind of hide and seek.

Harlan Conkey mentions that we can thank the NBA and computer people for the change in leisure games for children.

A note from Lawrence Wetter, who attended grade school at Frog Pond School, north of Norton, remembered the fox and geese game and also reminded me that the boys built forts from snow and had snowball fights.

"I remember when I was in first grade, the teacher let us little kids go out to play between recesses one snowy day and we

tramped around in the deep snow drifts and got our clothes all wet," he said. "The teacher gave us each a swat on the bottom, stripped us to our long handled underwear, hung our wet trousers up, and sat us down at the back of the room by the big potbellied stove to warm up and dry out. Can you imagine anything like that taking place today?"

Probably not Lawrence.

Bonnie Underwood Lathrop said that her favorite game was jacks and I might add that it is because she places my column on the Internet to all classmates that I get so many responses from them.

Again thanks, Bonnie.

I received other comments by e-mail as well as people I meet on the street and by phone.

Thanks to all for your encouragement, I hope it does jog your memories. Aren't we wonderfully made to have in our little heads a memory bank that is spurred to work again by someone saying something or by seeing something. No doubt God knew we would need some humor in our life down the road and made it possible for us to store memories for years.

Leroy Ciboski sent 10 games for when we are older. I will mention only a few. If you are interested in the full list, come by the office or call me.

- Pin the toupee on the bald guy
- 20 questions shouted into your good ear
- Simon says something incoherent
- Spin the bottle of Mylanta
- Musical recliners

Senate Doings

Sen. Stan Clark



lion will be adopted before the Jan. 1, 2006, effective date of this act. Without this assurance, this act places an undue compliance burden on beginning small retail businesses in our state.

In the Kansas Senate, some of us are attempting to either delay or repeal this onerous law until Congress acts. To renew our local economies, we have to encourage our youth to open businesses and many of these businesses will have to market their products outside the immediate community.

A community grows and prospers when the capital, management and labor are all three generated within the community. Absence of any one of these three elements increases the hurdles that have to be overcome.

The current law and the regulations being advanced by the multi-state compact favor large businesses that can afford the compliance costs. At the same time, this law and the proposed regulations discourage others from starting a business.

I will continue to work to create a business climate that encourages the development of more businesses throughout our state.

Please feel free to contact me on this or any issue. I can be reached by writing to Sen. Stan Clark, State Capitol-Room 449-N, Topeka, Kan 66612; by calling 1-800-432-3924 or 785-296-7399; by FAX at 801-457-9064; or by e-mail at <mailto:stclark@ink.org>stclark@ink.org.