

Local government should shop at home

This didn't happen here. But it could have. Someone at a county meeting made the suggestion that if one of the commissioners was going to Salina, maybe he could pick up some tables at an unnamed membership store. The commissioner never made the trip, the tables weren't bought and someone pointed out that stores right here in the county sell that sort of thing. Good for him. Buying tables at Sam's Club seemed like a sort of unusual slip for the commissioners, who buy most of what they can in the county. A lot of people probably don't realize, though, that one of the hardware stores or End Zone has access to just about anything you might want in a lot of lines.

Other local businesses either carry goods we don't think of or can get what you need. Most of us could do a better job of shopping at home. And sometimes, it's the merchant who is to blame: Many never advertise their entire lines, and people just don't know what they have. No one can buy everything they need here. There's no new-car dealership any more, for instance, and only a few used-car lots. The city and county make every effort to work with dealers here, though, and that's a good thing.

All of us should make an effort to shop at home. We need to support the businesses here for two reasons: They provide jobs and income in our hometown, and that's important.

And if we don't support them, they'll disappear and we'll wonder why we have to drive to Hays or Kearney to buy thread.

That said, we know it does no good to preach to people used to driving 100 miles to buy a car. People shop where they will shop, and it's the merchants' job to get them through the door.

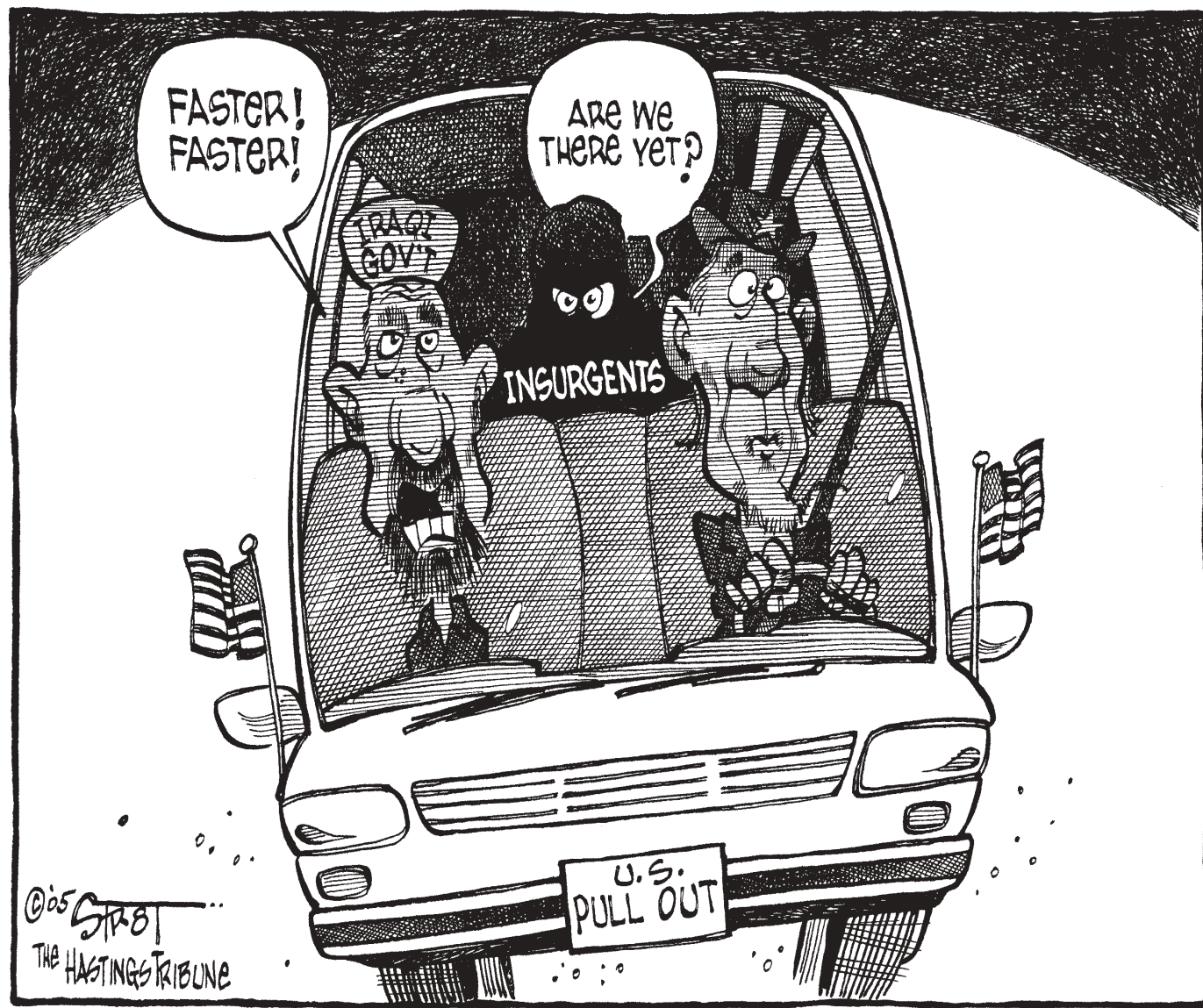
Some work harder at that than others. But when it's tax money being spent, for food, equipment, supplies, whatever, then the city or county or school board really needs to make a commitment to shop at home.

For the most part, our schools, our city and our county have done that. There's the occasional lapse, but nobody's perfect. And there really are things you can't buy here.

Norton has a pretty nice way of life. One thing we all can do to preserve that is spend our dollars at home, where they help people in our town.

Think about that the next time you're tempted to run to Wal-Mart for groceries — or Sam's Club for tables.

Where do you want your dollars to go — Norton or Arkansas?
— Steve Haynes



Home is where the dog is...

How do you know where home is? As we packed the final things from our Lenora house, I found myself thinking, such and such item is at home, meaning Lenora. Or I might say I'm going home (to Lenora) to do whatever.

But when I got there I would pull up, get out of the car and something was missing — the dog wasn't there to greet me. Or I'd walk out on the patio and expect her to come around the corner to get her belly rubbed.

No Smiley. I was worried because it was a big adjustment for her when she first came to live with us. I suppose she remembered another family and home and wanted to find them. She kept going to town. But she was easy to find, she would go to the day care and watch the kids.

One morning when Junior went to pick her up one of the kids said, "Mister, we sure do like your dog."

And finally she liked us; she stayed home.

As to this move, Smiley never missed a beat.

It's been harder for the rest of us. But that is just because we have so much "baggage."

Back Home
Nancy Hagman



Not to make light of a horrible situation, but I couldn't understand how Dennis Rader's wife never found his little cache of mementos from the murders he committed.

Well, now I know. The husband has things I never dreamed existed and I didn't even see it all.

I think he purposefully kept me away from his shop as much as possible.

I know I am keeping plenty but it doesn't hold a candle. We have long had an agreement that I get to die first, because I think cleaning up his stuff would kill me anyway.

I knew we had stored a lot of old tax papers in the little attic but I was amazed at what else. Some things I was happy to see. There were two old oak school chairs. I thought they were in the shop and when we didn't find them there I was sure they

were lost.

We had years and years of copies of the "Mother Earth News." It's been a while since I looked at the world through the eyes of Mother Earth News and while it probably wouldn't hurt if I did, I had to draw a line, to the silo they went. I kept the umbrella baby stroller — although Tricia informed me it does not have near enough bells and whistles for today's child. (Maybe there is more Mother Earth ingrained in me that I realize.)

I guess this move was easy for Smiley because she had her chair, her dog house and her friends — the cats. Everyone seems happy. Especially Smiley. She got to help with every repair during harvest and Elizabeth is here almost every day and she gives the best belly rubs.

Or maybe the animals just watched us trudge back and forth with yet another load of stuff and thought, "Fools, what do you need with all of that?"

The last day before we had to have everything out, I stood in the almost empty kitchen, looked at the last few items to be packed and said, "Those need to go home."

And I realized for the first time, yes, Claudell is HOME. That's where the dog is.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: Norton man thinks fair was great

Dear Sir: The community owes a big THANK YOU to the guys at the Norton Home Owned Carnival, and the Norton County Fair Board. They put on another great fair.
R.W. Yeager
Norton

Editor's Note — We agree. Our community is lucky to have so many dedicated volunteers.

WRITE:

The Norton Telegram encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of public interest. Letters should be brief, clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise.

We do not publish form letters or letters about topics which do not pertain to our area. Thank-yous should be submitted to the Want Ad desk.

Letters will not be censored, but will be read and edited for form and style, clarity, length and legality. We will not publish attacks on private individuals or businesses which do not pertain to a public issue.

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Legislation to help transportation

Capitol Views

Rep. Jerry Moran



Congressman Jerry Moran today announced that the House has passed final legislation reauthorizing money for federal highways, public transportation programs and safety initiatives through 2009.

The Transportation Equity Act, will invest in Kansas more than \$2 billion in transportation infrastructure and is estimated to create thousands of new jobs.

"Kansas highways, roads and bridges link our producers and travelers to the rest of the world," Mr. Moran said. "Whether it's driving to school or hauling grain, Kansans rely upon the safety and efficiency of the state's transportation system."

Kansas has the fourth largest number of public roads in the nation, more than 134,500 miles, and ranks third in the number of bridges. The First Congressional District alone has more road miles than 29 states.

The legislation includes money for projects in the First District, including:

- K-18 in Geary County — construct a new four-lane highway over the existing two-lane road, from the Riley-Geary

- County line, southward to Interstate 70.
- Old U.S. 77 in Geary County — resurface, grade, replace guardrails, and add shoulders.

- US-54/400 in Pratt County — construct a four-lane improvement on U.S. 54/400, from four miles west of the Pratt-Kingman County line, continuing westward four miles in Pratt County..
- U.S. 400 in Ford County — construct the southwest quadrant of a two-lane on a four-lane right-of-way bypass with access control on U.S. 400 at Dodge City.

- Alternate truck route in Osborne County — construct a mile and a half of new roadway to reroute heavy truck traffic away from a school zone and the main

business district in Downs to the grain facility in the middle of town.

- Kansas and Oklahoma Rail Line, Osborne to Salina — rehabilitate 82 miles of short line rail track from Osborne to Salina.

- National High Priority Corridor — designates the SPIRIT Corridor on U.S. 54 from El Paso, Texas, through New Mexico and Oklahoma, to Wichita and on U.S. 50 High Plains Corridor from Newton to Pueblo, Colo. as National High Priority Corridors.

In addition to individual projects, there is money to improve the overall safety of the nation's roads and interstate system, as well as upgrade bridges, roads and public transit.

Mr. Moran is a senior member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and was involved in the last comprehensive transportation bill that became law in 1998.

For more information, contact Congressman Moran at (202) 225-2715 or visit his web page at www.house.gov/morank01/.

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