

## Bless all those Sunday School teachers

The Sunday School teacher was describing how Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt. Little Grayson interrupted, "My Mommy," he said rather triumphantly, "also looked back once while she was driving, and she turned into a telephone pole!"

Lots of luck to all you precious teachers of Sunday School!

There's something I'm not quite understanding. It involves a commercial on television that encourages us to eat a certain kind of cookie to lose weight. In fact, they go so far as to tell us the cookie(s) can take the place of two meals, saving us \$1,200 a year! Some guy Thursday morning on the commercial said he lost 115 pounds in six months eating those cookies. I have a problem with that kind of weight loss in that short a period of time. I'm 185 pounds and if I lose 115 pounds in six months I would weigh 70 pounds and too weak to write this column. Where's the health benefit?

Paychecks now are reflecting President Obama's stimulus program. They will be a little fatter (so keep them away from those cookies). How much difference it'll make with your paycheck you'll soon find out because the stimulus package kicked in on April 1. No matter what the amount, the old saw, "I'll take every penny I can get," applies here, thanks to the economic mess we find ourselves in.

I had occasion to watch *Imus in the Morning* on Thursday (ch. 58/Nex-Tech in Norton, RFD-TV) and he was talking about a friend in the car business who had cut the price on new vehicles by \$20,000! Imus, who incidentally is beset with prostate cancer, said he didn't know how much mark up there was on cars, but \$20,000 off sounded like a bargain. It's interesting to watch the various programs the industry is pushing to sell what looks like an over abundance of new vehicles sitting around just waiting to be purchased. Some of the manufacturers say if you lose your job, they will make your payment for up to a year. I suppose there are catches to these claims. But it certainly points out the seriousness of the situation.

A while back we had an item in the paper about stimulus spending for short line railroads, such as serve our community. Well, five projects were selected out of 16 submitted, and they are: Kyle Railroad Company, Scandia—construct 2,000 feet of new siding and a new switch at Nesika Energy, \$371,000 (Republic County); Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad, Alexander—expand siding at Mid-States Farmers Coop, \$158,470 (Rush County); Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad, outside of Wichita—add siding to handle 110-car grain trains, \$967,820 (Sedgwick County); Nebraska Kansas Colorado Railroad, near St. Francis—partial funding for bridge rehabilitation, \$476,826 (Cheyenne, Rawlins and Decatur counties); and Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad, Sawyer—extend siding capacity at Farmers Coop, \$195,278 (Pratt Coun-

### Let's Chat Tom Dreiling

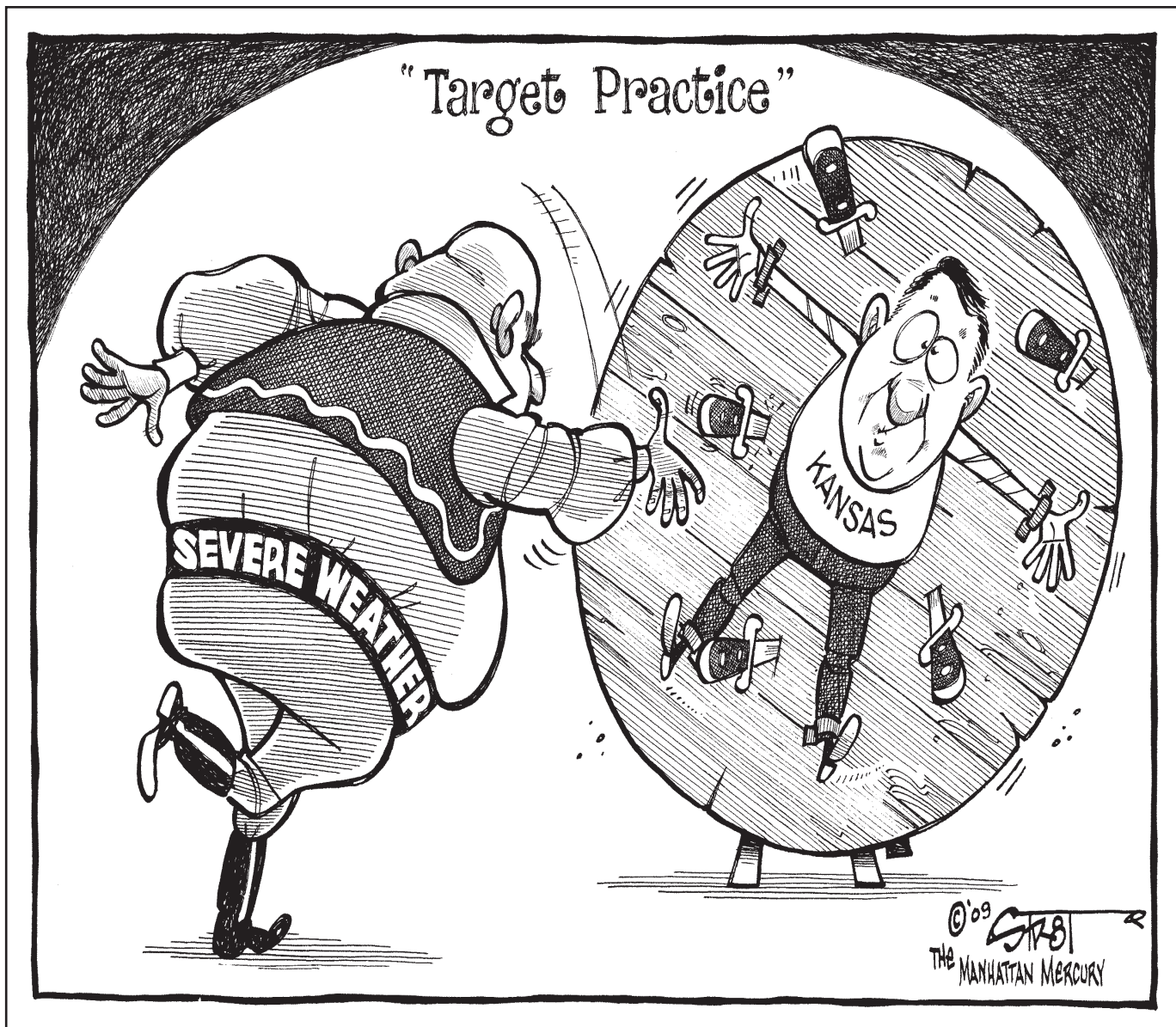


ty). Thanks to Kristen Brands, out at the Kansas Department of Transportation's district headquarters in Norton for that information.

I managed to do it once again. Wednesday morning, upon arriving at work, I told the ladies in the office, "gosh, that clutter from the accident is still laying in the alley across the street." Their comment was, "What accident?" I told them they couldn't have missed all that stuff if they were paying attention driving down the street. So, to prove my claim, I motioned to the front of our building and they followed me out onto the sidewalk. I pointed across the street, they looked, and looked again with question marks on their faces. I explained, "April Fool!" A 'boo' is worth a thousand words.

The best April Fool's joke ever played on me happened shortly after I was discharged from the Air Force and returned to my hometown (Hays) to begin what would lead me to a career in journalism. Anyway, to make a long story short, there was this girl—using today's lingo she was *hot*—and I wanted to date her but didn't have the guts to ask her out. My buddies kept encouraging me, assuring me that eventually I'd work up the nerve to do so. It just didn't happen, however. So they told me they'd intervene, in some form or another to get us connected. Well, one fine evening as we gathered at our favorite hangout in Hays (it was called the Golden Acres at the time on South Vine Street), they told me they had a surprise for me and kept hinting that this might be the night I and the girl of my dreams would meet face to face. Glenn Windholz (who, unfortunately is no longer with us) and Jay Schlyer (who also has passed on), put a blindfold over my eyes and led me into the next room. They sat me on a chair and told me not to remove the blindfold because someone would do that. So I sat, anxiously, knowing this would be the date I had hoped for. I sat. And sat. And sat. And sat some more. It was so quiet in that room you could hear my heart beating. I don't know how often I folded my arms, twisted and turned to keep my system from falling asleep. Finally, I thought to myself, there's something amiss here. At least 45 minutes had passed and nothing had taken place. So I slowly removed the blindfold... and there, in front of me was a huge sign with two words painted on it: APRIL FOOL! My comment apparently was loud and clear because it brought Glenn and Jay and at least a half dozen other loudly laughing folks into the room. And the girl? Well, that never materialized.

Have a good evening! And as you prepare to attend the church of your choice this weekend, leave the blindfold at home.



## Sound Off!

### Manhattan project should concern all of us

Why in the world are Kansas residents so happy about the official announcement on Jan. 12, 2009, that the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility is to be relocated to Manhattan? Every citizen should be alarmed, that facilities which conduct research on dangerous and highly contagious animal diseases, such as foot-and-mouth disease, will be relocated in the heart of cattle country.

The facility currently is located on Plum Island and was put there for a reason. The facility is offshore and has natural barriers to prevent FMD and other diseases from impacting animals and humans on the mainland. In 1978, there was an FMD leak on Plum Island, but, because there were natural barriers, a catastrophe was prevented. In 2007, in the United Kingdom—due to human error—FMD leaked at a vaccination

lab and infected animals in the surrounding area.

Manhattan has no natural barriers. The facility is planned to be built on the Kansas State University campus where the Milling Science Department building is now located. Here are some questions we should be asking. What protection will there be for the population of the area? What compensation will there be for livestock producers if herds or the food system are contaminated? The placement of this facility in the heart of cattle country could be devastating to our economy.

I am appalled that the Department of Homeland Security, which officially is supposed to protect us, is putting Kansas citizens and the livestock industry in jeopardy. It is irresponsible that Homeland Security and our elected

representatives would proceed with its ill-conceived plan, particularly when the Government Accountability Office reports there is no evidence to conclude that contagious disease research can be done safely on the United States mainland. Only the Plum Island facility can do that, as it has in the past.

There is no amount of job creation or economic boon that justifies putting Kansas and the surrounding states at risk. They are trying to make us believe the facility will be very safe, but that is the same people who couldn't even protect us from peanut butter.

Some day Pat Roberts might be very sorry that he is allowing his name to be placed on the building.

Cleon and Anita Davis  
Hill City

### Wind farm lease may not be in your best interest

Every landowner should know that a wind farm lease may damage and limit the use of one's own ground. I recently drilled a discovery well in Hodgeman County. If my original oil and gas lease would have been recorded one month later, as noted in the drilling title opinion, the wind lease would have been superior to my lease.

A subordination of the wind lease would have been required to allow development. The wind farm would have been in a position (not the landowner) to negotiate or not negotiate. This leaves a wind farm in a position to control leasing and development on the farmers ground.

This control costs the wind farm pennies on the dollar for what a landowner might receive from an oil and gas

lease. It also allows for leases as long as one hundred years. No wonder Boone Pickens, George Soros and others are leasing as much ground as possible throughout the most productive sedimentary basins in the USA.

I would recommend that each of you take your leases to your attorneys to scrutinize and ask for a legal opinion as to whether the wind farm lease limits oil and gas or other development. What are the unintended consequences of such far reaching leases?

One hundred and forty years ago, the railroads negotiated leases with the federal government to allow them the right to mine coal (for their coal burning locomotives) along the railroad routes. This seemingly benign lease is now being used to deny any ownership of

minerals for thousands of landowners in the west and has metamorphosed to mean uranium, gold, silver, oil and gas, etc.

This has spawned giant mineral companies that dwarf the railroads in size. If your lawyer will not give you an opinion, get another lawyer.

A typical oil and gas lease is one page long. A typical wind farm lease is 20 pages long. I believe this difference is by design.

Removing damaging language should be possible, if there are no ulterior motives. Under any circumstance, asking for an opinion, should allow your family protection.

Jerry Green  
Hays

### This mess we're in is like a carnival shell game

Am I the only one that thinks it a tad curious that the media makes a big deal about the governor of New York getting the employees of AIG to give back their bonuses that add up to \$80 million or some such? Hmmm...the total accused bonus was \$160 million (I suppose the other \$80 million went to CEOs or non-employees? Where did it go?), lots of moolah; but, what was the amount of the bailout? Hmmm.

\$170 billion comes to mind, correct me if I am very wrong. (It takes a thousand millions to make a billion.) Let's see, the bonuses were less than one tenth of one percent then. Is this like a carnival shell game and they got you(us) looking at the gnats when we outta be swatting horse flies? There is an attempt here, in my opinion, to redirect our attention, because it was totally wrong for 'them' to be handing out the billions of bucks in the first place, you know? If the mortgages were the

problem, then tell me why they didn't use the "bailout muneec" to pay off the mortgages...the numbers (mortgage debt total and bailout totals) are very close to the same according to more than one source I read.

And, we all thought it was pretty cool that we took time to shop for insurance and save ourselves fifty bucks or so on our premiums and now we get to help AIG out with much more than that per capita. If their situation turned sour because the market went south on them, then should we be blaming those who took a mortgage that they could not afford (as it turns out)? Should all of those people have been smarter than the AIG executives with the college educations? Should they have been better able to see the future? Speaking of fortune telling (is that what it is?), there was an article in the paper a couple of weeks ago about some guy in France in a Bernie Made-off-type position in their stock

market, who used a clairvoyant to make investment decisions for his clients and...poof...there went another \$50 billion just like another rubber tree plant. The guy will, supposedly, get a trial starting in 2010 and he might get a 300,000 dollar fine and three years in jail if guilty. Meanwhile, the Iraqi that pitched his shoe at the USA's CEO Bush stands to get three years. Convincing everyone that this is sanity is gonna cost a lot of muneec and newsprint—oops, there goes a few more million trees. Let's all just be optimistic and believe... and skip all the propaganda from the headquarters in Foggy Bottom. I made a foolish million dollar bet with my wife and I lost. Suppose we can get them to monetize that and bail me out? Let's all try it!

Richard Henderson  
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